

Georgia's far-reaching abortion law, Nixon donation raises questions, and California expands healthcare to undocumented children: US state blog round up for 13 – 19 June

USApp Managing Editor, **Chris Gilson**, looks at the week in U.S. state blogging. [Click here](#) for our weekly roundup of national blogs.

Northeast

On Wednesday, the Granite State's *NH Labor News* [reports](#) that Governor Maggie Hassan is planning to issue the budget recently sent to her by the Republican-controlled legislature. They say that Hassan has stated that the GOP's budget is 'fiscally irresponsible' because of its proposals for unpaid tax cuts for big corporations.

Moving south to the Bay State, *Blue Mass Group* [says](#) this week that the state's Senate has won a 'constitutional tiff' with the House over the question of whether its significant amendments to the House's budget (which include some tax changes) breach the origination clause in the state's constitution which states that money bills must originate in the House. The Senate won out in the state's Supreme Judicial Court because the original House bill contained a tax provision.

In Rhode Island this week, *RIPR* [argues](#) that it is time to consolidate the state's 'bloated' public agencies. They writes that the small state has 77 fire departments, 155 separate pension systems, and more than 100 water systems, all of which stem from an outdated system of government which favors local control.

Legislators in the Empire State reached a compromise deal this week – *State of Politics* [writes](#) Friday that the Assembly and Senate leaders, along with Governor Andrew Cuomo, have announced a stop-gap measure which would extend existing rent control regulations, as well as a tax abatement measure, for five extra days. The agreement buys time for a more comprehensive deal to be made.

In the wake of a State Supreme Court ruling that the administration of New Jersey Governor, Chris Christie did not have to honor an agreement to fully fund the state's pension system, *Blue Jersey* [calls](#) on public employees to make tough choices at the ballot box this year to send a message to members of the state legislature that the problem needs to be fixed. Staying in New Jersey, *Americablog* [writes](#) this week that the state's Democrats are pushing a slate of bills which would lead to the expansion of voting rights similar to those recently called for 2016 presidential candidate, Hillary Clinton. The bills are likely to come into conflict with Governor Christie, who has rejected Clinton's calls for the



New Jersey Governor Chris Christie Credit: Gage Skidmore (CC-BY-SA-2.0)

expansion of voting rights.

South

This week, Virginia's *Bearing Drift* [argues](#) that the Old Dominion State needs to retain its presidential primary in 2016. They say that the current GOP Central State Committee is leaning towards a convention rather than a primary, something that would not be good for the state, and would hurt its national credibility.

Moving south *The Progressive Pulse* of North Carolina [reports](#) that the Supreme Court has refused to review a ruling which struck down the state's 2011 law which would require doctors to give a narrated ultrasound before undergoing an abortion. The law was enacted after the state legislature overrode a veto by Governor Perdue nearly five years ago.

South Carolina saw the tragic shooting of nine African-American churchgoers in Charleston this week. *Daily Kos* [says](#) that the state's Governor, Nikki Haley is not interested in changing any part of the state's gun laws in the aftermath of the deadly shooting, instead arguing that we should focus on the 'one person' who committed the crime. The shooting was allegedly racially motivated, with the suspect, Dylann Roof apparently wanting to incite a 'civil war'. *The Atlantic* argues [strongly](#) that in light of the shooting the state's Confederate flag, which flies on the grounds of the state Capitol, should be taken down.

Peach Pundit [writes](#) Friday that Georgia's law which bans late-term abortions is actually having a trickle-down effect in other states in the south. They say that the law has contributed to a lack of access to late-term abortions in states in the Midwest and the Northeast.

Florida's state legislature recently came to an agreement on a near \$79 billion budget for 2015-16. Despite the deal, the state House's budget chief, Richard Corcoran, has advised Governor Rick Scott to use his line-item veto to remove portions of the budget's spending plans., [reports](#) *Saint Peters blog*.

Midwest

In the Buckeye State, *Ohio Daily* [writes](#) on Thursday that the state's Republican Party is using the annual budget to continue its attacks on women. They write that as well as introducing additional regulations on abortion clinics, the Ohio GOP has also introduced a new bill in the state House which would further regulate abortion-inducing drugs.

Moving north, Michigan's *eclectablog* [reports](#) that the state's GOP are drafting a 'RFRA for marriage' law, which would end the state's involvement in sanctioning marriage, ahead of the Supreme Court's coming decision on the constitutionality of same-sex marriage laws.

Are you a fan of drinking alcohol in your porch? Well now you can in the Hawkeye State! *Hit & Run* [says](#) that the Iowa Supreme Court has ruled that public intoxication on a person's front porch is not a crime, as it is not a public place.

PoliticMO has the [story](#) on Wednesday of a \$50,000 donation to Governor Jay Nixon (who is term-limited) from the United Auto Workers Union last week. The donation has raised questions as it follows his veto of a 'right-to-work' bill which would have weakened the union's strength.

Wonkblog has a [roundup](#) of 11 often surprising facts about how Kansas treats the poor. These include the raising of sales taxes, approved by Governor Sam Brownback, in 2012 and 2013 and putting a \$25 limit on ATM withdrawals of benefits.

Meanwhile in North Dakota, *Say Anything Blog* [reports](#) that the state's part-time legislature was due to reconvene this week for the first time in the state's history. They say the Senate Majority Leader has maintained that the renewed session will save money for taxpayers, as it will finish the budget for the state's Public Employees Retirement System, which has yet to be reconciled by the state House and Senate.

West and Pacific

On Monday, *The Daily Signal* has the [story](#) that Colorado's Supreme Court has ruled that companies are able to fire employees for using marijuana, despite the fact that the drug is legal in the state (though illegal federally). Staying in the Centennial State, *ColoradoPols* looks at the '[strange story](#)' of an attempted coup within the state's Republican Party, aimed at the chairman of the Colorado Republican Committee, Steve House.

Heading over to Idaho, *Eye on Boise* [reports](#) that after 18 months of talks, the state has settled a children's mental health lawsuit that has spanned 35 years and 5 governors. They say much of how Idaho treats children with mental health problems has changed because of the suit.

Townhall [comments](#) on California's recent law change which would allow the children of undocumented immigrants to enrol in Medicaid in the state. They say that the Golden State has made the move despite President Obama's past comments that healthcare reforms would not insure illegal immigrants. Staying in California, *The Daily Signal* [writes](#) that a new ruling from the state's Labor Commissioner's Office which defines drivers for the taxi company, Uber as employees threatens to destroy the company's business model.

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Note: This article gives the views of the author, and not the position of USApp– American Politics and Policy, nor of the London School of Economics.

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