

## Cuomo vs de Blasio, Wisconsin's budget stalls, and Texas' abortion law blocked: US state blog round up for 27 June – 3 July

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

### Northeast

Late last week New Hampshire Governor Maggie Hassan vetoed the state's \$11.3 billion budget. *Granite Grok* [says](#) that there is one good thing about the veto – because of a soon to be signed temporary funding resolution, government funding will be stuck at its current level of \$10.7 billion.

Moving south, *RIPR* [wonders](#) why the Ocean State's lawmakers cannot do more for the state's working poor. They say that it is surprising that the state's Democrats are not doing more for struggling workers, citing the recent failure of a proposed increase in the state's earned income tax credit in favor of giving tax breaks to the elderly in the state who collect social security.

Sparks flew in the Empire State this week with New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio blasting Governor Andrew Cuomo, accusing him of holding up the City's legislative goals out of persona; pettiness, [reports](#) *Crooks & Liars*.

Heading over to New Jersey, the *Brennan Center for Justice* [writes](#) on Tuesday that the state's legislature passed the Democracy Act, which if it becomes law, would make the state the second (after Oregon) to institute automatic voter registration, along with other voter-friendly reforms. Staying in the Garden State, *PolitickerNJ* [reports](#) that in a moment of bipartisanship, the state Assembly has signed off a conditional veto from Governor Chris Christie's of the state budget's millionaire's tax, while at the same time increasing the state's earned income tax credit from 20 to 30 percent of the federal rate. Speaking of Christie, *Blue Jersey* [examines](#) what his presidential aspirations (he announced his candidacy this week) mean for the state on the national stage.



### South

This week *Political Maryland* [writes](#) that the state's (relatively) new Republican Governor, Larry Hogan, has essentially told the city of Baltimore to 'drop dead' by killing the city's Red Line, wasting more than \$250 million and forfeiting nearly a billion federal funds. They say that Hogan's transportation package is much more focused on roads and bridges to curry favor with the asphalt and concrete industries.

*FITS News* has the sobering [report](#) this week that KKK membership in South Carolina has been surging in the

wake of the shooting of nine black parishioners in June at Charleston's Mother Emanuel AME Church by a white supremacist.

Last week's marriage equality ruling sent many Southern Republican legislators into a tailspin, with many vowing that they would fight the ruling in their states by not issuing marriage certificates to same-sex couples. On Tuesday Alabama's *Yellowhammer* [says](#) that the state's Republicans are secretly relieved at the Supreme Court's ruling because it will help to move the state's cultural identity towards one that is more business-friendly.

The Supreme Court also ruled in favor of subsidies for health insurance purchased on Obamacare's federal exchanges. In light of this decision, the Natural State's legislature is considering repealing its own state exchange because of the potentially high long term costs, [reports](#) *The Arkansas Project*.

On Tuesday, *The Daily Signal* has the [news](#) that Oklahoma's Supreme Court has ruled to remove the state capitol's monument to the Ten Commandments, on the grounds that it violates the separation of church and state.

*Burnt Orange Report* [writes](#) this week that the U.S. Supreme Court issued an emergency stay which blocks the implementation of a state law which would have severely restricted abortions in the state by leaving only nine abortion providers. The legislation was made famous by State Senator, Wendy Davis who filibustered the bill for 11 hours in 2013.

## Midwest

In the Great Lakes State this week, *eclecta blog* [says](#) that Michigan Republicans have an emerging \$1.4 billion plan to fix the state's roads, at the same time as they are proposing a more than 4 percent reduction in the state's income tax as well as further cuts to the state's budget.

Heading west to Wisconsin, *The Political Environment* comments that Governor Scott Walker's proposed 2015-17 budget remained stalled in committee despite the coming end of the fiscal year. They [say](#) that one of the budget's sticking point is a measure which ends the prevailing wage level for workers on large construction projects, which if passed, is likely to further increase inequality in the state. Staying in the Badger State, *Blogging Blue* says that the state GOP have put a repeal of open records laws into their budget. They [write](#) that the new measure would restrict access to 'deliberative materials' used in creating legislation, as well as create a 'legislator privilege' which would give lawmakers the right to disclose their communications with virtually everyone.



Wisconsin Governor, Scott Walker Credit: Chatham House (Flickr, CC-BY-2.0)

There was celebration this week in Minnesota after CNBC announced that the North Star State was the best place to do business in 2015. *True North* [takes issue](#) with the study, arguing that CNBC has simply changed its yardstick, and given different weights to different factors, many of which allow states' PR efforts to drive the outcome.

Heading west, *Say Anything Blog* [wonders](#) if the national media wants to see an oil bust in North Dakota. They comment that falling oil prices are spurring commentators to write pieces predicting an oil-industry bust in the

state, something that does not gel with the reality on the ground.

Recent years have seen GOP leaders in Kansas experiment unsuccessfully with trickle-down economics. Successive tax cuts have led to spiraling budget deficits and rising debt levels. *PoliticusUSA* [says](#) this week that the state has issued an \$840 million certificate of indebtedness – a form of IOU for the debts that it is unable to pay in the upcoming financial year.

## West and Pacific

On Monday, Montana's *Cowgirl Blog* [looks](#) to history for lessons for the state's 'Silicon Barons'. They say that overly financed candidates do not have the best record at succeeding in politics in what is a populist-minded state.

Heading west to Washington State, *GovBeat* [reports](#) that college will soon be much cheaper thanks to a \$200 million increase in state higher-education funding. The cheaper fees will be largely paid for by increased taxes on businesses – 30 percent of the new income is predicted to come from Microsoft.

*BlueOregon* [points](#) out this week that the Supreme Court's decision on Monday to uphold Arizona's independent redistricting commission also means that its own vote-by-mail law is safe. The Beaver State's mail in voting measure was adopted by a ballot measure in the same manner as Arizona's redistricting commission.

On Wednesday, *Fox & Hounds* [reports](#) on comments from Los Angeles' former Deputy Mayor for Budget and Innovation that the city is 'not designed to work'. They comment that while LA's operations are simpler compared to other large cities like New York and Chicago, there is no well thought out plan to repair and maintain roads, and the city's finances are in a shambles, with more than \$25 billion in unfunded pension liabilities.

*Blog for Arizona* [comments](#) this week that Secretary of State Michele Reagan has given up on digging up the roots of 'dark money', stating that any new regulation of the practice would be impossible – despite the fact that other states such as Montana and California have made efforts to curtail the practice.

Heading out to the Aloha State, *Honolulu Civil Beat* [wonders](#) which of the 200 bills sent to Governor Governor David Ige will survive his veto pen. Ige has until July 14<sup>th</sup> to sign, veto or let them become law without his signature. Bills which may get Ige's thumbs down include a tax increase to fund a \$6 million Honolulu rail project, and a sex-trafficking bill.

*Featured image: Governor of New York State, Andrew Cuomo Credit: Diana Robinson (Flickr, CC-BY-2.0)*

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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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