

## New York's uneven recovery, Alabama's 'hostage' budget and Idaho's busy Senator: US state blog round up for 8 – 14 August

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 Saturday this week, *Blue Mass Group* [writes](#) that the Bay State is a model for President Obama's clean power plan, announced last week. They comment that state's similar Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, begun in 2009, has led to the state having nearly 100,000 clean energy jobs.

Heading south, *RINPR* has [17 things that we need to know](#) about Rhode Island politics and media for the week. These range from falling unemployment, compelling local political theatre, and the lack of municipal coverage from the *Providence Journal*.

*State of Politics* [writes](#) that a new report has found that New York State's recovery has been an uneven one; despite more new jobs overall in the state, many areas outside New York City have experienced low or even negative job growth.

Moving over to New Jersey, *PolitickerNJ* [reports](#) on Monday that the state's Senate President, Democrat Steve Sweeney, has heavily criticized Republican Governor Chris Christie after the Governor vetoed legislation which would make the state make use of \$300 million of this year's budget surplus as a prepayment for 2016 into the state's pension system. Staying in the Garden State, *Save Jersey* [says](#) that new Rutgers-Eagleton poll has shown that 54 percent of voters in the states want Christie to resign, and also that about half of voters polled think that Lieutenant Governor, Kim Guadagno is ready to take over from Christie.



New Jersey Governor Chris Christie Credit; Gage Skidmore (Creative Commons BY SA)

This week saw special elections in three seats in the Pennsylvania State House. *PoliticsPA* has the [news](#) that the state's Democratic Party was able to retain the three seats, meaning that the state's House of Representatives will carry on with 84 Democrats and 119 Republicans.

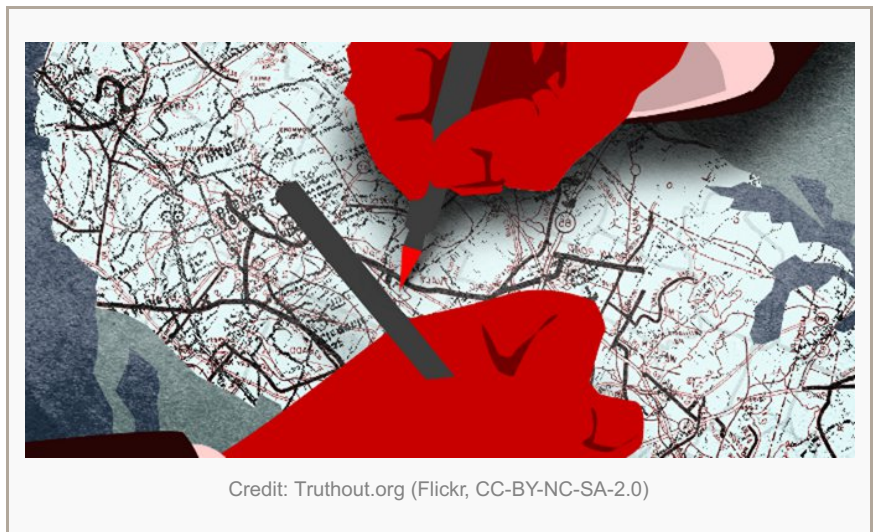
### South

On Wednesday, North Carolina's *NC Policy Watch* has an interesting graph of what the state's budgets would have looked like if a budget bill currently being debated had been put in place in 1992. They [say](#) that the budget

regime would have led to massive revenue shortfalls which would have meant that 15 percent of the public investments made since 1992 would not have been possible.

Heading down to the Peach State, *Better Georgia* [reports](#) that a progressive Democrat beat the incumbent Republican in a special election for the state House's 80<sup>th</sup> District. They say that the win now means that the GOP no longer have a supermajority in the state's House of Representatives.

This week the Florida legislature met in a special session to redraw the state's Congressional districts in response to a July state Supreme Court ruling that the previous Congressional map (drawn up by the GOP) violated the state's constitution. *The Shark Tank* [says](#) that some of the state's Democrats are pushing back against the redistricting, claiming that the new proposals might actually hurt representation in some districts. Staying in the Sunshine State, *Saint Peters Blog* [writes](#) Thursday that the state is being sued for refusing to acknowledge same-sex couples as parents on birth certificates.



Credit: Truthout.org (Flickr, CC-BY-NC-SA-2.0)

Moving on to Alabama, *leftinalabama* [comments](#) that the state's government is in a 'hostage situation', where the state's population are the hostages. They say that the state is heading towards its second special legislative session in two or so weeks, which will debate a budget which slashes millions from the state's Medicaid and other state agencies. The budget is very similar to the one that Governor Robert Bentley already stated was unacceptable earlier this spring.

Over in the Natural State, *Arkansas Times* [says](#) that nearly 50,000 have lost their health insurance under Medicaid despite the fact that many actually remain eligible, mostly because of errors in the new program's verification process.

## Midwest

*Progress Illinois* has the [news](#) on Monday that \$4 million in salary costs for the staff of Governor Bruce Rauner is actually being up by state agencies, and not the governor's office.

Heading up to Wisconsin, *Blogging Blue* [examines](#) Governor Scott Walker's record of government reform – something that Walker is touting as he runs for the Republican presidential nomination. They say that in the case of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, over four years the agency has had two chief executives, five chief financial officers, and \$126 million in loans that were not properly underwritten or vetted.

On Friday, *Bleeding Heartland* of Iowa [looks](#) at the state's refugee crisis, whereby federal support for refugees runs out after 90 days. They bemoan the fact that Governor Terry Branstad has vetoed funding for a pilot program of 'community navigators' to further help refugees.

*Taking a left turn in South Dakota* [writes](#) this week that while increasing teachers' pay in the state will not solve staffing shortages, it will help by attracting more qualified applicants to the positions.

Jumping north, *Say Anything blog* of North Dakota [says](#) that a state House Representative has expressed dissent for the state university system's latest strategic plan. They comment that North Dakota does not really have a good university system, and that more lawmakers need to speak out about getting better value for money for taxpayers from university spending.

## West and Pacific

While state's like Massachusetts (mentioned above) will suffer little effect from President Obama's new emissions regulations, some, such as Montana will not be quite so lucky. *The Flint Report* [says](#) that the Treasure State faces the most drastic emissions cuts of any state according to the new rule.

*WyoFile* [reports](#) this week that a medical marijuana initiative has launched in the state. If campaigners can gather at least 25,000 signatures from registered voters by February, then the measure will go on the 2016 ballot.

### [Talk Radio News Service](#)

Idaho's US Senator Mike Crapo has been busy – holding more than 100 town hall meetings, [reports](#) *Eye on Boise*. They say that Crapo has held more town meetings in 2-15 than any other member of Congress, with 154 scheduled through September.

Washington's *Strange Bedfellows* has the [news](#) that Seattle has moved to require that all city buildings and places of business have all-gender, single-stall restrooms.

In the Golden State. *FlashReport* [writes](#) on a plan that would be the perfect public pension solution that the state's unions could support – but won't. They argue that all that needs changing is the taxpayer guarantee on the funds' return earned and paid out.

Heading out to the Aloha State, *Honolulu Civil Beat* [looks](#) at why Honolulu rents are getting more expensive.

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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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