

## Virginia's death penalty debate, Illinois' progressive tax plan, and line-item vetoes abound: US state blog roundup for 9 – 15 April

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

### Northeast

On Wednesday this week, Maine's *Pine Tree Politics* [looks](#) at whether or not families in the state who are given state assistance are rescued from poverty. They say that welfare proposals from the state's Governor, Paul LePage recognize that state assistance can lead to cycles of dependency, and actually aim to create true safety nets which will redirect people into work.

Moving down to Massachusetts, *Blue Mass Group* [writes](#) Tuesday that the conservative wing of the state's GOP are not going down without a fight. They write that a conservative group is lobbying against the state's transgender accommodation bill, which would put in place non-discrimination protections for the transgendered in public places. They comment that given that the state's Republican Governor, Charlie Baker, has been trying to remake the state's Republican Party, he is more likely to sign than veto the bill.

Continuing on to Rhode Island, it looks like the people of the Ocean State might be too much for Donald Trump; Trump has stated he won't be visiting there because of his fears about '[disruptive protestors](#)'.



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

Meanwhile, in the Empire State, Governor Andrew Cuomo this week vetoed 210 line items in the state's budget, [reports](#) *State of Politics*. Measures given the thumbs-down by Cuomo included 14 on constitutional grounds.

*PolitickerNJ* looks at New Jersey Lieutenant Governor Kim Guadagno's chances of taking over from Governor Chris Christie in at the 2017 election. They [comment](#) that given her links with Christie, Guadagno may be facing an uphill battle.

In the Keystone State this week, *Raging Chicken Press* [wonders](#) if the state House Bill to ban abortions at 20 weeks is now dead. They say that the bill is now not likely to come up for a vote in the state House as the legislature is now focusing on getting a budget passed.

## South

*Bearing Drift* this week [reports](#) on Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe's attempts to avoid the use of the electric chair in executions in cases where the relevant drugs are not available by allowing secrecy over who provides the cocktail of drugs used in executions. They say that the move is a strike against transparency, and that McAuliffe should know better.

Heading on to Kentucky, *Blue in the Bluegrass* [says](#) that the state's 'austerity' budget as approved by the state House and Senate is not as bad now as Governor Matt Bevin – who has a line-item veto – will make it.

North Carolina stayed in the news this week with continued controversy over the state's HB2 – the recently passed bill which rolls back LGBT rights protections. *The Progressive Pulse* [reports](#) that in response to the controversy, Governor Pat McCrory has issued an executive order which he claims will fix some of the bill's problems. They comment that McCrory's move fails to live up to the hype and actually reinforces many of the bill's most objectionable provisions.

Moving west to Alabama, *Yellowhammer* [reports](#) that whistleblowers from inside the state's government have stated that in 2015 Governor Robert Bentley ordered a state helicopter to fly his wallet to the beach after he had forgotten it.



Mississippi's *Y'all Politics* [writes](#) this week that a federal judge has stated that the Confederate emblem on the flag of the Magnolia State is 'anti-American', given that it represents those who fought to leave the US. The comments come during a lawsuit to decide whether the flag is an unconstitutional relic of slavery.

In other line-item-veto news, *Arkansas blog* [wonders](#) if the state Governor Asa Hutchinson's likely veto of a budget item which kills Obamacare in the state will be legal. Hutchinson wants to expand Medicaid in the state, but has faced gridlock in the legislature because of divisions among the state GOP.

## Midwest

On Monday, *Plunderbund* accuses Ohio Governor (and GOP presidential primary candidate) John Kasich of hypocrisy over his calls for the national GOP to be transparent during the party's July nomination convention. They [say](#) that Kasich has insulated his administration from letting the public know information from the cost of his security to releasing his own tax returns from his years at Lehman Brothers.

In a new podcast, *Indy Politics* [discusses](#) the Hoosier State's manufacturing myths, and the state of American industry in general.

Heading on to Illinois, *Capitol Fax* [reports](#) that the state is likely to direct state employees to continue working, even if there is a shutdown over the state's lack of budget. They say that employees will be paid...eventually. Staying in the Prairie State, *Progress Illinois* has the [news](#) that state Democrats have introduced a graduated state income tax plan, which would replace the state's 3.75 percent flat tax. Ninety-nine percent of Illinois tax payers would pay less under the proposals.

Wisconsin's *Political Environment* [writes](#) Monday on the growing concern over the Badger State's groundwater crisis. They write that eight counties have groundwater contamination and capacity issues mostly enabled by large

agricultural interests.

Say *Anything*, meanwhile [reports](#) on comments from North Dakota state Senator Tim Mathern, that the position of state Treasurer (which he is running for) should be eliminated. They say that the comments put the incumbent, Kelly Schmidt in the position of having to justify her own job.

## West and Pacific

In Colorado this week, *The Spot* [comments](#) that the recent killing of a ban on gay conversion therapy by a state Senate committee is going to be an election issue. Staying in the Centennial State, *Colorado Peak Politics* [writes](#) that while he is now complaining about the state's GOP for not holding a primary, only one day before his tram was praising them, and was not even expecting to pick up one delegate in the state.

*Blog for Arizona* [looks](#) at what they say is the GOP's 'court packing' scheme in the state.

Nevada's *Desert Beacon* [profiles](#) Sharron Angle who is campaigning once again for the state's US Senate seat and Michele Fiore, who is running for the state's 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District. Both are very conservative; Fiore has argued women on university campuses should be armed, while Angle wants to get rid of health coverage for maternity leave and autism.

Moving on to the Golden State, *Fox & Hounds* [looks](#) at what they say is California's job creation and destruction machine, with 300,000 payroll jobs both created and destroyed every month.

Over in Alaska, *The Mudflats* [writes](#) that state legislators have been pushing for more guns in schools and government buildings, rather than addressing the state's more important fiscal woes.

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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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