

Christie's ratings at their lowest, Iowa GOP defunds Planned Parenthood, and California's 'awesome' ballot statements: US state blog roundup for 23 – 29 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 Tuesday, *VTDigger* has the [news](#) that the state's Senate Appropriations Committee has decided not to include funding for proposed health reforms in the budget bill it presented to the wider Senate this week. The proposals included funding for a study into how universal primary care might be provided to the people of Vermont.

Heading down to Rhode Island, *RIFuture* [reports](#) that there was weak turnout in the state's Republican Primary. They argue that this, in combination with Senator Bernie Sanders' win in the Democratic Primary, illustrates that the state is moving to the left politically.

State of Politics [says](#) this week that New York City Mayor, Bill de Blasio, has insisted that his administration is cooperating with an ongoing federal and state probe into his fundraising activities. The investigation is related to de Blasio's efforts two years ago in the Empire State's state Senate elections.

Moving on to New Jersey, *PolitickerNJ* [writes](#) Thursday that a new Rutgers-Eagleton poll has found that Governor Chris Christie's approval rating has plummeted to its lowest ever of 26 percent. Staying in the Garden State, *Save Jersey* [comments](#) on a proposal from the Mayor of Jersey City, Steve Fulop, which would require private employers in the city to provide a minimum 30-hour week. They say that the move goes beyond socialism and constitutes government control of private industry.



Bill de Blasio Credit: Kevin Case (Flickr, CC-BY-2.0)

In Pennsylvania this week, *PoliticsPA* [reports](#) that Katie McGinty beat former Congressman Joe Sestak in the US Senate Democratic primary. McGinty will face incumbent GOP Senator, Pat Toomey in the fall.

South

On Thursday, Maryland's *Seventh State* [says](#) that analyses of Representative Donna Edwards' loss to Chris Van Hollen in the state's Democratic Primary miss the real story – voters did not reject Edwards because she was African-American, but because Van Hollen actually worked for and won a large number of African-American votes.

Heading down to Virginia, *Bearing Drift* [reports](#) that the state's Governor, Terry McAuliffe, has granted voting rights to

206,000 Virginians who are also convicted felons. They remind us that the state's legislature voiced its opposition to a series of bills which would have a similar effect, and that McAuliffe's move is one of executive overreach.

Continuing on to North Carolina, *The Daily Haymaker* [says](#) that the row over the state's 'bathroom bill', HB2 is the least of Governor, Pat McCrory's worries. Corruption and high levels of government spending, they write, are more likely to sink the Governor's re-election bid.

In the Sunshine State this week, *Shark Tank* [writes](#) that Mark Freeman, a candidate for one of the state's Congressional districts has come under fire from his Democratic rival, for stating that "we need to have compassion for these people", referring to African-Americans. Staying in Florida, *Saint Peters blog* [reports](#) on the Monday debate between US Senate hopefuls Rep. Alan Grayson (D), and Rep. David Jolly (R). They comment that unlike many of the recent primary debates, the debate was actually mostly civil.

Heading west to Arkansas, *Talk Business* [says](#) that according to a new report, 1 in 11 children in the state have a parent who has been incarcerated.

Midwest

Eclecta blog of Michigan this week [reports](#) that the state's Senate this week had a vote on "fetal tissue" bills for absolutely no reason, other than to waste time and taxpayers' money, given that selling fetal tissue (covered in one of the bills) is already illegal in the state.

Tuesday sees an important presidential primary in the Hoosier State. *Indy Politics* [gives](#) their predictions for the presidential and local Congressional primaries. They say that the most interesting race is the GOP primary for the nomination for the state's 9th Congressional district. Staying in Indiana, *Masson's blog* [comments](#) on the state's political history, writing that in the past, it was a hotly contested state, but the announcement that Ohio Governor John Kasich was essentially trading votes in the states for votes from Senator Ted Cruz's supporters in New Mexico and Oregon shows that it no-longer has a large amount of political influence in presidential primaries.

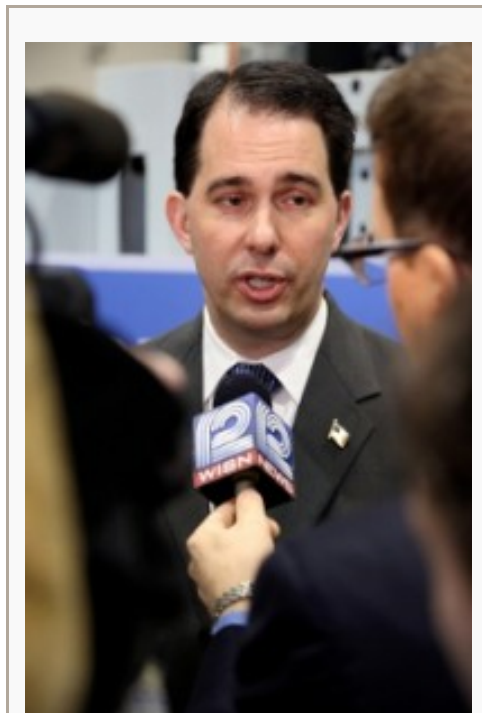
Why is Governor Scott Walker 'shrugging off' Wisconsin's student debt crisis? Because he has to take care of the \$1 million he owes from his failed presidential bid first, [says](#) *The Political Environment*.

Moving on to Iowa, *Blog for Iowa* [has the news](#) that the state's House Republicans have voted to defund Planned Parenthood in the state, a move which is truly unpopular with most of those in the state. They say that the state GOP has made this move as it plays well in their own districts, and that it punishes the poor.

Nebraska Appleseed this week has a [recap](#) of the state's 2016 legislative session. Highlights include bills passing which would improve access for working adults to continue their education, and would help young people in foster care.

West and Pacific

In the Centennial State, *Colorado Peak Politics* gives a '[friendly reminder](#)' that regardless of who the Republican's nominee for the US Senate election in the state this fall, incumbent Democrat Michael Bennet is still in 'rough shape', having won his 2010 election by less than 1 percent.



Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker Credit: Gateway Technical College (CC-BY-NC-ND-2.0)

Heading on to Arizona, *Democratic Diva* [says](#) that the state's legislature and Republican Governor, Doug Ducey are

'poised' to give \$5 million to a libertarian think tank which is against public schools. This is against the backdrop of a special election vote on Proposition 123 in the state which would increase funding for schools from the state's land trust.

In the Golden State this week, *Flashreport* [wonders](#) who is blocking 29 million Los Angelenos from getting water. They say that while the state faces a growing water storage crisis, 'enviro-sounding non-profits' have been opposing shifting \$2.7 billion in pre-designated water storage funds from the state's water bond to build new underground water storage, in favor of 'ecosystem enhancements'. *The Orange Juice* blog, meanwhile, says that California has the '[awesomest ballot statements](#)', after reviewing the words of the state's 34 senatorial candidates.

Moving up to Alaska, *The Mudflats* [argues](#) that the 'Republicans know-best' strategy of the state's House and Senate is not working well for Alaskans, given that they have not yet come up with a plan to deal with the state's \$4 billion deficit, and are still paying the industry \$700 million more in tax credits than are collected in production taxes.

In Hawaii, *Honolulu Civil Beat* [writes](#) on the state's House of Representatives, commenting on the four factions in the body which help determine leadership structures, and influence which bills become law.

Featured image credit: New Jersey Governor Chris Christie Credit; Gage Skidmore (Flickr, CC-BY-SA-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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