

State of the States: New York's tax hike, Georgia rethinking death penalty and South Dakota ethics reform: 21 – 27 January

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

Northeast

On Monday, *NH Journal* [reports](#) that a “turf war” has broken out between the Granite State’s executive and legislative branches over the process of deciding administrative rules. The conflict was sparked after Governor Chris Sununu called for a 90-day halt to new regulations during his inaugural address. The Joint Legislative Committee on Administrative rules then sent a letter to the Governor, stating that the committee and existing processes already accomplishes many of Sununu’s goals.

Heading south, *Blue Mass Group* [argues](#) that a Democrat can beat incumbent Katherine Clark in the state’s 5th US House District, citing the impacts of gun violence in her district.

Over in Connecticut, *Wait What?* [comments](#) that we should be wary of the state charter school industry’s proposed new funding scheme, which would see these schools gaining an extra \$40-50 million per year in public funds, despite the schools in question not being accountable to an elected local board of education.

In New York this week, *State of Politics* has the [news](#) that liberals have welcomed a new proposal from Assembly Democrats which would increase taxes on the rich, generating \$5.6 billion in new revenues. The new taxes would affect those on more than \$5 million a year, and would help to fund education budgets.

On Thursday, *Save Jersey* [says](#) that GOP State Senator Joe Pennacchio has queried the state legislature’s priorities after it moved to ban the declawing of cats, rather than reforming abortion laws to ban the procedure after 20 weeks gestation.

Moving west to Pennsylvania, *Raging Chicken Press* [says](#) that the Keystone State’s Senate is now pursuing a bill which would financially punish cities which release undocumented immigrants from police custody and do not turn them over to a federal agency.

South

On Wednesday, *Blue Virginia* has the [news](#) that the state’s Attorney General, Mark Herring has found that a Republican bill which would ban abortion after 20 weeks would be very likely to be struck down as unconstitutional.

Heading down to North Carolina, *The Progressive Pulse* this week [writes](#) that officials of the American Civil Liberties Union based in the state are taking aim at a recent state Senator’s comments that heckling a former state Governor should come with a five-year prison centre. The comments come after former Governor Pat McCrory was confronted by protestors on the street who denounced him as an “anti-gay bigot”.

Better Georgia [writes](#) Friday that a group of state conservatives are calling for a “re-think” to the death penalty. Their concerns mostly center on costs – which can run to the millions – and the potential for wrongful convictions and executions.

Over the state line in Florida, *Saint Peters Blog* [says](#) that the Sunshine State’s “water war” with Georgia could cost

the state another \$13 million in legal fees. The dispute centers on an ongoing case between the two states over the apportionment of a cross-state watershed.

Heading west, *Juanita' Jean's* [writes](#) that the US Supreme Court this week declined to hear an appeal by Texas to bring back the state's GOP-backed voter ID requirements which a lower court had ruled to be discriminatory.

Arkansas' *Talk Business* [reports](#) this week that the state House and Senate have passed Governor Asa Hutchinson's \$51 million tax cut plan for low earners, and that the House has passed a bill which would ban certain types of second trimester abortions, and one which would designate the "Arkansaurus" as the state's official dinosaur.

Midwest

On Tuesday, Ohio's *Third Base Politics* [wonders](#) why one state Democrat – Richard Cordray may have lost his chance to be a 2018 gubernatorial candidate by using a private mobile device, this falling foul of requirements for communications records to be available, when Hillary Clinton's presidential election chances were hurt last year by doing something fairly similar.

Moving west to the Hoosier State, *Indy Politics* has the [news](#) that the state Senate has passed a resolution which would give citizens a chance to vote on a balanced budget amendment to the state's constitution. The resolution would stop the state from spending more than it takes in unless 2/3 of the General Assembly agrees otherwise.

Blogging Blue [says](#) that while the world was watching Donald Trump's inauguration, the Wisconsin Supreme Court ordered the release of documents related to the John Doe investigations into GOP Governor, Scott Walker's election campaigns.

Up in North Dakota, *Say Anything blog* [writes](#) that a state Democrat has been suspended on Facebook for calling for a "war" against the Dakota Access Pipeline. They comment that while Chase Iron Eyes' posts are "irresponsible", Facebook should not have censored them.

Heading south to South Dakota, *Dakota Free Press* [covers](#) recent moves to repeal an earlier anti-corruption bill by state Republicans. Their efforts have been slowed by a sex scandal involving a state Representative, Matthew Wollman, who resigned after admitting to having sex with interns. Staying in the Mount Rushmore State, *South Dakota War College* [reports](#) that Governor Dennis Daugaard has stated that he would veto a bill which restricts which locker rooms that transgender students are able to use.

West and Pacific

On Friday, *Eye on Boise* [says](#) that the fight over Idaho's faltering horse racing industry reveals the divisions between the state legislature and the governor, Butch Otter. The state legislature has banned instant horse racing terminals, but now, there is talk of reviving them through a rule-making process, which Otter could approve.

Moving south, *Joe Monahan* [writes](#) on what he calls the "great downsizing of New Mexico". Apparently the state is ranked 45th in the country as a retirement destination, mostly because of its property crime rate. They [say](#) that to improve the ranking would require huge investments in education and policing, which goes against the state's current budget woes. Staying in the Land of Enchantment, *Progressnow NM* [says](#) that a city councilor in Carlsbad has made Facebook postings which state that women "have the right to be slapped" for protesting against Donald Trump as well as using the "N" word in another.

Over in the Grand Canyon State, *Blog for Arizona* [says](#) that state Democrats have stated that Governor Doug Ducey's budget is "based on unicorns and rainbows", given that it had no funding to back it up.

On Wednesday, *Fox & Hounds* has a conservative [response](#) to California Democratic Governor, Jerry' Brown's

State of the State address. They comment that the address ignored the state's lack of housing affordability and the "dismal" state of K-12 schooling.

The Mudflats [looks](#) at the latest developments in Alaskan politics, including a major new oil discovery that may actually provide little financial benefit to state residents.

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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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