

Cuomo pushes gun control and a \$15 minimum wage, Medicaid cuts in Texas, and California's assisted dying bill: US state blog round up for 5 – 11 September

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 Tuesday, New Hampshire's *Granite Grok* [writes](#) that Governor Maggie Hassan's budget veto is hurting the state, since it would provide resources to communities to fight an epidemic of deaths from drug overdoses. Staying in the Granite State, *Miscellany Blue* says this week that one of the state's Congressmen, Frank Guinta has had to privately review his legislative strategy with party operatives and provide justification for his goals in order to obtain support from the GOP's Patriot Program which gives support to some of the House's most vulnerable Republicans.

Heading down to the Empire State, *Times Union* [says](#) that Governor Andrew Cuomo has challenged fellow elected officials this week to have the courage to pass national gun control policy to stop the flow of illegal firearms. The call comes after one of Cuomo's aides was shot in Brooklyn this week by a stray bullet. *State of Politics* [reports](#) more comments from Cuomo this week – this time on the minimum wage. They say that Cuomo has stated that a \$15 minimum wage is feasible and has pushed state lawmakers to adopt it.

On Wednesday, *PolitickerNJ* [writes](#) that a new study has shown that the New Jersey state legislature does not resemble the constituency that it represents. The study, published by Stockton University, found that the state's legislature is older, more male, better educated and less racially diverse than the overall New Jersey population.

In Pennsylvania, meanwhile, *Keystone Politics* [argues](#) that the current stop-gap compromise for the state budget being pushed by Republicans is a 'political bailout' for them, and that the Governor, Tom Wolf should veto it, and push for a full year budget.

South

This week, *Peach Pundit* [looks](#) at the debate over religious freedom & civil rights in Georgia and asks its readers what types of situations they want to allow or prevent in terms of opposing discrimination or supporting religious freedom.



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On Tuesday, *SaintPetersblog* has [answers](#) to the ten big questions that faced Florida politics at the beginning of the summer such as whether or not the state's Democratic Party will get its act together to recruit quality candidates to challenge the GOP's majorities in the legislature. The answer? Probably not. Staying in the Sunshine state, *Shark Tank* [says](#) that Florida's ongoing redistricting dilemma may end up being decided in court after all, after a special session of the state's legislature failed to draw up a map that would satisfy a recent court order's redistricting requirements.

Moving west to Alabama, *Yellowhammer* [writes](#) on a recent state Supreme Court ruling that threw out a state law banning the open carrying of a firearm on someone else's property, because it lacked a punishment clause. They say that the ruling is a victory for gun rights in the state.

Over in Mississippi, *Cottonmouth* [argues](#) that the ballot paper for Initiative 42, which concerns the public funding of education, is a 'literacy test' given its length and complexity. They say that the Republicans in the state legislature who voted to amend the initiative, giving it the more complex language, should be held accountable for their blatant attempt at misleading voters.

In the Lone Star State this week, *Burnt Orange Report* [says](#) that the Texas state legislature wants to make budget cuts, and that some of these cuts will slash \$100 million from Medicaid payments for therapy services, leaving up to 60,000 children with disabilities without access to critical care.

Midwest



Ohio Governor John Kasich – Photo Credit: Governor Beshear (Creative Commons: BY-NC-ND 2.0)

On Monday, Ohio's *Plunderbund* [writes](#) that on Labor Day, it is appropriate to ask when the state's GOP Governor works, who he is working for. They say that Kasich's personal and political policy is to dislike unions, especially the teacher's unions – in 2011 he pushed for legislation which would have stopped teachers from bargaining collectively in Ohio, and in May he made 7,000 home health care workers and 2,700 child-care workers who do business with the state ineligible for collective bargaining.

Heading north, *Michigan Liberal* [says](#) that following the expulsion of state Representative, Cindy Gamrat and the resignation of Todd Courser from the state House after a plot was uncovered for the two to conceal their extramarital affair, some have called for the ending of term limits in the legislature given that state Republicans and Democrats did not handle the expulsion 'with dignity'.

Moving over to the Prairie State, *Progress Illinois* [reports](#) that GOP State Senator Darin LaHood has won a special election this week for the state's 18th Congressional District previously held by ex-Congressman Aaron Schock. Schock resigned in March following investigations over his campaign spending and use of taxpayer's money.

On Wednesday, Wisconsin's *Political Environment* [looks](#) at what they say is the state's 'increasingly risky environmental crapshoot', with the state's policy makers taking only the smallest steps to prevent pollution and more environmental damage.

This week in South Dakota, *Dakota Free Press* [says](#) that the state's prolonged lawsuit to fight against same-sex marriage (even after the Supreme Court's ruling in its favor) has already cost the state \$300,000, and this is likely to continue to grow.

Meanwhile, *Say Anything blog* [reports](#) that North Dakota Senator, Heidi Heitkamp has announced that she will not be running for the state's Governorship in 2016. They say that the state's GOP have a strong field of candidates, but the Democrats may struggle to come up with one who is competitive.

West and Pacific

On Friday, Colorado's *The Spot* has the [news](#) that a GOP state Senator, Kevin Lundberg, has faced criticism for his defence of Kim Davis, the Kentucky clerk who was sent to jail for refusing to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples. They say that Lundberg made the case that Davis was abiding 'by the laws of God' in a series of Facebook posts.

Heading north to Wyoming, *Wyofile* [looks](#) at how the state manages to spend \$9.3 billion in state and federal dollars every two years. Breaking down the budget, they say that education and health care are the two biggest spending areas. Unlike, many other states, Wyoming has no personal income or corporate tax, instead relying on sales and property taxes and revenue from mineral production.

On Sunday, *Blog for Arizona* [reports](#) that the Secretary of State, Michele Reagan wants the state's legislative redistricting plan voided, and has asked the US Supreme Court to do so. Reagan is concerned that the population differences in the 30 legislative districts created by an independent Redistricting Commission in 2011, which might mean that voters in some districts have more power than others.

Heading west to the Golden State, *Flashreport* [says](#) that the the California State Assembly passed an assisted suicide bill this week, which will now move on to the State Senate. They say that there is concern that if assisted suicide becomes legal in the state, it will become the cheapest option for health insurance companies and some families.

Moving up to Washington state – and specifically Seattle – *Seattle PI* [reports](#) that the socialist city councillor, Kshama Sawant, has raised more campaign cash than any other Seattle city politician – \$281,000 so far this year.

Honolulu Civil Beat this week [looks](#) at Hawaii Governor, David Ige's, attempts at engaging the public with social media. They say that while the intent is there, the results are often less than stellar.

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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