

## Solar power in Massachusetts, Virginia's budget 'shell game' and Iowa's Branstad is now the longest serving Governor: US state blog roundup for 12 – 18 December

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

### Northeast

In the Granite State this week, *NH Labor News* [argues](#) that even as world leaders reached a climate agreement in Paris this week, New Hampshire is being denied climate safeguards. They say that the state's Governor, Maggie Hassan, refused to address the concerns of activists and elected officials who marched in Concord against the proposed Northeast Energy Direct oil pipeline. Staying in New

Hampshire, *Granite Grok* [writes](#) that the 2016 contest for the state's US Senate seat will be one between two 'pathetic' candidates in the form of Hassan and the incumbent Senator, Kelly Ayotte, given that neither have represented their constituents during their time in office.

Heading south, *Blue Mass Group* [says](#) that despite attacks in the local press against it, the Bay State has a great deal of space for solar power – only 33 square miles would be needed to replace the state's existing power generation facilities with solar.

In the Empire State this week, *State of Politics* takes a [close look](#) at the need for campaign finance reform in New York State. They write that the recently conviction of State Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos on corruption charges is likely to do little to advance the reform agenda so long as the state Senate remains under Republican control.



New Hampshire Governor Maggie Hassan, Credit: [Marc Nozell](#) (Flickr, CC-BY-2.0)

On Thursday, *PolitickerNJ* has the [news](#) that Democrats in the state's Assembly have once again failed to override Governor Chris Christie's veto of a bill which require law enforcement to be notified before the mental health records of a prospective gun buyer were cleared. *Save Jersey* this week [looks ahead](#) to 2016, writing that it may well be a crucial year for democracy in the state given the potential for redistricting.

### South

Virginia's *Bearing Drift* this week [writes](#) that the budget put forward by the state's Governor, Terry McAuliffe is a 'reckless shell game'. They argue that the new \$109 billion bill is packed with new taxes, spending and a now familiar call to expand Medicaid, all of which are likely to die in the state's GOP-dominated state House.

Heading south, *Fits News* looks at the [controversy](#) over a Christmas card sent by state Representative Chris Corley to fellow legislators which accused Republicans of betraying their constituents by voting to take down the

Confederate flag in the state.

Moving on to the Sunshine State, *Sainte Peters blog* [lists](#) the five most disappointing Florida politicians of 2015. Coming in at number 1 is Jeb Bush, who they say has been 'laid low' by the effects of time.

*Yellowhammer* of Alabama this week looks at a new report from the American Society of Civil Engineers into the state's 'crumbling' infrastructure. They [say](#) that the poor condition of the state's roads cost every driver \$300 a year in car maintenance and repairs.

Louisiana's *Something Like the Truth* has its 'Good, Bad, and Ugly' awards for the state's politics for 2015.

The respective winners are Stephen Perry, for condemning Governor Bobby Jindal's executive order giving state officials the ability to discriminate against same-sex couples, Louisiana legislators for opposing the expansion of Medicaid to the state's working poor, and Bobby Jindal for abandoning the state in favor of his ultimately abortive presidential campaign.

Many are concerned that Islamophobia is on the rise because of presidential candidate Donald Trump's recent rhetoric against Muslims. *Burnt Orange Report* [writes](#) that in the area of Islamophobia, Texas Republicans are way ahead of Trump who have this year filed at least eight bills to 'protect' the state against the implementation or use of Sharia law.

## Midwest

On Saturday, Ohio's *Plunderbund* [writes](#) that Governor John Kasich's 2014 re-election campaign promise to 'lift everyone up' has remained unfulfilled given new data which shows a rise in poverty in the Buckeye State in recent years as well as flat wages.

Moving up to Michigan, *eclecta blog* [says](#) that the children of Flint have been being poisoned by toxic water for months because of the state Governor, Rick Snyder's 'reckless radicalism' of appointing an Emergency Manager who made a bad policy decision.

In the Hoosier State, *Indy Politics* reports on the [results](#) of a new survey which shows that most in the state think that LGBT discrimination is illegal, despite there not yet being such a law on the books in the state.

Heading west, *Progress Illinois* has the [news](#) this week that eight Chicago Public School teachers who sued the school district after they were fired for becoming pregnant will receive a settlement which totals \$280,000.

*The Iowa Republican* [reports](#) Tuesday that the state's US Senator, Joni Ernst this week released a tribute to the state's Governor, Terry Branstad made history as the longest every serving governor, with nearly 21 years of service over two terms. Staying in the Hawkeye state, *Blog for Iowa* [argues](#) this week that it's now time to get rid of the Iowa Caucuses, given that it does not encourage local-community building, just coalition-building with the aim of winning elections.

## West and Pacific



Jeb Bush Credit: Gage Skidmore (Flickr, CC-BY-NC-2.0)



Iowa Governor, Terry Branstad. credit: Gage Skidmore (Flickr, CC-BY-SA-2.0)

Colorado's *The Spot* [looks](#) at anger from outside groups over how state Republicans and Democrats are discussing a proposed ballot initiative which would change how the state maps its Congressional districts.

Moving up to Montana, *Reptile Dysfunction* [comments](#) on allegations of corruption against the state's Democratic US Senator, John Tester. They write that if he was a Republican, then liberal blogs would be all over the allegations.

Continuing on to Idaho, *Eye on Boise* [reports](#) that the state's losing legal battle to defend its ban on same-sex marriage has cost taxpayers \$715,000.

On Friday, *Blue Oregon* [says](#) that with the state's politicians seemingly unable to act to help low-wage workers, it is now time for a ballot initiative so that Oregonians can decide for themselves on a minimum wage increase to \$15 an hour.

California's *Fix & Hounds* this week [writes](#) on the Golden State's roads – a recent report found that 68 percent are in poor condition, and that the cost for all the currently unfunded repairs which have been identified is around \$135 billion.

Featured [image](#): low Governor, Terry Branstad. 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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