

# State of the States for 27 October: Pennsylvania’s judicial roulette, Oklahoma legislators facing pay cut, and ‘Republican-lite’ in California

USAPP Managing Editor, **Chris Gilson**, looks at the week in US state blogging.

## Northeast

On Thursday, *VTDigger* [reports](#) that Governor Phil Scott is behind a decision by an official in his administration to have armed personnel to attend a public environmental meeting, ostensibly to help maintain order.

Moving on to the Keystone State, *PoliticsPA* [talks](#) on the state’s ‘great game of judicial roulette’, referring to the relatively lack of knowledge among voters as to candidates for the state’s Superior Court. They argue that this ignorance is a big problem, given the importance of the judicial positions up for election.

Over in Rhode Island, *RIFuture* has the [news](#) that a Vice Chair of the state’s Democratic Party, Joe DeLorezon, has resigned from the Party after criticizing a state Representative who had claimed she had been sexually harassed at the State House.

In 2015, former New York State Assembly Speaker, Sheldon Silver, was indicted on fraud and extortion charges. *Capitol Confidential* [says](#) that the czar brought in to strengthen ethics and transparency in the Empire State Assembly, Jane Feldman, quickly became disillusioned with her role, citing a lack of support, and resigned in June. Staying in New York, *State of Politics* [reports](#) that Vermont Senator, and 2016 presidential candidate, Bernie Sanders will hold a rally with New York City Mayor, Bill de Blasio to support the latter’s bid for a second term.

Heading over to New Jersey, *Observer* [writes](#) that victims of 2012’s Hurricane Sandy are unhappy with how the state has handled recovery efforts, according to a new poll. A majority also said that their families’ finances are still worse than before the storm. Staying in the Garden State, *Save Jersey* [says](#) that former Bill Clinton, who is rallying for the state’s Democratic gubernatorial candidate, Phil Murphy, has flip-flopped on the issue of sanctuary cities: criticizing GOP candidate Kim Guadagno’s promise to ban them, despite his own anti-undocumented immigration rhetoric while President in 1995.

## South

On Thursday, *Blue Virginia* [ponders](#) whether or not Democratic candidates in state House races will outpoll the Democratic candidate for Governor, Ralph Northam next week.

In the Sunshine State this week, *Florida Politics* has the [news](#) that state Senator, Jeff Clemens has resigned following his earlier apology that he had had an affair with a lobbyist during the last legislative session.

Alabama’s *Yellowhammer* [says](#) on Tuesday that voters in the state are being pursued by the office of Secretary of State, John Merrill, for voting in both the Democratic and Republican gubernatorial primaries earlier this year, a practice which would be against state law.

*Big Jolly Politics* this week [looks](#) at whether or not state House Speaker, Joe Straus, was ‘ousted’ from his position, after he announced he would not seek reelection.

Over in Oklahoma, *The Okie* [reports](#) that the panel in charge of state legislators’ salaries will soon meet to decide whether to reduce compensation for the state’s Senators and Representatives, due to what some have described as their ‘disappointing performance’.

## Midwest

*Plunderbund* has the [news](#) that for the first time in 57 months, Ohio’s job growth is no longer below the US national average. They say that hurricanes in Southern states and fires in the west have depressed the US average.

On Monday, *Ogden on Politics* [writes](#) that following a large gas tax increase last year, Indiana is now considering introducing tolls on its interstates, something that they describe as being a ‘really bad idea’.

Moving on to Illinois, *Capitol Fax* [reports](#) that Governor Bruce Rauner has defended his veto of a state debt transparency act, arguing that it was ‘political manipulation’ from the State House Speaker and Comptroller on how they could prioritize which of the state’s bills were paid.

In Nebraska, *Leavenworth Street* [says](#) that there is still no word on any Democratic candidates for the state, including for Governor.

*Dakota Free Press* [writes](#) Thursday that the South Dakota state Democratic Party is pushing to resurrect the independent redistricting initiative which was defeated in a ballot measure last year. Heading north, *Say Anything* *blog* of North Dakota [argues](#) that politicians in Washington should look to the Peace Garden State for inspiration on how to reform the nation’s taxes, citing its low taxes and business-friendly policies.

## West and Pacific

On Thursday, *Colorado Peak Politics* [reflects](#) on a new poll which shows that GOP gubernatorial candidates in the state need to start campaigning ‘yesterday’.

*The Montana Post* [looks](#) at key endorsements in the state’s upcoming municipal elections, commenting that they are important as candidates who are elected could end up as Governor or US Senator one day.

In Idaho, *Eye on Boise* [writes](#) that state lawmakers are wrestling with how to continue their current legislative session following a state Supreme Court ruling which upheld Governor Butch Otter’s veto of a grocery tax bill which also held that the legislature must present its bills to Otter before it adjourns.

*Oregon Catalyst* [says](#) Monday that state legislators may be trying to fool voters into thinking they are not paying higher health taxes after putting assessments onto health insurance and hospital services which means those that use them are charged more.

Over in the Golden State, *Fox & Hounds* [remarks](#) that some of Democratic Governor Jerry Brown’s recent vetoes have been praised by state Republicans, such as one which rolls back a Senate Bill which would maintain Obama-era sexual assault guidelines for college campuses. Staying in California, *Flashreport* [looks at](#) whether the state GOP’s recent tactic of running as ‘Republican-lite’ is really a winning electoral strategy.

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