

State of the States for 6 October: Virginia Governor's race gets dirty, Idaho Freedom Caucus plans fall flat, and California's Sanctuary State symbolism

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

Northeast

On Tuesday this week, *Granite Grok* [takes](#) the New Hampshire Republican Party to task, berating state lawmakers who green-lit through a subcommittee a bill introducing up to 12 weeks of paid family leave for workers.

RIPR [writes](#) that Rhode Island's Governor, Gina Raimondo, has apologized after making remarks that were critical of the state's media organizations, labelling broadcast news as being "almost like talk radio".

Heading down to the Empire State, *Capitol Confidential* [says](#) that senior state Republicans have poured cold water on the idea of a constitutional convention to improve state government, arguing that the structure of such a convention would put too much power in the hands of "liberal politicians and special interests."

Recent weeks have seen New Jersey's US Senator, Bob Menendez on trial on federal corruption charges. *Save Jersey* [looks](#) at a new poll which finds that only 28 percent of Garden State voters believe that Menendez should seek another term in the Senate even if he is acquitted.

In Pennsylvania, *PoliticsPA* [reports](#) that one of the state's US Representatives, Republican Phil Murphy, will be resigning from Congress effective October 21st. The strongly anti-abortion Murphy had been embroiled in a scandal after it emerged that he had encouraged a woman he was involved with to terminate a pregnancy.

South

On Saturday, *Bearing Drift* [comments](#) that the "mud has start[ed] flying" in the Virginia gubernatorial contest, with Democrat and Ralph Northam and Republican Ed Gillespie now unleashing negative attack ads on one another.

Heading down to North Carolina, *The Progressive Pulse* [says](#) that a new state House bill which would redraw judicial and prosecutorial districts will cost nearly \$32 million over the next five years, mostly through the addition of district court judges.

Continuing on to the Golden State, *Saint Petersblog* has the [news](#) that a federal judge has blocked a Florida law which would require organizations providing abortion advice to register with the state and provide an explanation of the procedure and alternatives.

In Alabama, *Yellowhammer* this week [says](#) that the state legislature is "looking for a few good men and women", with 19 of the 105 state rep seats lying vacant and 9 of the State Senate seats also sitting empty.

Moving west to Mississippi, *Y'all Politics* [reports](#) that the Mississippi Center for Justice has sponsored a federal lawsuit against the state's Secretary of State to reinstate the voting rights of up to 50,000 convicted felons.

According *Talk Politics* this week, the Arkansas Supreme Court has [determined](#) that the handling of the state's General Improvement Funds or GIF by state lawmakers was unconstitutional. The ruling found that the GIF had handed out monies to various groups and projects in violation of a state law that such appropriations should have a distinct purpose.

Over in the Lone Star State, *Big Jolly Politics* [wonders](#) what's going on with the Harris County Republican Party, citing an ideological fight which may see its current Chair rolled in the near future.

Midwest

In Michigan this week, *RightMI* [says](#) that one decade later, the 'temporary' income tax increase signed into law by the then Governor, Jennifer Granholm, is still very much in place. They wonder, given that the GOP has had control of all branches of state government since 2010, who "needs a kick in the ass?"

Heading down to the Hoosier State, *Indy Politics* has the [news](#) that one of the state's US Representatives, Republican Mike Braun, has reportedly raided \$1 million in the past quarter in his race to win the state's US Senate seat. They say that Braun's fundraising makes him competitive in the state's GOP Senate primary.

Illinois' *Capitol Fax* [writes](#) Tuesday that the seven Republicans representing the state in the US House of Representatives have criticized Governor Bruce Rauner for signing legislation allowing for the use of taxpayer money to cover abortions, and voted to advance federal legislation which would restrict abortions to 20 weeks or more after conception.

Uppity Wisconsin [looks](#) at arguments this week in the *Gill v. Whitford* US Supreme Court case which covers how legislative districts in the Badger State are apportioned.

Continuing westward, *Blog for Iowa* [says](#) that the state's US Senator, Joni Ernst, is one of the biggest recipients of support from the National Rifle Association in Congress, having received more than \$3 million from the group since 2014.

South Dakota War College [reports](#) Thursday that the state's Republican Party has launched an effort for voters to educate themselves on ballot measures before they agree to them, called "Don't Sign on the Line".

West and Pacific

Montana Cowgirl Blog [writes](#) this week that the state's US Senator, Steve Daines has refused to hold a town hall meeting with his constituents, despite finding time to hold lavish fundraisers and to "hob-knob with the President". Instead, Daines is offering Montanans the chance to meet him at a high-tech jobs summit for the fee of \$20. Staying in the Treasure State, *Reptile Dysfunction* [takes](#) another Montanan blogger to task, accusing them of "playing with the politics of resentment" for arguing that Democrats are great at complaining rather than being responsible for their own selves.

In Idaho, *Eye on Boise* [says](#) that plans for a conservative 'Freedom Caucus' in the state house are now on hold with legislators on the far-right unwilling to work towards a consensus which would help them achieve real legislative victories.

This week saw a horrific mass shooting in Las Vegas, Nevada with 58 people shot dead. *Desert Beacon* [says](#) that the story that has almost been lost in the wake of the shooting is that the state's Governor, Brian Sandoval, had been given until October 9th by a lawyer to implement a ballot measure which would prohibit the selling or transferring of a gun without a federal background check.

Governor Jerry Brown signed a bill into state law this week that means that the Golden State is now a Sanctuary State. *Fox & Hounds* [says](#) that the state government's actions are largely symbolic and the move will change little as to how those who are in California illegally are treated by the state.

Honolulu Civil Beat [reports](#) Thursday that the Aloha State is poised to challenge President Trump's latest travel ban, which is set to take effect on October 18th.

- *Featured image credit: J. Stephen Conn (Flickr, [CC-BY-NC-2.0](#))*

[Please read our comments policy before commenting.](#)

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.

Shortened URL for this post: <http://bit.ly/2yQzOO5>