

State of the States for 17 November: Arizona’s McSally appeals to Trump, #SealMageddon in South Carolina, and would the “Shelby stratagem” work in Alabama?

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

Northeast

On Tuesday, *Granite Grok* [says](#) that while New Hampshire’s local media have been reporting that a majority of the state’s residents support a gas tax increase, a closer analysis of the survey in question shows that a majority would prefer some other means of funding road and bridge work.

Continuing on to Vermont, *VT Digger* [reports](#) that the US Department of Justice has threatened the state and the city of Burlington with the withdrawal of federal funding over their so-called “sanctuary” policies which limits the extent to which local law enforcement is able to enforce federal immigration laws.

On Saturday, *Blue Mass Group* [looks](#) at how to make Massachusetts a more blue state, starting with working harder to defeat the state’s Republican Governor, Charlie Baker, to avoid his veto of progressive legislation enacted by the Democratic state House and Senate.

This year, the state of New York began to offer free tuition for up to four years of public college for in-state students from households with incomes less than \$100,000. *Capitol Confidential* has the [news](#) that enrollment at private colleges has been falling, possibly because of the state’s free tuition policy.

In the Garden State this week, *Blue Jersey* [comments](#) that the state’s 11th Congressional District, currently held by Republican Rodney Frelinghuysen, is now a ‘toss-up’ race according to political pundits. Frelinghuysen has held the 11th for 22 years, and now faces a real race for the first time in decades as state Democrats kick their own fundraising into high gear. Staying in New Jersey, this week saw the corruption trial of US Senator Bob Menendez (D) fall apart after a deadlocked jury led to a mistrial. *Observer* [examines](#) which Republicans might be able to challenge Menendez next year, including Assemblyman Jack Ciattarelli and Lieutenant-Governor Kim Guadagno.

In the Keystone State, *PoliticsPA* [writes](#) on the contested GOP primary for the state’s 15th congressional district – state Representative Justin Simmons has apparently missed nearly 500 legislative votes since January 2011.

South

On Thursday, *Blue Virginia* [reports](#) on rumors from “solid sources” that State Senator Barbara Favola may enter the incoming Northam administration in January, triggering a special election for her district. This could then attract candidates from two Democratic-held state House seats, triggering further special elections.

Moving on to North Carolina, *The Progressive Pulse* [comments](#) that state lawmakers are ‘hellbent’ on changing the judiciary one way or another before next year’s elections. House Bill 717 redraws judicial and prosecutorial districts would further entrench the “white elite” in the state’s judiciary according to a new analysis from the Centre for American Progress.

South Carolina faces #SealMageddon this week – it turns out that dozens of laws enacted in 2003 and 2004 did not receive the Great Seal of the State by the Secretary of State which is required by the state’s constitution for the bill to become law. *FITS News* [says](#) that more than 100 laws could be affected.

Moving down to the Sunshine State, *Florida Politics* has the [news](#) that the state’s Democratic Party leader, Stephen Bittel, has resigned amid reports that he sexually harassed during his tenure.

On Friday, *Yellowhammer* [suggests](#) the “Shelby stratagem” to resolve the GOP’s “mess” over US Senate candidate, Roy Moore. Briefly, this would involve a write-in campaign for current Senator, Richard Shelby. If Shelby were to win, he would resign his current Senate seat, leaving Governor Kay Ivey to appoint someone until a new election could be held in November next year.



“Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Ala.” by Medill DC is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#)

Y’all Politics [writes](#) this week that the Mississippi Division of Medicaid is working towards a request for a waiver from the federal government to require those who receive Medicaid because their children do, or they are a caregiver, to work or participate in some other program to remain on Medicaid.

Arkansas blog [comments](#) Monday on the lack of fallout from the botched execution of Kenneth Williams last year. Governor Asa Hutchinson has dismissed calls for an investigation, and there has been no meaningful look at how the execution’s drugs were administered.

Heading west, *The Okie* [says](#) that Governor Mary Fallin has bemoaned the state legislature’s lack of “courage” in passing a tax hike to fund state agencies which are facing a \$550 million budget gap.

Midwest

Michigan’s *eclecta blog* this week [comments](#) that the state Democratic Party’s Central Committee appears to be intent on driving away new and younger members of the party, following the shutting down of debate at a recent meeting to appoint a new representative to the Democratic National Committee.

In Indiana, meanwhile, *Indy Politics* [previews](#) next year’s Senate race, specifically the May primary. They say that the GOP primary to choose incumbent Joe Donnelly’s opponent will need to select a candidate who can appeal to the “Lugar Republicans”, after those part members who voted for Donnelly in 2012 rather than a far-right Republican.

On Sunday, *The Political Environment* [notes](#) that Governor Scott Walker has signed into law a bill which would remove the requirement that a person must be at least ten years of age to hunt under the hunting mentorship program.

Blog for Iowa this week [rounds up](#) the 25 ways in which state Republicans voted against veterans in the 2017 legislative session including areas such as workers’ rights, home ownership, and the Iowa Veterans Home.

On Wednesday, *Say Anything* [wonders](#) whether North Dakota’s farmers are “double dipping” on federal subsidies, after a new report showed that the US Department of Agriculture compensated farmers for a price decline on top of existing subsidy programs.

Dakota Free Press [takes the South Dakota legislature to task](#) this week, commenting that a new plan for a “State of the Legislature” speech shows little vision, and that the time allocated for it should be used to actually debate and pass legislation.

West and Pacific

The Montana Post writes this week to express its [disagreement](#) with the state’s Governor, Democrat Steve Bullock. The source of the disagreement? That Montanans can be pleased with the achievements of the recent state legislative special session, which they argue was regressive and had little bipartisan compromise. Staying in the Treasure State, *Combat!* [comments](#) that a potential GOP US Senate candidate, Troy Downing, has blamed claims that he illegally applied for hunting and fishing permits on the Montana “deep state”.

Heading down to New Mexico, *Progressnow NM* [reports](#) that Democrat Tim Keller has won Albuquerque’s mayoral run-off election in what they say is a rebuke to GOP Trump-style tactics.

Speaking of Trump, *Blog for Arizona* [says](#) that US Representative Martha McSally has been making an effort to appear to be his twin sister in order to gain the Donald’s endorsement in the state’s upcoming US Senate race.



“[Martha McSally](#)” by [Gage Skidmore](#) is licensed under [CC BY SA 2.0](#)

On January 1st 2018, California will legalize marijuana. *Fox & Hounds* [argues](#) that public health must be the centerpiece of the state’s “Green Rush”, with safe and sound practices for development and distribution of the new product now being needed.

On Monday, *Oregon Catalyst* accuses Governor Kate Brown of having attention deficit disorder by not making the state’s costly public employee retirement system a priority in the next legislative session.

[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/2zal4cz>