

# State of the States for 10 November: The end of the Christie-Guadagno era in New Jersey, Republicans lose in Virginia, and South Dakota's GOP Governor joins the 'war on coal'

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

## Northeast

On Wednesday, *VTDigger* has a [write-up](#) covering Vermont's rural economy; despite programs to books rural industries, economic difficulties have persisted outside of the Green Mountain State's towns and cities.

This week saw state and local elections across the country; *NH Labor News* [reports](#) that Democrats did well in New Hampshire (as in other states as we'll see), flipping Manchester's mayoralty, and picking up two state House seats in special elections. The conservative *Granite Grok*, meanwhile, [says](#) that now more than ever Initiative 18 – which provides fundraising and training for right-wing constitutionalists who are keen to stand for office in New Hampshire – is needed.

Moving on to Massachusetts, *Blue Mass Group* [talks](#) on the comprehensive health care legislation up for debate in the state's Senate. Amendments to the bill include a Medicaid 'buy-in' program and the creation of a public health insurance program.

The Empire State also saw elections this week, and the defeat of 2014 GOP gubernatorial candidate, Rob Astorino in his bid for a third term as Westchester County Executive. *State of Politics* [comments](#) that current New York Governor, Andrew Cuomo, has interpreted Democratic successes in the state as being a rejection of President Trump and the Congressional Republican Party. Talking about Cuomo, *Capitol Confidential* [says](#) that federal prosecutors are seeking to use campaign contributions to the governor as evidence in a coming corruption trial against one of Cuomo's former aides.

In New Jersey's elections this week, *Observer* has the [news](#) that the incumbent state Senate President, Democrat Steve Sweeney, has defeated his Republican challenger, in what was the most expensive race in state legislative history, with nearly \$20 million spent between both campaigns. Tuesday's election also saw the GOP lose the state's gubernatorial race, with the state's Lieutenant Governor, Kim Guadagno, losing to Democrat Phil Murphy; *Save Jersey* has a [few things to consider](#) as the (Chris) Christie-Guadagno era comes to an end, including that for 40 years no Democratic governor of New Jersey has been elected to a second term.

*PoliticsPA* [runs a roundup](#) of the Keystone State's election results, including that female candidates swept all of the state's seven state-wide races.

## South

Maryland's *Seventh State* gives their [five quick takeaways](#) from Tuesday's elections, commenting that state Republicans "went down big" to Democrats in in two mayoral elections.

Most of the country's attention was on the Old Dominion State this week, where Democrat Ralph Northam beat out Ed Gillespie. *Bearing Drift* has [some thoughts](#), including that it was a Republican loss rather than a Democratic win, as well as blaming Donald Trump's influence. *Blue Virginia*, meanwhile [points out](#) that in the Virginia House of Delegates, the GOP controls zero majority-minority seats.

*Better Georgia* [writes](#) Wednesday, that in the Peach State's elections, progressive voters flipped three state legislature seats, and broke the state GOP's Senate supermajority. *GeorgiaPo* meanwhile [reports](#) that State Senator Michael Williams has condemned his state Senate colleague, Hunter Hill for vacating his seat to run for governor leading to two Democrats winning the runoff election, despite Williams having a very similar voting record.

Heading down to the Sunshine State, *Florida Politics* [looks](#) at the winners and losers in the city of St. Petersburg's general elections, including the top staffers for Rick Kriseman who held on as Mayor this week.

Alabama's US Senate race drastically changed this week when allegations of sexual impropriety by the Republican candidate (and former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Alabama), Roy Moore, emerged. *Yellowhammer* [says](#) that given that Moore has refused to withdraw, Republicans across the state are seeking options, which are complicated by their inability to remove him from the ballot by the Secretary of State.

*The Okie* [writes](#) Tuesday that the Oklahoma state Senate has passed a tax increase to address the majority of the state's budget shortfall, and that it is now headed back to the state House for approval.

## Midwest

On Thursday, *Plunderbund* of Ohio has the [news](#) that Democrats have made gains across the state in local elections, including county and city council seats.

*Eclectablog* [talks](#) gerrymandering in Michigan on Monday, commenting that while state Republicans are mobilizing against a ballot proposal which would create an independent redistricting commission, alleging that Democrats are 'changing the rules of the game', it is actually Michigan's GOP who have rigged the 'game' of the state's elections through their own redistricting efforts.

Heading south to Indiana, *Indy Politics* [reports](#) that there has been mixed reactions to Governor Eric Holcomb's 2018 legislative agenda which includes measures to upskill the Hoosier State's workforce and tackling its drug epidemic.

Illinois' *Capitol Fax* has a [roundup](#) of commentary Wednesday on the failure of the state House to override Governor Bruce Rauner's veto of legislation which would stop local governments from establishing right-to-work zones.

Over in Wisconsin, *The Political Environment* [writes](#) that a new bill from State Senator Leah Vukmir would cost the state \$57 million by expanding prisons via revoking probation, parole or supervision for anyone charged with a new crime.

On Wednesday, *SayAnything* [blog comments](#) that North Dakota's initiated measure reformers (who want to make such measures simpler) should learn from Montana's law which stops a single ballot measure from making multiple changes to the law.

*Dakota Free Press* [reports](#) this week that South Dakota's Republican Governor, Dennis Daugaard has joined in on the 'War on Coal', publically stating that "coal has seen its day", and speaking in favor of gas as a fuel source to pair with wind and other renewable fuel sources.

## West and Pacific

On Sunday, *Montana Cowgirl Blog* [writes](#) on the "battle for the heart of the Montana GOP", as state politicians "kiss the feet" of high-ranking Republicans such as Senate Majority Leader, Mitch McConnell, and former Donald Trump adviser, Steve Bannon. Staying in the Treasure State, *The Montana Post* [comments](#) that people all across the state are in agreement that the state legislature must work with Governor Steve Bullock to balance the state's budget in a way that minimizes the impact of the cuts needed because of the state's fire season and lower than expected revenues.

Idaho's *Eye on Boise* has a [roundup](#) of mayoral and city council election results from around the state on Wednesday.

*WyoFile* [wonders](#) on Tuesday if the state's politics will be able to accommodate the economic adaptation which will be needed as the state turns away from fossil fuel production – given that mineral extraction accounts for almost two thirds of the state's revenues.

Moving on to California, *Fox & Hounds* [says](#) that on the issue of rent control, groups are trying to have it both ways – trusting and not trusting the market – with Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom calling for a massive increase in housing production in the state, and the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment Group filing a ballot measure which would repeal an anti-rent control law. Staying in the Golden State, *Flashreport* [argues](#) that Governor Jerry Brown is “building his empire” by trying to make an end-run around Donald Trump on climate policy.

- Featured [image](#): *New Jersey Governor Chris Christie Credit: Gage Skidmore (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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