
State of the States for 19 January: GOP worries about Pennsylvania 18th, Wisconsin's upset election, and Idaho cuts substance abuse services

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

Northeast

On Tuesday New Hampshire's *Granite Grok* [reports](#) on the latest efforts by the state legislature to impose an income tax, which they comment has been "hidden" within another bill covering a family and medical leave insurance program.

Moving down to Rhode Island, *RI Future* [writes](#) that in touting low unemployment, and programs like free tuition at community colleges, Governor Gina Raimondo's 4th State of the State address laid a path for her re-election run.

State of Politics [profiles](#) a new plan contained in New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo's recent budget which would require digital ads to disclose the audience they were targeting and for a copy to be available online for public inspection, as well as a digital copy of the independent expenditure made. Staying in the Empire State, *Capitol Confidential* has the [news](#) that state Comptroller, Tom DiNapoli has released a report which heavily criticizes the state Commission on Corrections for its poor handling of inmate complaints.

New Jersey's *Observer* [says](#) that newly inaugurated state Governor, Phil Murphy's first order of business was to sign an executive order which would promote equal pay for women.

PoliticsPA gives a [good overview](#) of the upcoming special election on March 13th for the state's 18th Congressional district. They say that the GOP's current mobilization efforts show that they are worried in what should be a very safe seat for them.

South

On Monday, *Political Maryland* [writes](#) that Governor Larry Hogan has had both good and bad news on the polling front. He's remarkably popular, with a 71 percent approval rating, but, another poll finds that 90 percent of Democrats who approve at least somewhat of his performance would still not vote for him this November.

Bearing Drift [reckons](#) that Republicans in the state's 6th Congressional district seem eager to give Democrats a chance to win this fall. Why? They have decided to have a convention rather than a primary which would see the candidate win if they had a plurality of votes, and that plurality is likely to go to the far-right (and Roy Moore supporting) Cynthia Dunbar.

The big news out of North Carolina this week was the Supreme Court's blocking of a federal court's order for state lawmakers to redraw the state's Congressional map because of gerrymandering. *The Progressive Pulse* [says](#) that that same federal court has subsequently ordered that the 2018 election take place under a Stanford academic's plan.

Florida Politics also [talks](#) this November's elections, commenting that for every proper competitor, there are a "dozen head-scratchers" who have mounted House campaigns which seem unlikely to succeed.

In Alabama, *Yellowhammer* [examines](#) whether or not Toyota and Mazda decided to site a new manufacturing facility in the state because it rejected Roy Moore for US senate in December, and so therefore is something that US Senate Majority Mitch McConnell should take credit for.

On Tuesday, *Arkansas Times* [looks](#) at the evolving story of marijuana politics in the state, writing that big politics is likely to get involved with the licensing process for the drug's medicinal use.

The Okie asks this week, whether Oklahoma is [ready](#) to elect a wealthy outsider to high office, referring to businessman Kevin Stitt.

Midwest

This week was an embarrassing one for Michigan Governor, Rick Snyder, after state Democrats and Republicans came together to override his veto of a bill which would increase the exemption from sales tax of the value of a trade-in vehicle, [writes eclectablog](#).

Indy Politics criticizes state Democrats for urging the General Assembly to “[do something](#)” following what was seen by some as a workaday State of the State address from Governor Eric Holcomb.

According to *Capitol Fax* Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner now has [his own policy blog](#). Welcome to the blogosphere Governor!

Wisconsin saw a stunning upset election result this week, with the Republican candidate losing to the Democrat in the 10th State Senate district. *Right Michigan* [says](#) the loss was actually in line with national special election trends this week which saw increased vote shares for Democratic candidates.

Moving on to South Dakota, *Dakota Free Press* [looks](#) at a new report which shows that while the state has a relatively low tax burden, this is matched by anemic economic growth.

Meanwhile, *Blog for Iowa* [writes](#) on why the state's Medicaid is “so screwed up”. They comment that the state's previous governor, Terry Branstad, declared that private companies would be allowed to “peck” at it, an experiment they declare to have been a failure.

West and Pacific

On Wednesday, *Eye on Boise* reports that Idaho's state health agency has [slashed](#) its spending on treatment for substance abuse. The cuts could affect anywhere from 33 to 80 percent of the clients of current substance abuse services.

Moving on to the Golden State, *Fox & Hounds* [comments](#) that both President Trump and current Governor Jerry Brown are looming large over the state's gubernatorial race, following a candidates forum at the University of Southern California this week. Staying in California, *Calmatters* [writes](#) that the state may counter Congress' abolition of Obamacare's individual mandate by introducing its own state-based version. *Flashreport* [isn't very happy](#) with how Democrats have been running California, arguing that they have turned it into a “sh*thole”, echoing President Trump's comments from last week.

On Saturday, Hawaii residents were rocked by a false missile alert. *Honolulu Civil Beat* [says](#) that the state legislature convened Wednesday amid the buzz over the false alert, an event which has likely caused some locals to question the state government's ability to manage important issues.

- “[Visitor Center Welcomes me to Pennsylvania](#)” by *miracc* is licensed under [CC-BY-NC-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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