

State of the States for 12 January: Chris Christie takes a victory lap, Virginia Democrats out of options, and the brawl for San Francisco mayor

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

Northeast

In New Hampshire this week, *Granite Grok* [names and shames](#) the 33 Republicans in the state legislature who voted alongside Democrats for the state's Paid Family Leave Act. They accuse them of being Republicans In Name Only – or RINOs – for helping state Democrats to pass “yet another” progressive social program.

Meanwhile, *VTDigger* [reports](#) that the state Senate has passed a measure which would legalize marijuana for recreational use, and sent it on to Governor Phil Scott, who had previously stated he would sign the legislation.

Continuing on to the Empire State, *State of Politics* [says](#) that there has been rocky start to 2018 for the New York State government in Albany, which has seen one lawmaker indicted on fraud charges, and another facing allegations of sexual misconduct. Staying in New York, *Capitol Confidential* has the [news](#) that the US Department of Justice is taking a look at the state's system of civil confinement for sex offenders. Under the system, convicted sex offenders can be kept in secure psychiatric hospitals after their prison term if the state orders them committed over fears of the potential for further reoffending.

In New Jersey, *Observer* comments that the state's outgoing governor, Chris Christie has taken a “[victory lap](#)” in his final State of the State address, stating that he had left the state in better shape than it was in when he took office eight years ago.

In Pennsylvania, *PoliticsPA* [reports](#) that a forum for Republican candidates running for election in the state's 18th Congressional district has been cancelled due to the “unforeseeable actions and views” of some of the candidates, likely referring to Sean Donahue, a candidate with allegedly racist and anti-Semitic views.

South

Monoblogue begins its “countdown to terror”, [referring](#) to what it must be for Maryland Governor Larry Hogan who is facing the final General Assembly Session of his first term. In the coming weeks, the Assembly is likely to spar with Hogan over issues such as paid sick leave, the effects of national tax cuts, and the Baltimore city school system.

Virginia also saw its General Assembly convene this week; *Bearing Drift* reckons that state Democrats are [out of options](#) to prevent the GOP from having a 51-49 seat majority following the November elections. Democrats had challenged election results in two districts, but were unsuccessful. Staying in the Old Dominion State, *Blue Virginia* [looks](#) at how the newly elected slate of Democrats who won last year will be able to ensure their reelection in 2019 – working hard in their districts, and passing laws which benefits their constituents.

North Carolina's *WataugaWatch* [reports](#) that a federal court has ruled that the state's Republicans unconstitutionally gerrymandered the state's US Congressional districts in 2016 to ensure a GOP majority in its delegation.

Moving south, *Better Georgia* [covers](#) news of a racist mailer which has come to light in an upcoming special election for seats for the State Senate and House of Representatives. The mailer encourages people to vote against state Democrats by stoking anti-immigrant fervor. Staying in the Peach State, *GeorgiaPol* [looks](#) at what we can expect from the General Assembly's upcoming session, and advises us to look at bills and proposals through lenses such as whether or not they address particularly critical issues.

Florida Politics [says](#) that state Republican lawmakers have shot down amendments filed by Democrats to a bill which would ban sanctuary cities from the state. The amendments would have protected DACA recipients and reimbursed the state for the cost of complying with federal immigration authorities.

On Thursday, *Yellowhammer* has the [news](#) that the Alabama State Legislature was considering a tax cut proposal as well a resolution which would call for term limits for members of Congress.

Midwest

On Sunday, *eclectablog* [writes](#) that Michigan Attorney General, Bill Schuette, has been using taxpayer dollars to fund campaign activists ahead of his gubernatorial campaign this year. The Progress Michigan watchdog group has already filed a complaint against Schuette under the Hatch Act which restricts campaigning by federal employees.

Moving on to Indiana, *Indy Politics* [talks](#) on Governor Eric Holcomb's second State of the State address which covered workforce development, opioids and tackling infant mortality.

The Political Environment writes Thursday that the state's Republican Governor, Scott Walker and US Speaker, Paul Ryan "[own](#)" Donald Trump after the latter made vulgar racist comments in a meeting which were then later made public.

On Thursday, *Nebraska Appleseed* [looks](#) at the state of child welfare in the Cornhusker State, commenting that recent reports have shown a number of concerning cases which illustrate that the state is not ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children in foster care.

South Dakota War College [comments](#) on the potential Congressional campaign of State Senator, Neal Tapio.

Reviewing Governor Dennis Daugaard's State of the State address, *Dakota Free Press* makes specific [criticism](#) of his embracing of a proposal from President Trump to impose a requirement to work on Medicaid recipients.

West and Pacific

New Mexico Politics with Joe Monahan [says](#) that those who had thought that Governor Susana Martinez was going to pursue a softer approach were proved wrong early this week when she blasted state lawmakers for the state's crime problems, despite having been governor for eight years.

Heading up to Idaho, *Eye on Boise* [reports](#) that a state chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) this week held a State of the State of Idaho Women event at the state Capitol. The rally was to promote legislation which would penalize employers who ignore or condone workplace sexual harassment and more funding for women's health and domestic violence enforcement.

On Wednesday, *Desert Beacon* [comments](#) that the Nevada US Senate primary race may end up being a referendum on President Trump given the presence of Danny Tarkanian as a candidate, who they say is a racist xenophobe.

Heading north, *Oregon Catalyst* [lets us know](#) that state Democrats have introduced a new measure to regulate carbon dioxide emissions, a bill which they call the "Manufacturing Phase Out Act of 2018".

On Friday, *Fox & Hounds* [previews](#) the San Francisco mayoral race, which they say could turn into a "brawl" as a number of state democratic officials vie for the job.

Over in Hawaii, *Honolulu Civil Beat* [wonders](#) if the corruption scandal currently affecting the state's police will jump-start policing reform in the state legislature.

- Featured image by [Ragnar Vorel](#) on [Unsplash](#)

[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/2Dh0ygx>

