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REPUBLICAN GOVERNORS

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Taxes and Budget

Governor Deal to sign state's budget ([WTVM](#)) – Governor Nathan Deal will sign the state's budget on Monday. The measure includes money giving thousands of state employees and teachers a raise. Also included in the budget is new funding for more than \$1 billion in road and bridge projects across the state.

Kansas legislators approve plan for balancing state budget ([The Herald](#)) - Kansas legislators approved a plan early Monday morning to dump most of the work of balancing the state's budget on Republican Gov. Sam Brownback while telling him he can't cut aid to public schools. The measure passed by divided GOP supermajorities in both chambers assumes the conservative governor follows through on plans to delay major highway projects and cut higher education spending. It also anticipates him making \$92 million in further cuts during the next fiscal year, beginning July 1, that could touch state Medicaid health coverage for the poor and disabled and other social services.

Commerce tax repeal effort faces Nevada Supreme Court test ([AP](#)) - A high-stakes battle over a new business tax passed last year by the Nevada Legislature is heading to the Nevada Supreme Court on Monday. Justices will consider the fate of a proposed ballot measure to repeal the commerce tax, which applies to businesses that make more than \$4 million each year in Nevada revenue. A Carson City judge ruled a few months ago that the petition language passes legal muster, clearing the way for supporters to gather the more than 55,000 signatures they'll need to qualify it for the November ballot. The commerce tax brings in about \$60 million a year when offsets are counted. It's the smallest part of the three-pronged tax package, which included more lucrative moves such as raising a payroll tax rate and permanently extending temporary taxes.

Transportation and Infrastructure

Iowa Legislature Adjourns With Some Compromises ([KIWA](#)) - The Iowa Legislature's march toward adjournment has ended, with compromises falling into place on spending and policy issues. Another last-minute compromise was worked out on salaries for Department of Transportation employees. A nearly ten-million-dollar request from the DOT was cut in half. House Republicans questioned why the DOT was asking for more money after last year's ten-cent-per-gallon gas tax increase.

Why Michigan wants to stay in the driver's seat on autonomous vehicle legislation ([Automotive News](#)) – In 2013, Michigan legislators adopted the state's first laws for driverless vehicles, allowing them to share the road with live motorists only while being tested. That legislation helped Michigan become an early leader in the race to build a self-driving car, said Mike Kowall, a state senator from Oakland County who sponsored the bills. But for Michigan to win -- especially against the tech giants of Silicon Valley, which are developing their own prototypes -- he believes the state also needs to lead by regulation, before a patchwork of rules crops up across state lines.

Economic Development

Governor Scott Heads West to Search for Jobs ([WTVL](#)) – Governor Rick Scott is headed to the wild west for a three day crusade for jobs. Rick Scott left today for California where he's set to meet with thirteen companies throughout Los Angeles, San Jose and San Francisco. This is his latest visit by the Republican governor to state's run by Democrats. Ahead of his trip, Florida's Economic Agency paid for radio ads criticizing Californians decision to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

Public Safety

Iowa lawmakers approve 'significant' criminal justice reform ([The Gazette](#)) – Motivated in part by traumatic stories from their districts, a pair of Iowa state lawmakers pushed for legislation that ultimately became what legislators and advocacy groups are calling the most significant criminal justice reform passed by the Iowa Legislature this year, if not

several years. The legislation — which is en route to Gov. Terry Branstad, who said he wants to review the package before deciding whether to sign it into law but praised lawmakers for addressing criminal justice issues — instantly was hailed by criminal-justice reform advocates.

Education

Math Education: A Messy Problem ([Inside Higher Ed](#)) — Mathematics educators agree. We know that in mathematics, as in any other knowledge system that builds on itself, the procedures that work so well are only part of the package. That in the center is the student, but always situated in the midst of a society that is constantly evolving. That students learn best when encouraged and supported by knowledgeable teachers who help them explore and understand underlying concepts. That intellectual stimulation and growth are possible and enjoyable for all children. That in our classrooms, we can help students sharpen their ability to persist in the face of apparent failure. That today's students need to learn to tackle complex and ill-defined problems requiring both individual and collaborative effort.

Special-education report makes one thing clear: There's a lack of clarity on the issue. ([WaPo](#)) - The biggest difference between schools I attended a half-century ago and schools I visit now is special education: It took a while for our country to grasp how to help students with extra needs. Many were amazed when Richard Rothstein and Karen Hawley Miles of the Economic Policy Institute revealed that about 60 percent of increased education spending between 1967 and 1991 went to special and compensatory education for students with disabilities or disadvantaged backgrounds. Their findings show a dramatic 165 percent rise in the number of students classified as having autism between the 2005-2006 and 2014-2015 school years. They also reveal a decade-long decline in disability categories, such as specific learning disabilities and speech and language impairments, that have usually included the most children.

Healthcare

Heroin, prescription opioids form especially toxic mix in Mass. ([The Boston Globe](#)) - The Massachusetts heroin epidemic is unlike any other in the United States. The overdose rate in the state is more than twice the national average. And deaths from prescription opioids like OxyContin are only slightly less harrowing. Unusual, too, is the degree to which these two scourges are feeding off each other. A substantial and spiking number of overdoses in Massachusetts involves both heroin and prescription drugs, something you rarely find elsewhere in the United States. Until now, it's been hard to see how, exactly, heroin and prescription opioids were interacting, since almost all available data lump them together under the heading of "opioids." But a Globe examination of the information in death certificates from 1999 to 2014 reveals the increasingly toxic interplay between the drugs, both at the state level and in individual counties.

Oklahoma Newest of 26 States to Require Women be Notified of Breast Density and Cancer Risk ([BCN](#)) - A measure signed into law by Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin on April 21 will require healthcare providers to notify women who may be at an increased risk of breast cancer. Under House Bill 2601, sponsored by state Rep. Mike Ritze, healthcare facilities are obliged to include breast density information in all mammography reports, and to additionally notify patients with extremely dense breast tissue that they may be at increased risk of developing breast cancer. "This is an effort to ensure that women have the information they need to make informed decisions about their health," added Rep. Ritze (R-Broken Arrow), who is chair of the Oklahoma House Public Health Committee. "When patients are empowered with information, they are far more likely to act upon that information and take steps to reduce their risk."