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REPUBLICAN GOVERNORS

PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

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Recommended Reads

DHS grants 8K Syrians temporary amnesty ([The Hill](#))- The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is granting new, temporary amnesty to more than 8,000 Syrians currently residing in the U.S., according to reports. DHS's decision lets affected Syrians remain on American soil for up to 18 months longer regardless of their legal status, The Washington Times said Monday. The Washington Times said the "temporary protected status" impacts Syrians who are in the U.S. as of Monday and may continue living here permanently. The status lets such Syrians apply for work permits and other documents to live and work in America without fear of deportation. Johnson's order reportedly applies to 5,800 Syrians who were granted similar status under a 2012 program and 2,500 new arrivals lacking a more permanent status here. The Washington Times added those eligible for temporary protected status could include any illegal immigrants from Syria who snuck into the U.S. or overstayed their visa expirations over the last four years.

Judge blocks North Dakota's voter identification law ([Washington Post](#))- A federal judge in North Dakota on Monday blocked the state's voter identification law after it was challenged by a group of American Indians, who alleged that the state's voter identification requirements are unconstitutional and "disproportionately burden and disenfranchise Native Americans." U.S. District Judge Daniel Hovland issued a temporary restraining order, ruling that the state's "ill-advised" repeal of "fail-safe" provisions in 2013 resulted in an undue burden on Native Americans trying to vote. The lawsuit was filed in January against North Dakota Secretary of State Al Jaeger by seven members of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa. The tribe receives one-quarter of all welfare payments in the state, according to tribal officials. North Dakota is the only state without voter registration, but state law has required voters to provide ID since 2004. Before that, casting a ballot was an informal process in most precincts, and identification cards were seldom requested.

(Mississippi) Judge continues to block religious objection law during appeal ([WDAM](#))- A federal judge has denied a request by Governor Phil Bryant to allow a law that protects religious objections to same-sex marriage to take effect during an appeal. U.S. District Judge Carlton Reeves, who blocked the law hours before it would have taken effect July 1st, made the ruling. Bryant and the director of Mississippi's Department of Human Services are appealing Reeves' original decision. They could now ask the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to let the law take effect. The law's opponents had asked Reeves to leave his preliminary injunction in effect during any appeal, saying Bryant hasn't shown any proof his appeal will succeed.

Economic Development

Massachusetts Expands Equal Pay For Equal Work Law ([Forbes](#))- Governor Charlie Baker signed into law a measure that mandates equal pay for comparable work. The "comparable" term is important because it makes a significant change to the existing equal pay for equal work by gender law. But there may also be some unplanned advantages to minority workers as well. The new bill "provides a more comprehensive definition of comparable work," according to the Massachusetts Equal Pay Coalition, an organization focused on passing the Equal Pay Bill. In addition, the law allows employees to discuss salaries without employer retribution and forbids employers from asking perspective employees for a salary history before offering a job.

Sandoval, UNLV agree to share sports gambling research with University of Sydney ([News 4](#))- Gov. Brian Sandoval is leading a research collaboration between the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and the University of Sydney to share gaming research. Sandoval's office announced in a statement Monday that the governor and UNLV's executive director of the International Gaming Institute signed a memorandum of understanding with the Australian school. Gambling and money laundering can threaten the integrity of sports, the governor's office says, and the agreement between Nevada and the University of Sydney will provide for understanding issues related to sports betting, the integrity of sports, gambling regulations and the psychology of gambling behaviors. Sandoval said the agreement will help Nevada lead in the interactive gaming market.

Healthcare

(Florida) With 10 new Zika cases in Miami, CDC sends emergency team, advises pregnant women to avoid area ([Miami Herald](#))- Federal health officials on Monday advised pregnant women to avoid a Miami neighborhood — marking the first time the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has warned against travel to any area within the continental United States — as a Zika outbreak in South Florida has led to 10 more local cases spread by mosquitoes. The advisory extends to all expectant mothers, and women planning on becoming pregnant who have traveled to a one-square-mile area north of downtown Miami on or after June 15, said CDC Director Tom Frieden. Perhaps most troubling, Frieden said, is that extensive spraying of insecticides in the area over the past several weeks has not reduced the local population of mosquitoes capable of transmitting Zika virus. In response to the new Zika infections, and the four cases identified last week as the nation's first locally transmitted episodes, Florida Gov. Rick Scott called on the CDC to dispatch an emergency response team to Miami to help with the state health department's ongoing investigations.

Chris Christie Signs "Madison Holleran Suicide Prevention Act" into Law ([Philadelphia Magazine](#))- In January of 2014 friends and family of University of Pennsylvania student Madison Holleran were devastated by her death. Her legacy survives today in the form of a suicide prevention act, signed into law by Chris Christie. The "Madison Holleran Suicide Prevention Act" requires that all New Jersey colleges provide students with round-the-clock access to health care professionals with mental health training. Supporters of the law hope that 24/7 emergency assistance will prevent students from attempting suicide, the leading cause of death on college campuses. The legislation was sponsored by state Senator Kevin O'Toole and Assemblymen Scott Rumana and David Russo. Ed Monica, a former teacher of Holleran's, and Pam Phillips, a local suicide prevention advocate, championed the law, with support from the Holleran family.

Governor Susana Martinez Announces Statewide Vaccination Program for Kids ([Silver City Sun-News](#))- Gov. Susana Martinez on Monday announced this year's statewide program to help parents vaccinate their kids at little or no cost before the school year starts. "Got Shots? Protect Tots!" will run through Aug. 13 and increases access to vaccines at more than 60 providers. "As we approach the start of new school year, parents need to make it a priority to ensure their children are up-to-date on their vaccines so that they can return to the classroom healthy, strong and ready to learn," Martinez said. In addition to some Saturday clinics, some providers will offer vaccinations during lunch hours and after 5 p.m. Participants should bring a copy of insurance or Medicaid cards, if available. However, if insurance or Medicaid is not available, vaccines will be free at all Public Health Clinics or provided at a low cost at participating private clinics.

Budget & Tax

Gov. Paul LePage orders hiring freeze in state government ([Sun Journal](#))- Gov. Paul LePage has ordered a hiring freeze across the executive branch of state government "until further notice" in preparation for cuts he wants to make in a state budget proposal that's due in January 2017. Documents obtained Monday by the Bangor Daily News indicate that the hiring freeze was ordered in a July 18 memo to LePage's top administrators. The hiring freeze comes as LePage has been talking publicly about making personnel cuts in state government and after a memo was leaked last week that indicated LePage wants to reduce the state's workforce to 9,500 employees. That would be down from 13,286 authorized positions, of which 11,808 are filled. LePage has said the downsizing can be accomplished by cutting vacant positions.

Illinois governor signs pension bill for LGBT retirees ([Windy City Times](#))- Gov. Bruce Rauner, on July 29, signed legislation that ensures fairness for state employees who retired prior to the state's passage of its civil union and marriage equality bills. Illinois House Bill 6021, passed in the state Senate May 31 and in the state House April 13, allows state employees who retired prior to June 2011, and are in the Illinois Teachers Retirement System, State Universities Retirement System or Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund, to establish survivors' benefits for a same-sex spouse. Prior to 2011, when the state's civil unions law took effect, retirees designating a same-sex spouse for their benefits would have to take a refund of their survivor credits. Under the new law, these retirees would be able to pay back the refund with interest and re-establish survivor benefits for their spouse.

Dalrymple outlines plan to address \$310M budget shortfall ([Aberdeen News](#))- Republican Gov. Jack Dalrymple is endorsing a bill that would impose further cuts to government agencies, skim profits from North Dakota's state-owned bank and drain a rainy day fund to make up for a \$310 million budget shortfall due to depressed agriculture and oil prices. Dalrymple and state budget director Pam Sharp outlined the bill to statehouse reporters on Monday, a day before North Dakota's Legislature is returning for a three-day special session summoned by Dalrymple to address the projected shortfall due to less-than-forecast tax collections. The bill proposed by the GOP, which holds a supermajority in the Legislature, would require an additional 2.5 percent cut to most state agencies, which will save the state about \$152 million.

Good Government

New Illinois Law Requires Local Public Agencies to Regulate Travel Expenses ([Lexology](#))- In the wake of numerous recent examples of extravagant spending by some Illinois local governments and agencies, the Illinois General Assembly sent Gov. Bruce Rauner a bill designed to increase the accountability of local public agencies when spending on meals, travel and entertainment. The governor signed House Bill 4379 into law on July 22, 2016. The new law, called the "Local Government Travel Expense Control Act," will go into effect Jan. 1, 2017. The Act applies to school districts, community colleges and all other non-home rule units of local government. The Act exempts all home rule units. The Act

requires public agencies to regulate the reimbursement of "travel, meal, and lodging expenses" of "employees and officers" of a local public agency. In this alert, we refer to travel, meal and lodging expenses collectively as "travel expenses."

Education

Alexander, Murray Urge Secretary King To Provide More Time For State Accountability Systems ([The Chattanooga](#))- Senate education committee leaders on Monday requested changes to the Education Department's proposed accountability rule to allow more time for states working to develop their new accountability system under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). In a letter to Secretary of Education Dr. John King, Jr., Senator Lamar Alexander and Senator Patty Murray called on the Education Department to allow states to implement their new accountability systems in 2017-18, and begin to identify new schools for improvement in 2018-19 as the new law fixing No Child Left Behind intended.

Illinois Journalism Teachers Now Protected From Retaliation Under Law ([Education Week](#))- Illinois journalism teachers are now protected from being fired or disciplined in retaliation for what their students publish in the school newspaper. Republican Gov. Bruce Rauner signed a new law on Friday that protects high school student journalists' right to exercise freedom of speech and of the press in school-sponsored publications, regardless of whether the publication is paid for by the school district or produced as part of a class. The law also stipulates that a journalism adviser "shall not be dismissed, suspended, disciplined, reassigned, transferred, or otherwise retaliated against" for protecting student journalists' right to publish content protected by the law. (Protected content is not libelous, disruptive of school activities, a violation of state or federal law or of school district policy, or an invasion of privacy.)

Scott Walker calls for extending UW tuition freeze in next state budget ([WiscNews](#))- Gov. Scott Walker says he wants to extend the freeze on University of Wisconsin System tuition for another two years. The Republican governor also told UW and most other state agencies they should not anticipate new funding in his next budget. A list of "budget targets" from Walker's office states that "all agencies should assume there will be zero growth" in state funding, with a few exceptions — the governor writes that he will seek more money for K-12 education and for state departments such as Corrections and Health Services. Walker said extending the popular freeze, which has kept in-state undergraduate tuition level since 2013, will, along with greater K-12 funding, "help our young people develop the skills they will need for career and life."

Public Safety

Arkansas governor addresses issue of police-race relations at forum ([Times Record](#))- Instances of misconduct by police must be dealt with individually, Gov. Asa Hutchinson said Monday. Hutchinson was among the speakers at a "We Speak! Call-to-Action Forum," hosted by St. Luke Baptist Church in North Little Rock, a program focusing on clashes between police and blacks, the issues underlying them and ways to address those issues. The governor told a mostly black audience that there have been many "horrific instances" around the country recently. "They're intolerable and they should be addressed," he said, adding that racial profiling is wrong and there should be more education of police officers. But Hutchinson said each situation is individual and should be addressed as such. "The police by and large put their lives on the line to keep us safe," he said.

Kentucky State Police Troopers Get Pay Increase ([WKMS](#))- Starting this week, Kentucky State Police troopers are earning higher pay for their service. Governor Matt Bevin and state lawmakers worked earlier this year to include salary increases in the budget. State Police Spokesman Michael Webb says this pay hike could help with recruitment efforts. Webb says the salary hike can also help with officer retention. "The fact that we're able to keep those guys longer really does impact the safety of the Commonwealth because they know their communities, they know who is committing the crimes. They're seasoned investigators and it really does impact public safety as a whole." The KSP currently maintains a force of 900 sworn officers with an authorization to employ more than one thousand.

Environment

Branstad pitches new plan to pay for water quality efforts in Iowa ([Omaha World-Herald](#))- Gov. Terry Branstad on Monday said that he's meeting with several groups this summer to discuss a new proposal to fund water quality initiatives in the state, but it's unclear whether the idea will have enough backing in the Democratic-controlled Senate. Branstad told reporters that he's been traveling around Iowa to meet with farmers, educators and community leaders to discuss water quality and to pitch a plan that would use money typically designated for school infrastructure to pay for water improvement. The idea is similar to a plan the Republican governor announced in January that failed to garner enough support during the legislative session. Some Democratic lawmakers said that first plan pitted education against water quality. Branstad's office insisted that the funding system would have eventually generated more money for education.