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## REPUBLICAN GOVERNORS

### PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

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#### Recommended Reads

Appeals court strikes down North Carolina's voter-ID law ([Washington Post](#))- A federal appeals court on Friday struck down North Carolina's requirement that voters show identification before casting ballots and reinstated an additional week of early voting. The decision by a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit was an overwhelming victory for the Justice Department and civil rights groups that argued the voting law was designed to dampen the growing political clout of African American voters, who participated in record numbers in elections in 2008 and 2012. "We can only conclude that the North Carolina General Assembly enacted the challenged provisions of the law with discriminatory intent," Judge Diana Gribbon Motz wrote for the panel. The challenge to North Carolina's law is one of several cases throughout the country seeking to eliminate strict voting rules in place for the first time in the November presidential contest.

(Wisconsin) Federal judge throws out limits on absentee voting, other voting restrictions ([Wisconsin State Journal](#))- A federal judge in Madison ruled Friday that parts of Wisconsin's voter ID and other voting laws are unconstitutional, among them newly imposed limits on in-person absentee voting that he said were unfair to minority, largely Democratic voters. U.S. District Judge James Peterson, in a 119-page ruling issued late Friday, said that the state Legislature tailored that part of the law to curtail voting in Milwaukee, specifically "to suppress the reliably Democratic vote of Milwaukee's African-Americans." He wrote that his ruling will have no effect on the Aug. 9 primary election; it would take effect for the Nov. 8 general election unless overturned on appeal. State and local elections officials said they would immediately assess how to administer elections under the sweeping ruling.

(Kansas) Court ruling sides with governor on judicial appointment ([KFDI](#))- The Kansas Supreme Court has ruled that state law allows Governor Sam Brownback to decide when he will fill a vacant district magistrate position. Three 26th District judges asked the court in July to require Brownback to appoint a judge in that district within 90 days of learning of the vacancy. They argued state law requires five magistrate judges to serve the six-county district. Brownback wants to wait until after the August election to appoint a replacement for Judge Tommy Webb of Haskell County, who retired in February. The justices ruled unanimously Friday that wording of state law gives the governor discretion to exceed the 90-day deadline.

(Haslam Op-Ed) Let's Agree on Free Community College ([Wall Street Journal](#))- At the state and local level, leaders of both political parties are pursuing solutions to one of America's most pressing problems: the high cost of college. As the Republican governor of Tennessee and the Democratic mayor of Chicago, we have both launched efforts to improve access to community college and to increase educational attainment. The results of both programs provide proof that it's possible to find solutions for the country's most pressing problems—even in this fraught political era.

Court sides with greens on EPA boiler rule ([The Hill](#))- A federal appeals court Friday agreed with environmental groups and tossed out part of a contentious air pollution rule for boilers for an improper exemption within the regulation. The lengthy, 162-page opinion issued by the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit rejects numerous arguments from industry that the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) package of boiler rules is too strict. A key piece of the decision found that the EPA was wrong to leave certain boiler units with low levels of emissions out of the subcategories it constructed for the rule. The Clean Air Act, the judges wrote, "demands that source subcategories take the bitter with the sweet," and requires "without ambiguity" that all relevant units be kept in a subcategory. The boiler rule, dubbed boiler MACT for "maximum achievable control technology," has been one of the more contentious air pollution rules of the Obama administration, and congressional Republicans have tried weakening it in various ways with no success.

#### Budget & Tax

Ohio adds nearly \$30 million to rainy day fund, which tops \$2 billion ([Columbus Business First](#))- Lower-than-expected state spending has allowed Ohio to pile an extra \$29.5 million onto its rainy day fund. Office of Budget and Management Director Tim Keen said a stronger than expected balance at the end of the state's fiscal year made the addition

to the budget stabilization fund possible. The fund now totals \$2.034 billion — a stark contrast to 2009, when the account sank below \$1. "The fiscal condition of the state is strong," Keen said in a statement. "We finished the year with a larger ending balance than planned due to state spending that came in below projections, making possible the fifth deposit to our rainy day account in six years." Keen credited Gov. John Kasich's administration's for "being conservative both in our forecasting and our budgeting."

#### Healthcare

Governor: 4 new Zika cases likely came from Fla. Mosquitoes ([USA Today](#))- Four people infected with Zika in South Florida likely contracted the virus from local mosquitoes, marking the first time the disease has been transmitted by the bugs in the continental U.S., Florida's governor announced. The Florida Department of Health believes Zika is being transmitted locally in a small area just north of downtown Miami, Florida Gov. Rick Scott said Friday at a news conference in Orlando. No mosquitoes in the state have tested positive for Zika, he added. More than 1,650 Zika infections have been reported in the U.S., but until now all were linked to travel to areas with outbreaks of the virus. Zika, which can cause devastating birth defects, is spreading rapidly in more than 30 countries and territories in the Caribbean and Latin America. The four cases in Florida involved one woman and three men in Miami-Dade and Broward counties, Scott said.

(New Mexico) NMCAL Reaches out in mental health crisis ([Deming Headlight](#))- New Mexico Human Services Department (HSD) Secretary Brent Earnest announced that the New Mexico Crisis and Access Line (NMCAL) is helping more New Mexicans find the help, services, and support they need for mental health crises such as anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and others. NMACL fielded 2,952 calls last month alone, 16,000 in the first six months of this year, and more than 21,000 calls in 2015. "The hotline helps connect our most vulnerable family members, friends, and neighbors with the help they need," said Governor Susana Martinez. "When someone in need calls into the crisis hotline, they're given compassion and support, and connected to more opportunities and resources to get much-needed help. It's important that we keep supporting a tool that is so vital to New Mexicans in need."

#### Good Government

(Illinois) Demand action from lawmakers on term limits amendment ([Daily Herald](#))- Illinois has unprecedented challenges. Our great state has been driven to the brink of ruin after decades of mismanagement, corruption and insider deals made by career politicians. For too long, career politicians have been more concerned with being re-elected and maintaining power than doing what's right for the people of Illinois. The system is broken, and we need to fix it. As a first step, we need term limits on our elected officials to bring the focus of governing back to the needs of the people, rather than the politicians. Once politicians are elected to office, it becomes difficult to remove them, even if voters are unhappy with their performance. The system has evolved to include unfair advantages, from favorably redrawn districts to name recognition to rules that make it harder and harder for challengers to take on those in power. This year, 88 percent of Illinois legislative candidates faced no opposition in the primary, and two thirds will face no opposing candidate in the general election this November.

#### Education

(Arkansas) Governor's Higher Education Funding Plan Moves Forward ([5 News Online](#))- The model for Arkansas higher education could shift gears in the coming years. Gov. Asa Hutchinson announced his support of the proposed Higher Education Productivity Funding Model, which follows an outcomes-based approach, according to a release from the governor's office. The release also stated that colleges and universities in the state have been funded based on a needs-based model that is driven by enrollments and emphasizes access to higher education in its approach. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education Coordinating Board approved the proposal in a unanimous vote Friday morning (July 30). The proposal will go before the legislature during the 2017 general session. If the measure is adopted, Arkansas will become only the fifth state to make significant progress toward funding higher education based on outcomes — joining Tennessee, Indiana, Ohio, and Oregon.

#### Energy

Governor Mead formally opposes federal coal lease moratorium ([Wyoming News](#))- Gov. Matt Mead's formal comments strongly oppose the Department of the Interior's moratorium on new coal leases. The governor outlined the state's concerns in a letter to Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell and Bureau of Land Management Director Neil Kornze. "States like Wyoming, where coal is produced and environmental stewardship is a model for the nation, were not consulted and were caught by surprise," wrote the governor. "Now, national revenues, energy users across the nation, coal miners and their families are at risk. The justification for this moratorium and the manner it was unveiled are unjustifiable." Mead states this Programmatic Environmental Imp-act Statement (PEIS) process is an attempt by the DOI to bypass Congress and impose a carbon tax. The moratorium will dramatically impact jobs, energy security and energy independence, the governor said, adding it targets Wyoming as the nation's leader in coal production. Wyoming produces roughly 40 percent of the nation's coal — 80 percent of that comes from federal land.

#### Transportation

Compromise bill regulating Uber and Lyft lands on Gov. Charlie Baker's desk ([MassLive](#))- Massachusetts

lawmakers on Sunday night rushed a compromise bill regulating ride-hailing companies like Uber and Lyft to the governor's desk. The bill calls for the companies to pay a 20-cent surcharge per ride. The 20-cent per ride assessment is broken down this way: 10 cents would go to municipalities for their transportation structure, and the charge goes away after 10 years. Five cents go to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation for statewide improvements, and that charge sunsets after 10 years. The final five cents go to the state's MassDevelopment agency, geared toward a grant program handling job training and innovation for taxi and livery services. That part of the charge sunsets after five years.

#### Public Safety

Federal Court rejects Alabama's Refugee Case ([Alabama Public Radio](#))- A judge dismissed Alabama's lawsuit against the federal government over refugee placement. U.S. Magistrate Judge John Ott rejected Alabama's claim that federal officials are not consulting with states on refugee placement. The dismissal comes a month after a judge threw out a similar Texas lawsuit, ruling that states had no authority over resettlements that are handled by the federal government. Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley filed the lawsuit in January. The state asked the judge to block any refugee settlement unless the state was given security and medical information on each refugee. The governor's office did not have an immediate response to the decision.

Rauner reduces punishment for minor pot possession from jail to citation ([Chicago Tribune](#))- Getting caught with small amounts of marijuana will result in citations akin to a traffic ticket instead of the possibility of jail time under legislation Republican Gov. Bruce Rauner signed into law Friday. Rauner's approval of the decriminalization measure comes after he used his amendatory veto powers last year to rewrite similar legislation he argued would have allowed people to carry too much pot and fine violators too little. Supporters incorporated his proposed changes, and under the new law those caught with up to 10 grams of marijuana will face fines of \$100 to \$200. Individual municipalities could add to the fines and implement other penalties, such as requiring offenders to attend drug treatment. Citations would be automatically expunged twice a year, on Jan. 1 and July 1. The law also would loosen the state's zero-tolerance policy for driving under the influence. Before, a driver could be charged if any trace of marijuana was detected, even if it was ingested weeks before and the driver showed no signs of impairment.

Illinois governor signs plan limiting mentally ill from owning guns ([St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#))- Gov. Bruce Rauner has signed a measure designed to prevent people with mental disabilities from owning guns. The measure Rauner signed Friday strengthens existing law by requiring circuit court clerks to report the names of people a judge deems mentally disabled to the Illinois State Police at least twice a year. The new law takes effect immediately. Under the old law, a person deemed by a judge to have a mental illness could lose his or her gun owner identification card.

#### Veteran Initiatives

(North Carolina) Governor signs bills for vets, firefighters ([The Enquirer Journal](#))- N.C. Governor Pat McCrory signed legislation this week and said it is an indication of his support for military veterans and firefighters, according to a release. McCrory expects it to better serve veterans, active duty military and their families in North Carolina. The governor has also initiated in-state tuition for veterans at North Carolina community colleges and universities, funded Veteran Treatment Courts to ensure veterans get unique care, and signed legislation to give credit for military experience when veterans apply for positions like law enforcement and truck driving. The unemployment rate among veterans has been cut in half since 2013, according to the release.