



Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

November 29, 2017

Contents this week:

CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

U.S. Sentencing Commission's annual report

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

Arts districts stimulate state and local economies

ECONOMY

Study: CA's progressive policies do not harm the economy

EDUCATION

Grade inflation: employers pay more for college grads without increased productivity

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

Draft overview explains the CA WaterFix Project

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Santa Clara County Registrar reports 26 errors in administration of over 30 elections

HEALTH

Individual health insurance mandate repeal would cause premiums to rise by 10%

HUMAN SERVICES

Child poverty has fallen to record low due to government programs
CA child poverty declined, but still higher than at the start of the recession

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Safety impacts of "wildlife-vehicle conflict" in CA

CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

***U.S. Sentencing Commission's 2016 Annual Report.* United States Sentencing Commission. Nov. 2017. 10 p.**

<https://www.ussc.gov/about/annual-report-2016>

"The Commission sits at the intersection of all three branches of government and synthesizes the interests of the three branches to effectuate sound federal sentencing policy.... In addition, the Commission is committed to delivering effective and specialized training on federal sentencing issues." The Commission's latest annual report provides a high-level overview of the programs, budget, and major

activities undertaken in FY 2016. It provides valuable links to reports published by the Commission on federal sentencing statistics and guideline amendments.

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

Arts and Economic Prosperity 5. Americans for the Arts. Sep. 2017. 24 p.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/research-studies-publications/arts-economic-prosperity-5/use/download-the-report>

Brochure. 8 p.:

https://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/aep5/PDF_Files/ARTS_Brochure_Mockup.pdf

“In 2010, nonprofit arts and culture organizations pumped an estimated \$61.1 billion into the economy.... This study sends an important message to community leaders: support for the arts is an investment in economic well-being as well as quality of life.” Using Census Bureau population data, as well as numbers from over 14,000 arts and cultural organizations in the United States, this report provides a comprehensive analysis of the ways in which arts districts stimulate the state and local economy.

ECONOMY

California is Working: The Effects of California’s Public Policy on Jobs and the Economy Since 2011. By Ian Perry. UC Berkeley Labor Center. Nov. 2017. 21 p.

<http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/california-is-working/>

Working paper. 29 p.: <http://irle.berkeley.edu/files/2017/The-Effects-of-Californias-Public-Policy-on-Jobs-and-the-Economy-Since-2011.pdf>

“Between 2011 and 2016, California enacted a set of 51 policy measures addressing workers’ rights, environmental issues, safety net programs, taxation, and infrastructure and housing. Critics predicted that these policies—collectively called ‘the California Policy Model’ (CPM) in this paper—would reduce employment and slow economic growth, while supporters argued that they would raise wages for low-wage workers, increase access to health insurance, lower wage inequality, and reduce carbon emissions. This paper assesses some of these claims and prognoses, and finds that: Employment and GDP growth were not adversely affected by the California Policy Model; Wages for low-wage workers as well as overall health insurance rates statewide rose with the implementation of the California Policy Model.... Enforcement of labor standards and a lack of affordable housing remain as challenges facing the state.”

EDUCATION

Dismissed by Degrees: How Degree Inflation is Undermining U.S. Competitiveness and Hurting America’s Middle Class. By Joseph B. Fuller, et al. Harvard Business School, et al. Oct. 2017. 48 p.

<http://www.hbs.edu/managing-the-future-of-work/Documents/dismissed-by-degrees.pdf>

“A survey of 600 business and human resource leaders shows that degree inflation is driven by two key factors: the fast-changing nature of many middle-skills jobs and employers’ misperceptions of the economics of investing in quality talent at the non-graduate level. As more middle-skills jobs require mastery of one or more technologies, employers find it difficult to hire non-graduate talent with the requisite skills. While candidates often lack hard skills, such as proficiency in Microsoft Excel, they are equally likely to suffer from soft-skills deficits, such as poor written and verbal communications.... The results of our survey were consistent across many industries—employers pay more, often significantly more, for college graduates to do jobs also filled by non-degree holders without getting any material improvement in productivity.”

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

California WaterFix Overview (Draft). Kern County Water Agency, et al. Sep. 28, 2017. 76 p.
<http://www.restorethedelta.org/wp-content/uploads/KCWA-CWF-Overview-Public-Version-Complete-9.15.17.pdf>

“This overview ... is intended to assist landowners, Agency Member units and the Board of Directors with making decisions regarding California WaterFix.[Kern County Water] Agency staff has compiled this overview from the best available information developed over 11 years of study and analysis.... This overview attempts to provide an easy, yet complete reference for California WaterFix that may be used to help decision-makers determine whether to participate in the project.”

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters: Insufficient Policies and Procedures Have Led to Errors That May Have Reduced Voters’ Confidence in the Registrar’s Office. California State Auditor. Oct. 24, 2017. 63 p.
<http://www.auditor.ca.gov/pdfs/reports/2017-107.pdf>

“[T]his audit ... reviewed Santa Clara’s policies, procedures, and practices regarding its review and distribution of election-related materials, oversight of its vendors, and actions associated with errors in election-related materials that occurred from 2010 through 2016.... This report concludes the following: inadequate and often unwritten policies, procedures, and practices have led to errors in election-related materials;... Santa Clara has not ensured that it notifies voters consistently and effectively about errors in election-related materials;... [and] to help prevent errors in election-related materials and processes, the Secretary of State should enhance its oversight of county election officials.”

HEALTH

Repealing the Individual Health Insurance Mandate: an Updated Estimate. Congressional Budget Office. Nov. 2017. 5 p.
<https://www.cbo.gov/publication/53300>

The Congressional Budget Office and the Joint Committee on Taxation estimate that repealing the individual mandate starting in 2019 would reduce the federal budget by \$338 billion between 2018 and 2027, and decrease the number of individuals with health insurance by 4 million in 2019 and 13 million in 2027. Also, the average premiums for the individual market would “increase by about 10 percent in most years of the decade ... relative to CBO’s baseline projections. Those effects would occur mainly because healthier people would be less likely to obtain insurance and because, especially in the nongroup market, the resulting increases in premiums would cause more people to not purchase insurance. If the individual mandate penalty was eliminated but the mandate itself was not repealed, the results would be very similar to those presented in this report.”

HUMAN SERVICES

Child Poverty Falls to Record Low, Comprehensive Measure Shows Stronger Government Policies Account for Long-Term Improvement. By Isaac Shapiro, et al. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Oct. 5, 2017. 7 p.
<https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/10-5-17ppov.pdf>

“The child poverty rate fell to a record low of 15.6% in 2016, a little more than half its 1967 level of 28.4%.... The data show that the near-halving of the child poverty rate since the late 1960s is largely attributable to the creation or expansion of various safety net programs, particularly SNAP and two major refundable tax credits. When poverty is measured without counting the income that safety net programs provide (i.e., under the official poverty measure), child poverty has fallen significantly the last two years as the labor market tightened, but is only modestly lower than it was in the 1960s. But once these benefits are taken into account, a large decline in child poverty is evident.”

2016 Child Poverty Rate Sees Largest Decline Since Before Great Recession. By Marybeth J. Mattingly, et al. Carsey School of Public Policy. Sep. 14, 2017. 1 p.
<http://scholars.unh.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1314&context=carsey>

“Child poverty declined by 1.2 percentage points between 2015 and 2016.... By 2016, child poverty across the nation was still 1.5 percentage points higher than before the Great Recession. Child poverty remained higher in cities and rural places than in the suburbs. Across the nation there is substantial variability both in the level of poverty and in improvement since the start of the Great Recession—25 states have child poverty rates higher than those in 2007.” California is one of these 25 states, and follows the national average of child poverty in 2016 (1.2 percentage points lower than 2015). See Carsey School’s [Child Poverty by State and Place Type in 2016](#) for more details.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Impact of Wildlife-Vehicle Conflict on California Drivers and Animals. By Fraser Shilling, et al. Oct. 2017. 20 p.
https://itspubs.ucdavis.edu/wp-content/themes/ucdavis/pubs/download_pdf.php?id=2752

“Using observations of reported traffic incidents and carcasses the Road Ecology Center estimates the total annual cost of wildlife-vehicle conflict (WVC) in California to be at least \$276 million, up 20% from the year before... Projects to reduce WVC can be the most effective of any safety project, with effectiveness often above 90%. In addition, only 1-2% of California’s transportation budget, including the new Senate Bill 1 funds, would be required to carry out these safety projects.”

About the California Research Bureau

The California Research Bureau at the California State Library develops independent, nonpartisan research and analysis for the executive and legislative branches. We provide policy research, 50-state reviews, academic and media summaries, data analysis and much more. To learn more about us or to make a request, or to subscribe to *Studies in the News*, contact crb@library.ca.gov, or call (916) 319-2691.

Studies in the News archived issues and RSS feed are available at <http://www.library.ca.gov/sitn/crb/>.