



## Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

December 13, 2017

*Studies in the News is going on hiatus for the holidays. We will resume publication on Wednesday, January 3, 2018.*

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## **CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY**

***Making Ends Meet: How Much Does It Cost to Support a Family in California?*** By Sara Kimberlin, et al. California Budget & Policy Center. Dec. 2017. 78 p.

<http://calbudgetcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/Making-Ends-Meet-12072017.pdf>

**Interactive map:** <http://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/making-ends-meet-much-cost-support-family-california/>

“On a statewide level, this report estimates that a family with two working parents and two children needs roughly \$76,000 annually, on average, to cover basic necessities, while a two-parent family with one working parent needs about \$59,000 per year. A single-parent family with two children needs approximately \$66,000 per year to cover basic expenses, on average, while a single adult requires nearly

\$28,000.... The high cost of living relative to the earnings of many families and single adults means that publicly funded supports like food assistance, refundable tax credits, and subsidized health care serve as critical resources to help many households close—at least in part—the gap between what they earn and the prevailing cost of basic necessities.”

## ECONOMY

***Capitalists in the Twenty-First Century.* By Matthew Smith, et al. NBER. July 2017. 75 p.**  
<http://faculty.chicagobooth.edu/owen.zidar/research/papers/capitalists.pdf>

Responding to recent findings from [Autor](#) and others, the authors find that “private business owners who actively manage their firms are key for top income inequality,” accounting “for most of the rise of top incomes since 2000,” and becoming “twice as profitable per worker as other firms despite similar risk .... Most of this top business income growth comes from private ‘pass-through’ businesses, which are not taxed at the entity level; instead, income passes through to the owners who pay taxes on their share of the firm’s income.”

## EDUCATION

***Los Angeles Unified School District Advisory Task Force. Dec. 5, 2017. 21 p.***  
<https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/4321915/LAUSD-Attendance-Advisory-Task-Force.pdf>

The Los Angeles Unified School District has high levels of chronically absent students—80,000 were chronically absent in the 2016-17 school year, or 14.5% of the population. This absenteeism meant a loss of about \$20 million in “foregone revenue.” The highest levels of absenteeism are in kindergarten and in high school. The task force outlines recommendations for improving this situation: 1) using data more effectively to measure the effectiveness of their current school attendance programs, and 2) trying new approaches. “LAUSD should launch a broad, district-wide awareness effort to educate parents, students, and everyone in the community about the importance of attending school. It should also conduct targeted outreach to at-risk students and their parents through direct mail, text messages, phone banks, and canvassing; and implement a cash reward program for schools to incentivize them to achieve better results. Finally, the District should expand school-site, direct intervention programs to provide meaningful, one-on-one counseling to students and families most in need.”

## EMPLOYMENT

***Diversity in the Technology Sector: Federal Agencies Could Improve Oversight of Equal Employment Opportunity Requirements.* U.S. Government Accountability Office. Nov. 30, 2017. 76 p.**  
<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-18-69>

“The estimated percentage of minority technology workers increased from 2005 to 2015, but GAO found that no growth occurred for female and Black workers, whereas Asian and Hispanic workers made statistically significant increases.... Further, female, Black, and Hispanic workers remain a smaller proportion of the technology workforce—mathematics, computing, and engineering occupations—compared to their representation in the general workforce. These groups have also been less represented among technology workers inside the technology sector than outside it. In contrast, Asian workers were more represented in these occupations than in the general workforce. Stakeholders and researchers GAO interviewed identified several factors that may have contributed to the lower representation of certain groups, such as fewer women and minorities graduating with technical degrees and company hiring and retention practices.”

## ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

*Last week's WaterFix entry did not include the corresponding text. The following is the corrected version.*

***Department of Water Resources: The Unexpected Complexity of the California WaterFix Project Has Resulted in Significant Cost Increases and Delays.*** Bureau of State Audits. Oct. 2017. 97 p.  
<https://www.auditor.ca.gov/reports/2016-132/index.html>

"[T]his audit report [concerns] the Department of Water Resources' (DWR) management of the planning efforts for the California WaterFix Project (WaterFix)... [T]he planning phase experienced significant cost increases and scheduled delays.... [W]e also found that DWR did not follow state law when it replaced the program manager for the conservation and conveyance program.... Additionally, DWR has not completed either an economic or financial analysis to demonstrate the financial viability of WaterFix. Finally, it has not fully implemented a governance structure for the design and construction phase, and has not maintained important program management documents for WaterFix."

## GENERAL GOVERNMENT

***Truth and Integrity in State Budgeting: What is the Reality?*** The Volcker Alliance. Nov. 2, 2017. 117 p.  
<https://www.volckeralliance.org/publications/truth-and-integrity-state-budgeting-what-is-the-reality>

"[T]he alliance is grading all 50 states on their financial practices.... The area in which states collectively performed at their worst was long-term liabilities, such as pensions and retiree health care.... The report offers several policy recommendations, including having clear policies for withdrawing money from rainy day funds and other fiscal reserves; implementing rules for replenishing those funds; tying the size of fund balances to revenue volatility; and adopting a consensus approach to budget forecasting to reduce political influence." California earned grades of B in budget forecasting and budget maneuvers, D- in legacy costs, and A in reserve funds and budget transparency. (*Governing*, Nov. 8, 2017).

## HEALTH

***Helping Settle the Marijuana and Alcohol Debate: Evidence from Scanner Data.*** By Michele Baggio, et al. SSRN. Nov. 2017. 30 p.  
[https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3063288](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3063288)

"We find that marijuana and alcohol are strong substitutes. Counties located in MML [medical marijuana laws] states reduced monthly alcohol sales by 15%, which is a consistent finding across several empirical specifications. When disaggregating by beer and wine we find that legalization of medical marijuana had a negative effect on corresponding sales by as much as 13.8 and 16.2%, respectively.... We believe that the implications of our findings may be a useful contribution to economic policy not only because they help settle the debate on the type of relationship between alcohol and marijuana, but more importantly, because they address concerns about the potential spillover effects of medical marijuana laws on use of other substances that might contribute to negative health and social outcomes as the relationship between these substances is an important public health issue."

## HUMAN SERVICES

***Latino U.S.-Citizen Children of Immigrants: A Generation at High Risk.*** By Lisseth Rojas-Flores. Foundation for Child Development. Oct. 18, 2017. 22 p.

<https://www.fcd-us.org/latino-us-citizen-children-immigrants-generation-high-risk/>

This paper highlights “the work of scholars within the Foundation’s Young Scholars Program (YSP) related to Latino-U.S. citizen children of immigrants. Children of immigrants are growing up in a unique historical context in the United States — a time marked by aggressive immigration policies and practices. For over 10 years, studies conducted by YSP scholars have focused on the well-being of children of immigrants and their families.... Their research examines the impact of immigration enforcement practices and policies on Latino school-aged children within family units whose members have both authorized and unauthorized immigration status.”

### ***About the California Research Bureau***

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