

**CALIFORNIA RESEARCH BUREAU
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Studies in the News**

California -- One Hundred Years Ago

July 1908. "Women in Riot. Suffragettes Throw Stones. Fight Police in Effort to Get Into the House of Commons. Suffragettes besieged the House of Parliament today in unorganized and riotous masses, hurling cobblestones at the windows of the residence of Premier Asquith in Downing street, and shrieked defiance to the cordons of police, foot and mounted, who struggled to prevent their invasion of Parliament. Great throngs attended the onslaughts and skirmishes of the women and cheered their encounters with the police. Failing in their efforts to break through the surrounding squads, the women resorted to ruses and disguises to gain the lobby of the house.... Twenty-nine women were arrested before the demonstration was quelled." *Los Angeles Times* (July 1, 1908) pg. 11.

July 1908. "Women Want Ballot. San Francisco, July 14. The California Equal Suffrage Association yesterday launched a campaign for the extension of the franchise to women which will be carried on as vigorously as songs, banners, badges and general propaganda work will make possible. The movement was formerly inaugurated at a meeting of the State Central Committee of the association, at which about forty members were present." *Los Angeles Times* (July 15, 1908) pg. 12.

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Introduction to Studies in the News

Studies in the News is a current compilation of items significant to the Legislature and Governor's Office. It is created weekly by the State Library's [California Research Bureau](#) to supplement the public policy debate in California. To help share the latest information with state policymakers, these reading lists are now being made accessible through the State Library's website. This week's list of current articles in various public policy areas is presented below. Prior lists can be viewed from the California State Library's Web site at www.library.ca.gov/sitn

- When available, the URL for the full text of each item is provided.
- California State Employees may contact the State Information & Reference Center (916-654-0261; csinfo@library.ca.gov) with the SITN issue number and the item number [S#].
- All other interested individuals should contact their local library - the items may be available there, or may be borrowed by your local library on your behalf.

The following studies are currently on hand:

CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

GUNS & GUN CONTROL

Protect Children Not Guns. By the Children's Defense Fund. (The Fund, Washington, DC) June 2008. 15 p.

Full text at:

http://www.childrensdefense.org/site/PageServer?pagename=Safe_Start_Gun_Report

["According to the most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 3,006 children and teens were killed by firearms in 2005, the first increase since 1994 and the first rise in gun deaths since Congress allowed the Assault Weapons Ban to expire in 2004."]

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JUVENILE JUSTICE

Juvenile Justice Reform: Realigning Responsibilities. By the Little Hoover Commission. (The Commission, Sacramento, California) July 2008. 99 p.

Full text at: <http://www.lhc.ca.gov/lhcdir/192/report192.pdf>

["A state commission recommended that California phase out its antiquated juvenile prisons by 2011, replacing them with regional lockups run by counties. The regional centers would hold only the most dangerous offenders. Less serious offenders would be housed at local juvenile halls. Commissioners said the state also should end its three-year experiment with combining youth and adult prisons. Authority over youth prisons would be placed under an Office of Juvenile Justice reporting to the governor until the state ends its involvement." Ventura County Star (July 15, 2008) 1.]

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ECONOMY

COST OF LIVING

Running on Fumes: Rising Gas Prices Add to the Strain on Families' Already Squeezed Budgets. By Amanda Logan and Christian E. Weller, Center for American Progress. (The Center, Washington, DC) June 2008. 20 p.

Full text at: http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/06/pdf/food_gas.pdf

["Families across America are struggling with higher prices for gas and food along with record unemployment rates, flat wages, and the deepening housing crisis.... The underlying problem is that families are hurting because they do not have sufficient financial security; rising gas and food prices are only the latest spotlight highlighting this fact. Yes, better fuel efficiency, more public transportation, and conversations about our food and farm policy on local, national, and international levels are all necessary long-term solutions, but they don't completely hit the financial insecurity facing families."]
[Request #S08-39-2643]

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

People or Place?: Revisiting the Who Versus the Where of Urban Development. By Randall Crane and Michael Manville, University of California, Los Angeles. (Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Cambridge, Massachusetts) July 2008

Full text at: http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/dl/1403_719_LLA080702.pdf

["One of the longest standing debates in community economic development is between 'place-based' and 'people-based' approaches to combating poverty, housing affordability, chronic unemployment, and community decline. Should help go to distressed places or distressed people?.... Targeting individuals for labor market, housing market, and/or social service assistance is best in principle.... But even in a world of generous transfer payments, many low-income households are clustered in areas characterized by low levels of property wealth and high numbers of renters."]
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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Californians and Information Technology: PPIC Statewide Survey. By Mark Baldassare, Public Policy Institute of California, and others. (The Institute, San Francisco, California) June 2008. 40 p.

Full text at: http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/survey/S_608MBS.pdf

["The study found that 40 percent of Latinos have Internet access, and less than half own computers, compared with 86 percent of whites, 84 percent of Asians and 79 percent of African Americans. Half of households with an income of less than \$40,000 have a computer... compared with more than 90 percent of more affluent Californians. While computer usage has declined among Latinos, the majority use cell phones to send and receive text messages and access the Internet, signaling that mobile devices -- which cost less than a computer and Internet connection -- could help bridge the digital divide." San Francisco Chronicle (June 26, 2008) 1.]
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EDUCATION

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Partnering with the Private: A Governor's Guide to Investing in Early Childhood. By Sarah Daily, National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, and others. (The Center, Washington, DC) June 2008. 64 p.

Full text at: <http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0806PARTNERINGEDUCATION.PDF>

["States can pursue different paths to reach their school readiness goals based on their priorities. Through grants, training, and technical assistance, partnerships can focus on improving the quality or availability of early childhood programs by pursuing one or more of these objectives: 1) Provide flexible funding for locally identified needs; 2) Build the state and local infrastructure needed to coordinate an early childhood system across the state; 3) Increase public awareness and outreach efforts to engage the public and educate parents on the importance of early childhood; and 4) Promote best practices and bring promising models of high-quality programs to scale."]
[Request #S08-39-2650]

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GRADUATION RATES

Beyond the Numbers: Understanding California's High School Dropouts. By Jeric Huang and others, Policy Analysis for California Education. (PACE, Berkeley, California) July 2008. 15 p.

Full text at: http://pace.berkeley.edu/reports/Beyond_The_Numbers.pdf

["One third of students and one half of California's Latino and African-American students will never graduate from high school. To address the dropout problem, policymakers must work with school districts to produce more accurate dropout measures and better understand why students drop out of school. Recently six of California's urban school districts have joined together... to address the dropout issue by, 1) identifying the problems with dropout documentation, 2) offering a standardized method of computing cohort survival rates, and 3) presenting current strategies for preventing dropouts."]

[Request #S08-39-2662]

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SCHOOL FINANCE

The Fiscal Impact of a Large-Scale Education Tax Credit Program. By Andrew J. Coulson, Cato Institute. (The Institute, Washington, DC) July 2008. 20 p.

Full text at: <http://www.cato.org/pubs/pas/pa-618.pdf>

["Public Education Tax Credits reduce the state and local taxes owed by anyone who pays for the private schooling of an eligible child. Parents can claim credits for their own children's educational costs, and other taxpayers (including businesses) can claim credits when they pay for the education of someone else's child, either directly or by donating to a nonprofit scholarship-granting organization.... It is estimated that, in its first 10 years of operation, savings from the PETC program would range from \$1.1 billion for South Carolina to \$15.9 billion for Texas. Illinois, Wisconsin, and New York are estimated to enjoy 10-year savings within that range."]

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EMPLOYMENT

ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Economic Benefits of Employment Transportation Services. By Piyushimita Thakuriah and others, University of Illinois at Chicago. (The University, Chicago, Illinois) June 2008. 163 p., appendices.

Full text at: http://www.utc.uic.edu/research/reports/Thakuriah_Final_Report2008.pdf

["This report examines the benefits that accrue from employment transportation services implemented as a result of changes in welfare policy. Employment transportation services were developed to provide access to jobs for people who otherwise have few transportation options, either because public transportation is not available to their work locations (or for employment-supportive trips such as daycare, schools, job-training or for job search activities) or because they cannot afford to own and operate a private vehicle.... The services are being appropriately targeted and the individuals who use them are greatly dependent on them. Although program costs are high, benefits to the users are high as well and are likely to persist over time. "]

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WORKERS COMPENSATION

2007 California Workers' Compensation Losses and Expenses. By the Workers' Compensation Insurance Rating Bureau. (The Bureau, San Francisco, California) June 2007. 37 p.

Full text at:

https://wcirbonline.org/wcirb/resources/data_reports/pdf/2007_loss_and_expenses.pdf

["A new report on California's highly contentious system of compensating workers for job-related illnesses and injuries proves that the systemic overhaul pushed through the Legislature by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2004 continues to save employers many billions of dollars each year. The latest annual report says that in 2007, California employers paid \$13.2 billion in premiums for workers' comp insurance, \$10 billion less than they were paying three years earlier. And that doesn't count the lower costs of large employers who self-insure for workers' comp, about another \$5 billion less." Sacramento Bee (July 7, 2008) 1.]

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ENERGY

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Positive Returns: State Energy Efficiency Analyses Can Inform U.S. Energy Policy Assessments. By John A. “Skip” Laitner and Vanessa McKinney, American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy. (The Council, Washington, DC) June 2008. 42 p.

Full text at: <http://aceee.org/pubs/e084.pdf?CFID=301223&CFTOKEN=80926155>

["Despite very strong evidence of the many cost-effective investments that could enhance further gains in energy productivity, the national energy and climate policy debates too often overlook the energy efficiency resource. The result is a series of assessments that tend to overstate the cost of needed changes in the nation's energy and climate change policies. However, there are a large number of state-level studies that suggest a small but net positive benefit for the American economy as a result of policies that emphasize investment-led energy efficiency improvements. Energy efficiency policies offer a significant return on investment in ways that create jobs, promote a more robust economy, and insulate businesses and consumers from highly volatile changes in fossil fuel prices."]

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SOLAR POWER

The Economics of Solar Power. By Peter Lorenz and others. IN: **The McKinsey Quarterly.** (June 2008) 11 p.

Full text at:

<http://www.mckinseyquarterly.com/PDFDownload.aspx?L2=3&L3=41&ar=2161>

["Solar energy is becoming more economically attractive as technologies improve and the cost of electricity generated by fossil fuels rises. By 2020, hundreds of billions of dollars of investment capital will probably boost global solar-generating capacity 20 to 40 times higher than its current level. As the new sector takes shape, producers of solar components must drive their costs down, utilities must place big bets despite enormous technological uncertainty, and regulators must phase out subsidies with care. The actions these players take will determine the solar sector's scale, structure, and performance for years to come."]

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ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

CLIMATE CHANGE

National Intelligence Assessment on the National Security Implications of Global Climate Change to 2030. By Thomas Fingar, Office of the Director of National Intelligence. (The Office, Washington, DC) June 2008. 21 p.

Full text at: http://www.dni.gov/testimonies/20080625_testimony.pdf

["Global warming is likely to have a series of destabilizing effects around the world, causing humanitarian crises as well as surges in ethnic violence and illegal immigration. Rising temperatures could weaken already fragile regimes around the world and create a new set of national security challenges for the U.S. over the next two decades.... The effects of global warming are likely to be most severe in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and Central and Southeast Asia. Less rainfall and more volatile weather could cut agricultural output in some regions of Africa by as much as 50%.... The report represents the U.S. intelligence community's most comprehensive assessment to date of the long-term security consequences of global warming." Los Angeles Times (June 26, 2008) 1."]

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WILDFIRES

"Fire in the National Forest System." By Robert H. Nelson. IN: **Property and Environment Research Center Reports**, vol. 26, no.2 (June 2008) 3 p.

Full text at: <http://www.perc.org/articles/article1063.php>

["A shortage of Forest Service funds means that it will be a long time before forest treatments are undertaken in many areas. Hence, while not officially stated as such, the de facto policy is to wait until fires start before taking action and then to pour large resources into suppression.... The solution to this problem lies in decentralization. Given the current impact of forest fires on Californians and the major role that the national forests play in California forest fires, the state cannot wait for the U.S. Forest Service to get its act together.... California needs the authority to solve its own forest fire problems, including on large areas of national forest lands that adjoin state and private lands. The U.S. Congress should act to give the State of California the necessary legal authority."]

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GENERAL GOVERNMENT

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Preferring a Pound of Cure to an Ounce of Prevention: Voting, Natural Disasters and Government Response. By Andrew J. Healy, Loyola Marymount University. (The University, Los Angeles, California) July 2008. 48 p.

Full text at: http://myweb.lmu.edu/ahealy/papers/healy_prevention_070808.pdf

["Using comprehensive data on natural disasters, government spending, and election returns, I show that voters reward disaster relief spending but not disaster prevention spending. This aspect of voter behavior creates a large distortion in the incentives that governments face, since the data show that prevention spending substantially reduces future damage.... While the results illustrate multiple failures in voters' abilities to hold governments accountable, they also suggest that grass-roots efforts may help voters to reward government action that increases public welfare. Voters responded significantly to one particular disaster prevention program that emphasized communication and community involvement, behavior that stands in stark contrast to the ambivalence that voters display for prevention spending in general."]

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PROPERTY TAXES

Property Tax Assessment Limits: Lessons from Thirty Years of Experience. By Mark Haveman, Minnesota Taxpayers Association, and Terri A. Sexton, California State University, Sacramento. (Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Cambridge, Massachusetts) June 2008. 44 p.

Full text at:

http://www.lincolnst.edu/pubs/dl/1412_733_PFR%20Property%20Tax%20Limits.pdf

["During the 30 years since California adopted its groundbreaking tax limitation measure known as Proposition 13, pressure has persisted for states to adopt various forms of property tax relief.... The evidence shows, however, that limits on assessed values, while favored by many homeowners, are a deeply flawed measure to counter rising property taxes. They are offered in hope of reducing tax bills and slowing the shift in tax burdens to residential property, but in fact they can result in higher taxes on the very homeowners they are intended to assist and can cause unpredictable new shifts in tax liabilities..... Better alternatives exist for timely and efficient aid to needy taxpayers."]

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PUBLIC EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

State and Local Government Pensions Plans: Current Structure and Funded Status. Statement by Barbara D. Bovbjerg, Government Accountability Office. GAO-08-983T. (The Office, Washington, DC) July 2008. 28 p.

Full text at: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08983t.pdf>

["Most state and local government pension plans have enough invested resources set aside to fund the benefits they are scheduled to pay over the next several decades. Many experts consider a funded ratio (actuarial value of assets divided by actuarial accrued liabilities) of about 80 percent or better to be sound for government pensions. We found that 58 percent of 65 large pension plans were funded to that level in 2006, a decrease since 2000 when about 90 percent of plans were so funded. Low funded ratios would eventually require the government employer to improve funding, for example, by reducing benefits or by increasing contributions.... Low contributions raise concerns about the future funded status."]
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HEALTH

HEAD INJURIES

"Changes in Motorcycle-Related Head Injury Deaths, Hospitalizations, and Hospital Charges Following Repeal of Pennsylvania's Mandatory Motorcycle Helmet Law." By Kristen J. Mertz and Harold B. Weiss. IN: The American Journal of Public Health. (June 12, 2008) Various pagings.

Full text at: <http://www.ajph.org/cgi/content/abstract/AJPH.2007.123299v1>

["In 2003, Pennsylvania legislators repealed a law requiring motorcycle riders to wear helmets.... That decision had lethal and expensive consequences. Researchers compared accident statistics from the two years before repeal with numbers from the two years after. After repeal, helmet use decreased to 58 percent from 82 percent. At the same time, head injury deaths increased 66 percent and hospitalizations increased 78 percent. Acute-care for motorcycle-related head injuries increased 132 percent compared with a 69 percent increase in other injury costs. The rate of crashes per 10,000 registrants remained the same, indicating little change in driving habits, road conditions or the risk behavior of riders." New York Times (June 24, 2008) 1.]
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HEALTH CARE

Diagnosing the High Cost of Health Care: How Spending on Unnecessary Treatments, Administrative Waste, and Overpriced Drugs Inflates the Cost of Health Care in California. By Elizabeth Ridlington, Frontier Group, and Michael Russo, CALPIRG Education Fund. (The Fund, Sacramento, California) June 2008. 46 p.

Full text at:

http://www.calpirg.org/uploads/1Y/Zv/1YZvmO0BTPx4SIq6a2Lp_A/Diagnosing-the-High-Cost-of-Healthcare.pdf

["A major cause of high health care costs is treatment that does not result in better outcomes for patients. No matter who pays for this care, it does not help patients live better or longer, and thereby drives up health care costs without providing any corresponding benefit. In some parts of the state, patients are, on average, hospitalized too often and for too long, leading to unnecessary tests, procedures and specialist visits.... Per-patient spending on health care in some regions of California is far higher than elsewhere, but this extra spending leads to no improvement in patient health or satisfaction. Eliminating these excess costs just for Medicare patients would save at least \$700 million annually. Improving care for other patients with chronic illness would yield much greater savings. "]

[Request #S08-39-2658]

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Evidence on the Costs and Benefits of Health Information Technology. By Stuart Hagen and Peter Richmond, Congressional Budget Office. (The Office, Washington, DC) May 2008. 46 p.

Full text at: <http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/91xx/doc9168/05-20-HealthIT.pdf>

["This paper focuses on evidence about the benefits and costs of health IT and identifies and analyzes barriers to its adoption. Research indicates that in certain settings, health IT appears to make it easier to reduce health spending if other steps in the broader health care system are also taken to alter incentives to promote savings. By itself, the adoption of more health IT is generally not sufficient to produce significant cost savings. The most auspicious examples involving health IT have tended to involve relatively integrated health systems.... For providers and hospitals that are not part of integrated systems, however, the benefits of health IT are not as easy to capture, and perhaps not coincidentally, those physicians and facilities have adopted electronic health records at a much slower rate."]

[Request #S08-39-2663]

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The State of Health Information Technology in California: Use Among Hospitals and Long Term Care Facilities. By California HealthCare Foundation. (The Foundation, Oakland, California) June 2008. 20 p.

Full text at:

<http://www.chcf.org/documents/chronicdisease/HITHospitalsAndLTCSnapshot2.pdf>

["California hospitals and long term care facilities have been slow to implement health information technology. Barriers include the cost of new technologies, acceptance of them by staff, and a dearth of technology products. Only 13 percent of hospitals have fully implemented electronic health records. Only 12 percent of hospitals have fully implemented bar coding to track pharmaceuticals, and 25 percent of hospitals use this technology to track lab specimens. The initial cost of information technology tops a long list of health IT barriers, followed by staff acceptance of new technologies and an absence of well-trained clinical staff for process redesign."]

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SMOKING

Cigarette Use Among High School Students: United States, 1991--2007. By the Centers for Disease Control. (The Centers. Atlanta, Georgia) June 27, 2008. 3 p.

Full text at: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5725a3.htm>

["The campaign to reduce teenagers' smoking has stalled, dismayed federal health officials and anti-smoking advocates who said that one of the nation's most important public health priorities is faltering..... The proportion of students who smoke soared from 27.5 percent in 1991 to 36.4 percent in 1997 but then began to fall, hitting 21.9 percent in 2003. The 2005 survey, however, showed the rate had crept up to 23 percent. Because that change was not statistically significant, officials were waiting for the 2007 figures to determine whether the downward trend had actually stalled. The 2007 figure is slightly lower at 20 percent, but again, the figure is not statistically significant.... The survey did show continued declines in some groups, most notably African American girls." Washington Post (June 29, 2008) 1.]

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HUMAN SERVICES

CHILDREN

"Impact of Kinship Care on Behavioral Well-being for Children in Out-of-Home Care." By David M. Rubin and others. IN: Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, vol. 162, no. 6 (June 2008) pp. 550-556.

Full text at: <http://archpedi.ama-assn.org/cgi/reprint/162/6/550>

["This study examined the influence of kinship care on behavioral problems after 18 and 36 months in out-of-home care. The authors concluded that children placed into kinship care had fewer behavioral problems 3 years after placement than children who were placed into foster care. This finding supports efforts to maximize placement of children with willing and available kin when they enter out-of-home care."]

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Using Local Data to Explore the Experiences and Needs of Children of Incarcerated Parents. By Diana Brazzell, Urban Institute. (The Institute, Washington, DC) May 2008. 14 p.

Full text at: http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411698_incarcerated_parents.pdf

["The Urban Institute partnered with local research organizations in three sites to learn more about children of incarcerated parents through the merging and analysis of local and state level criminal justice and human services data. The purpose of the project was to better understand the experiences and needs of children of incarcerated parents in each locality and to explore the involvement of affected families with the criminal justice, child welfare, and social welfare systems. This report presents findings from the sites and lessons learned regarding the merging and analysis of administrative data on this population."]

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HOMELESS

Unsheltered: A Report on Homelessness in South Los Angeles. By David B. Howard, Special Service for Groups. (The Service, Los Angeles, California) 2008 52 p.

Full text at: http://www.ssgmain.org/unsheltered_report.pdf

["South Los Angeles has the highest concentration of homeless people in Los Angeles County outside of Downtown, yet the issue of homelessness in South LA communities has been largely overlooked in the recent media and political attention being paid to homelessness. The purpose of this report is to highlight and examine the community-level economic, demographic, and social indicators that help explain the high rate of homelessness in South LA. This data will help policymakers, service providers and community members to better understand the conditions of the underserved in the South LA area as a way to move forward in the countywide fight against homelessness."]

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TRANSPORTATION

FEDERAL FUNDING

Transportation Infrastructure: Issues and Options. Testimony by Peter R. Orszag, Congressional Budget Office, and JayEtta Z. Hecker, Government Accountability Office, before the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance. (The Committee, Washington, DC) July 2008. Various pagings.

Full text at: <http://finance.senate.gov/sitepages/hearing071008.htm>

["Some of the demand for additional spending on infrastructure could be met by providing incentives to use existing infrastructure more efficiently and by devoting current budgetary resources to their highest valued uses.... There is a strong economic rationale for charging beneficiaries for the costs of infrastructure..... A special-purpose entity, such as a federally chartered infrastructure bank, could provide funding for infrastructure outside of the annual appropriation process but would not be a source of 'free money': Any reduction in the federal shares of project costs would require greater shares to be borne by project users, state or local taxpayers, or both."]

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USER FEES

**Techniques for Assessing the Socio-Economic Effects of Vehicle Mileage Fees.
By B. Starr McMullen and others, Oregon State University. (Oregon
Department of Transportation, Salem, Oregon) June 2008. 108 p.**

Full text at: http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TP_RES/docs/Reports/2008/ODOT-VMT_Fee_Impacts.pdf

["The analysis focused on a change from the current gasoline tax to a Vehicle Miles Traveled fee structure for collecting highway user fees.... A revenue neutral VMT fee of 1.2 cents per mile would result in a very small increase in regressivity (less than one percent for the lowest income group) in contrast to the five percent increase in regressivity caused by the increase in the price of gasoline between 2001 and 2006. The impact of a change to a VMT fee on rural areas was found to be opposite to that suggested by conventional wisdom. On average a household in a rural location would pay less under the revenue neutral VMT fee than under the gasoline tax. Findings suggested that a change to a VMT fee is not likely to create a significant disincentive to purchase more fuel efficient or hybrid vehicles."]

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