

**CALIFORNIA RESEARCH BUREAU
CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY
Studies in the News**

California -- One Hundred Years Ago

June 1909 “Chairman Tawney and Hons. W.I. Smith, W.P. Brownley and J.J. Fitzgerald, members of the subcommittee that prepares the Sundry Civil Bill for the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives, have been invited by the California Good Roads Association to visit the Yosemite Valley. It is desired that they examine the conditions and determine what cooperation can be arranged with State and local authorities in making that wonderland of natural beauty more available and convenient to the millions of people that must be attracted by its fame during the years to come.... It is the opinion of Hon J.C. Needham and Senators Flint and Perkins that the first thing to be done is to make the trip from the end railroad to the valley proper as comfortable as possible. Needham suggests that a sprinkling system be installed to keep down dust, writing ‘It seems to me that people can stand a little jolting if it cannot be avoided, but when they are compelled to swallow dust and ride in a continuous cloud of dust, it is a little too much to ask.’” *Los Angeles Times* (June 1, 1909) pg. II6.

July 1909 “I have just returned from a visit to the Yosemite, and from my experience I believe a brief statement may be of benefit to others who may desire to visit the Yosemite.... I went in by way of Merced, which is the easiest and the popular way of entering the park. The branch road from Merced to El Portal is seventy eighth miles in length. The moment you leave the hotel at El Portal your troubles commence. It is about sixteen miles of staging from the hotel to the foot of Yosemite Falls. The road itself is of a reasonably good grade, but on account of the soil it has an average of two inches of floury dust, and in traveling this sixteen miles, the occupants of the stages breathe dust all the way. It takes four to six horses to haul these stages and in going in, it being a steep up-grade all the way, the speed is slow and you get the full benefit of this dust.’ J.L. Murphy” *Los Angeles Times* (July 3, 1909) pg. II2.

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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 California 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 California 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

POLICE

Office of Independent Review Seventh Annual Report. By the Los Angeles County Office of Independent Review. (The Office, Commerce, California) April 2009. 129 p.

Full text at: <http://www.laoir.com/reports/SeventhAnnualRept.pdf>

["There has been a dramatic upswing in the number of Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies arrested for alcohol-related offenses in recent years, suggesting a growing drinking problem within the department. Last year, 70 sworn and civilian employees of the Sheriff's Department were arrested. The majority of those arrests involved employees driving off-duty while under the influence of alcohol. In many cases, drunk deputies were carrying firearms at the time of their arrests.... Sheriff Lee Baca acknowledged that the number of alcohol-related arrests indicated that some deputies have a drinking problem. The report, however, expressed concern that deputies in field assignments were being transferred to work in the jails as a punishment for misconduct." Los Angeles Times (April 16, 2009) 1.]
[Request #S09-15-3598]

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Policing Los Angeles Under a Consent Decree: The Dynamics of Change at the LAPD. By Christopher Stone and others, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. (The School, Cambridge, Massachusetts) May 2009.

["After several years of court-ordered reforms, the Los Angeles Police Department has heightened its image among Angelenos and made significant improvements in the performance and attitudes of its officers.... In asking for the study and giving researchers unusual access to the department, LAPD Chief William J. Bratton had hoped it would find that the LAPD has changed for the better since being forced eight years ago by federal officials to adopt a sweeping set of checks and balances that resulted from the Rampart corruption scandal. Bratton increasingly has chafed under the stigma of federal oversight and, in recent months, has been waging a public campaign to convince federal officials that the department is fit to keep its own house in order." Los Angeles Times (May 19, 2009) 1.]

[Request #S09-15-3684]

Report. 76 p.

http://www.hks.harvard.edu/criminaljustice/publications/Harvard_LAPD_Report.pdf

Executive Summary. 3 p.

http://www.hks.harvard.edu/criminaljustice/publications/Harvard_LAPD_Report_Exec_Summary.pdf

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PRISONER REENTRY

Preparing Prisoners for Employment: The Power of Small Rewards. By Anne Morrison Piehl, Rutgers University. (Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, New York, New York) May 2009. 26 p.

Full text at: http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/cr_57.htm

["The high rates of recidivism and unemployment among ex-offenders suggest that the reasons to make an honest living are anything but obvious. Far more than a lack of education or skills, discrimination, or other external obstacles, it is ex-offenders' impulsiveness and unfamiliarity with the world of work and its trade-offs between sacrifice and reward that explain their poor outcomes after release from incarceration. That is the theory behind a residential prisoner-release program in Montgomery County, Maryland. Realizing that neither the powerful incentives of freedom and financial solvency nor the powerful disincentives of re-incarceration and impoverishment have sufficiently reshaped this troubled population's behavior, the program has resorted to the 'small stuff:' later curfews, access to phone cards, and more frequent visits from family, to induce program participants to get and keep jobs in the surrounding community."]

[Request #S09-15-3685]

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ECONOMY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Greater Philadelphia Life Sciences Cluster, 2009: An Economic and Comparative Assessment. By Ross C. DeVol and others, the Milken Institute. (The Institute, Santa Monica, California) May 2009. 110 p.

Full text at: <http://www.milkeninstitute.org/pdf/PhillyLifeSciencesRprt.pdf>

["The life sciences industry -- which includes biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, life sciences R&D, medical devices and health-care services -- has been highly sought by economic development agencies for its high-paying jobs and tremendous growth potential. The report compares Greater Philadelphia to 10 other metropolitan areas [including San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Diego] considered to be the leading life sciences clusters in the U.S. and ranks them based on employment, research and development capacity, output, work force, investment and dozens of other measures."]

[Request #S09-15-3687]

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ECONOMIC POLICY

Why Fiscal Stimulus Is Unlikely to Work. By Kevin A. Hassett, American Enterprise Institute. (The Institute, Washington, DC) March 2009. 28 p.

Full text at:

<http://www.aei.org/docLib/Why%20Fiscal%20Stimulus%20is%20Unlikely.pdf>

["Until recently, there was wide consensus among macroeconomists that activist fiscal policy was inadvisable.... These reviews generally found that stimulus measures were ineffective in the past, and usually appeared at the incorrect time. Despite these admonitions, there is one thing that appears certain as of this writing: Countercyclical discretionary policy is now politically feasible.... First, I will outline the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to document the economic arguments that have provided the architecture of the current approach. The next section will draw heavily on the empirical literature, and assess the likely efficacy of the approach that has been adopted in the United States. The final section will explore alternative approaches that may follow from the lessons of the literature, and discuss the possibility that these might lead to superior fiscal policy outcomes."]

[Request #S09-15-3686]

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UNITED STATES

The State of the Economy. By Douglas W. Elmendorf, Congressional Budget Office. Statement before the Committee on the Budget, U.S. House of Representatives. (The Office, Washington, DC) May 21, 2009. 21 p.

Full text at: http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/100xx/doc10086/05-21-State_of_Economy_Testimony.pdf

["In the Congressional Budget Office's judgment, the economy will stop contracting and resume growing during the second half of this year, but the hardships caused by the recession will persist for some time. The growth in output later this year and next year is likely to be sufficiently weak that the unemployment rate will probably continue to rise into the second half of next year and peak above 10 percent. Economic growth over time will ultimately bring the unemployment rate back down to the neighborhood of 5 percent seen before this downturn began, but that process is likely to take several years.... Many factors will temper the strength of the recovery: the loss of household wealth; the fragility of financial institutions; persistently weak growth in the rest of the world; a surplus of housing units on the market; and low utilization of manufacturing capacity. How much those factors will dampen the recovery is uncertain."] [Request #S09-15-3702]

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EDUCATION

EDUCATIONAL REFORM

Could a New Way of Collecting Data Transform Education in California? By Leonor Ehling, California Senate Office of Research. (The Office, Sacramento, California) May 2009. 12 p.

Full text at: [Data Transforms Education](#)

["The state plans to launch a more sophisticated process for collecting educational data.... known as longitudinal data These new data-gathering systems will provide.... an unprecedented volume of information that is expected to aid in the enhancement of California's public education system.... Linking these databases to other state systems would enable educators to more easily answer numerous important questions, such as: What percentage of a school district's high-school graduates enroll in college within 15 months of graduation? What percentage of the state's high-school graduates need remediation once they get to college? How is a student's ability to successfully complete college related to his or her high-school courses, grades, and test scores? Do students who attend a state-funded preschool have a better chance of meeting state academic expectations in elementary school? And in high school?"] [Request #S09-15-3689]

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PRESCHOOL

Preschool Adequacy and Efficiency in California: Issues, Policy Options, and Recommendations. By Lynn A. Karoly, RAND Corporation. (The Corporation, Santa Monica, California) May 2009. 197 p.

Full text at: <http://www.preschoolcalifornia.org/rand-study/>

["Faced with mounting evidence that California has fallen behind on many key indicators of education performance, policymakers and the public share considerable interest in exploring whether California should expand public funding for preschool education. This expanded funding will be most effective if resources can be directed to their most efficient uses. Doing so requires an understanding of how resources are currently allocated, what education objectives preschool education can help achieve, and where preschool resources can be most effective. To investigate these issues, the RAND Corporation has undertaken a multicomponent study called the California Preschool Study to examine the adequacy and efficiency of preschool education in California."]
[Request #S09-15-3698]

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SECONDARY EDUCATION

Effects of the California High School Exit Exam on Student Persistence, Achievement, and Graduation. By Sean F. Reardon, Stanford University, and others. (Institute for Research on Education Policy & Practice, Stanford, California) April 2009.

["California's high school exit exam is keeping disproportionate numbers of girls and non-whites from graduating, even when they are just as capable as white boys. The exam, which became a graduation requirement in 2007, has 'had no positive effect on student achievement.' Girls and non-whites were probably failing the exit exam more often than expected because of what is known as 'stereotype threat,' a theory in social psychology that holds, essentially, that negative stereotypes can be self-fulfilling. Girls and students of color may be tripped up by the expectation that they cannot do as well as white boys. Reardon said there was no other apparent reason why girls and non-whites fail the exam more often than white boys, who are their equals in other, lower-stress academic assessments." Los Angeles Times (April 22, 2009) 1.] [Request #S09-15-3663]

Report. 64 p.

http://www.stanford.edu/group/irepp/cgi-bin/joomla/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=243

Executive Summary. 5 p.

http://www.stanford.edu/group/irepp/cgi-bin/joomla/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=241

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EMPLOYMENT

IMMIGRATION

Trends in Immigrant and Native Employment. By Steven A. Camarota and Karen Jensenius, Center for Immigration Studies. (The Center, Washington, DC) May 2009. 24 p.

Full text at: <http://www.cis.org/articles/2009/back509.pdf>

["Immigrant unemployment (legal and illegal) was higher in the first quarter of 2009 than at any time since 1994, when immigrants were first separated out in the monthly data. This represents a change from the recent past when native-born Americans tended to have higher unemployment rates. The findings show that immigrants have been harder hit by the recession than natives. The picture is complex, with the least and most educated immigrants experiencing the largest increases in unemployment relative to natives. Although data on immigrants is collected, it is generally not published by the government. This report is one of the few to examine this data."][Request #S09-15-3644]

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The Unemployment and Immigration Disconnect. AND: Immigration and Native-Born Unemployment Across Racial/Ethnic Groups. By Rob Paral and Associates. (Immigration Policy Center, Washington, DC) May 2009.

["The reports examined data from the Census Bureau and found that there is no apparent relationship between the number of recent immigrants in a particular locale and the unemployment rate among native-born whites, blacks, Latinos, or Asians. Even now, at a time of economic recession and high unemployment, there is no correlation between the number of recent immigrant workers in a given state, county, or city and the unemployment rate among native-born workers.... The absence of a discernible statistical relationship between recent immigration and unemployment is not surprising given that recent immigrants are such a small portion of the overall labor force. As of 2008, immigrants who arrived during the last decade were only 5.5 percent of the U.S. workforce."][Request #S09-15-3693]

Immigration Disconnect. 13 p.

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/images/File/specialreport/Part%201%20-%20Unemployment%20Disconnect%2005-19-09.pdf>

Immigration and Native-Born. 14 p.

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/images/File/specialreport/Part%202%20-%20Unemployment%20Race%20Disconnect%2005-19-09.pdf>

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ENERGY

ENERGY POLICY

Climate 2030: A National Blueprint for a Clean Energy Economy. By Rachel Cleetus and others, Union of Concerned Scientists. (The Union, Cambridge, Massachusetts) May 2009.

["Blueprint policies lower U.S. heat-trapping emissions to meet a cap set at 26 percent below 2005 levels in 2020, and 56 percent below 2005 levels in 2030. The nation achieves these deep cuts in carbon emissions while saving consumers and businesses \$465 billion annually by 2030. The Blueprint also builds \$1.7 trillion in net cumulative savings between 2010 and 2030. Blueprint policies stimulate significant consumer, business, and government investment in new technologies and measures by 2030. The resulting savings on energy bills from reductions in electricity and fuel use more than offset the costs of these additional investments. The result is net annual savings for households, vehicle owners, businesses, and industries of \$255 billion by 2030."][Request #S09-15-3705]

Report. 239 p.

http://www.ucsusa.org/assets/documents/global_warming/climate-2030-report.pdf

Executive Summary. 16 p.

http://www.ucsusa.org/assets/documents/global_warming/Climate-2030-Blueprint_executive-summary.pdf

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ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate Change 101: Understanding and Responding to Global Climate Change. By the Pew Center on Global Climate Change and the Pew Center on the States. (Pew Center on Global Climate Change, Arlington, Virginia) January 2009. 86 p.

Full text at: http://www.pewclimate.org/global-warming-basics/climate_change_101

["The science is clear: climate change is happening, and it is linked directly to human activities that emit greenhouse gases.... These reports provide a reliable and understandable introduction to climate change. They cover climate science and impacts, technological solutions, business solutions, international action, recent action in the U.S. states, and action taken by local governments. The overview serves as a summary and introduction to the series.... To address the enormous challenge of climate change successfully, new approaches are needed at the international level, and the United States must re-engage in the global effort and adopt strong and effective national policies."][Request #S09-15-3703]

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ENDANGERED SPECIES

Endangered Species Act: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Has Incomplete Information about Effects on Listed Species from Section 7 Consultations. By the U.S. Government Accountability Office. (The Office, Washington, DC) May 2009. 39 p.

Full text at: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09550.pdf>

["The coastal California gnatcatcher has been listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act since 1993. You would think that when construction of the Sky Ranch development east of San Diego was predicted to harm seven gnatcatcher breeding pairs three years ago, the government would keep close tabs on those numbers, termed 'incidental take.' Not so, says the GAO. 'Out of 497 listed species in the western states,' the report's authors write, 'GAO identified 3 species for which the [U.S. Fish & Wildlife] Service has a formal Web-based database for tracking cumulative take: northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, and bull trout.' The gnatcatcher is not so lucky. According to the report, it is 'one of the most frequently consulted-on species in Southern California' but biologists simply rely on their 'firsthand knowledge' of data collected within their own offices to keep tabs on the species." Scientific American (May 27, 2009) 1.]
[Request #S09-15-3706]

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WATER RIGHTS

Stewart & Jasper Orchards, et al. v. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, et al. U.S. District Court, Eastern District of California. Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief. May 21, 2009. 20 p.

Full text at: <http://community.pacificlegal.org/Page.aspx?pid=900>

["The lawsuit claims that the smelt has no commercial value and is not involved in interstate commerce. Because of that, managing the smelt and placing it under the protection of the Endangered Species Act violates the U.S. Constitution, which limits federal domestic authority to things involved in interstate commerce. The suit also argues that a smelt management plan issued in December -- which has resulted in a reduction of water deliveries to west side farmers and urban users in the Bay Area and Southern California -- fails to show how the pumping reductions from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta would benefit the smelt, and did not take into account the economic effects of the ruling. 'The federal government is imposing a depression on California's agriculture industry,' said Pacific Legal Foundation attorney Damien Schiff." Fresno Bee (May 21, 2009) 1.]
[Request #S09-15-3697]

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GENERAL GOVERNMENT

FEDERAL BUDGET

The Economic Crisis and the Fiscal Crisis: 2009 and Beyond. By Alan J. Auerbach, University of California, Berkeley, and William G. Gale, Brookings Institution. (The Institution, Washington, DC) February 19, 2009. 29 p

Full text at:

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2009/0219_fiscal_future_gale/0219_fiscal_future_gale.pdf

["In 2009, the federal deficit will be larger as a share of the economy than at any time since World War II. The current deficit is due in part to economic weakness and the stimulus, and in part to policy choices made in the past. What is more troubling is that, under what we view as optimistic assumptions, the deficit is projected to average at least \$1 trillion per year for the 10 years after 2009, even if the economy returns to full employment and the stimulus package is allowed to expire in two years. The longer-run picture is even bleaker.... Recent trends in credit default swap markets show a clearly discernable uptick in the perceived likelihood of default on 5-year U.S. senior Treasury debt, a notion that was virtually unthinkable in the past."] [Request #S09-15-3411]

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Economic Development: The Local Perspective. By Max Neiman and Daniel Krimm, Public Policy Institute of California. (The Institute, San Francisco, California) May 2009.

["Since Proposition 13 in 1978 restricted property tax income, California's local governments have increased their economic development activities, especially in the areas of land development and retail sales. Such measures have provoked criticism, but local officials say they have few alternatives. This paper presents a detailed survey of local economic development efforts, including policies and activities and assessments of local officials of their successes and failures. The results show that significant barriers to local economic activity exist, among them an inadequate state transportation infrastructure, high energy costs, and lack of an appropriately trained workforce."] [Request #S09-15-3656]

Report. 52 p.

http://www.pplic.org/content/pubs/report/R_509MNR.pdf

Technical Appendix. 31 p.

http://www.pplic.org/content/pubs/other/509MNR_appendix.pdf

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REDVELOPMENT

The Double Bind of Redevelopment: Camden During Receivership. By David Greenberg and others, MDRC. (MDRC, New York, New York) April 2009. 43 p.

Full text at: <http://www.mdrc.org/publications/517/full.pdf>

["In the early years of receivership, the city proposed billion-dollar redevelopment efforts in several neighborhoods, hoping to encourage mixed-income development and a more sustainable fiscal future. These ambitious plans were met with protest and litigation, and have not yet advanced. During the same period, community organizations continued to build and rehabilitate affordable housing, the city's educational and medical facilities were able to expand, and some smaller neighborhood-wide redevelopment plans did, in fact, move forward. This paper finds that three factors were related to more successful redevelopment efforts. These efforts: 1) were able to build on groups' existing capacities and their past work in neighborhoods; 2) were marked by more effective participatory dynamics and the limited use of eminent domain; and 3) benefited from good relationships with the State of New Jersey and with private-sector partners."]

[Request #S09-15-3656]

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TAXES

Reforming the Tax Treatment of S-Corporations and Limited Liability Companies Can Help States Finance Public Services. By Michael Mazerov, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. (The Center, Washington, DC) April 8, 2009. 10 p.

Full text at: <http://www.cbpp.org/files/4-8-09sfp.pdf>

["S-Corps and LLCs generally are exempt from the federal corporate income tax; they are 'pass-through entities' that pass through their profits each year to their owners, who pay income taxes on these profits. Almost all states have conformed to the federal pass-through treatment of S-Corps and LLCs by exempting them from their corporate income taxes. Nonetheless, every state except Idaho has deemed it appropriate to levy a tax or annual fee directly on these business entities in addition to taxing the profits received by their owners.... Elected officials should review any taxes and fees that have not been changed in recent years to determine if they are still sufficient.... Three states -- California, Illinois, and Massachusetts -- impose corporate income taxes on S-Corps and LLCs at tax rates lower than those that apply to general corporations."]

[Request #S09-15-3583]

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HEALTH

CHILDREN

Express Lane Eligibility and Beyond: How Automated Enrollment Can Help Eligible Children Receive Medicaid and CHIP: A Catalog of State Policy Options. By Stan Dorn, Urban Institute. (The Institute, Washington, DC) April 2009. 48 p.

Full text at: http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411879_eligible_children.pdf

["Automated enrollment strategies have achieved remarkable results with many public and private benefit programs, dramatically increasing program participation while lowering administrative costs and reducing erroneous eligibility determinations. The recently passed Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009 (CHIPRA) should make such steps much easier for states to take in covering eligible but uninsured children. Following CHIPRA's enactment, states have both new tools and new incentives to use automated strategies in fulfilling four key functions: identifying uninsured children; determining their eligibility for health coverage; enrolling eligible children into coverage; and retaining eligible children."] [Request #S09-15-3708]

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FOOD SAFETY

Seeking Safer Packaging: Ranking Packaged Food Companies on BPA. By Larisa Ruoff, Green Century Capital Management, and others. (Green Century Capital Management, Boston, Massachusetts) April 2009. 12 p.

Full text at:

http://www.greencentury.com/pdf/globaldocuments/Seeking_Safer_Packaging.pdf

["Bisphenol A (BPA) is a chemical used in the epoxy lining of canned foods and beverages and in polycarbonate, a hard, clear plastic. The chemical mimics estrogen in the body and researchers have found links between BPA and numerous health problems including heart disease, diabetes, cancer and metabolic disorders.... The authors sent letters to 20 companies in the packaged food industry to identify the actions the companies are taking to address concerns regarding BPA. Fourteen companies replied. Company scores are based entirely on their responses to these letters. This scorecard reviews how leading packaged food companies are responding to increased consumer and investor concern about BPA. The report ranks companies on three factors: 1) efforts to find and implement alternatives to BPA, 2) plans to phase out BPA in products for which alternatives exist, and 3) transparency on the issue."]

[Request #S09-15-3625]

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HEALTH INSURANCE

Obamacare to Come: Seven Bad Ideas for Health Care Reform. By Michael Tanner, Cato Institute. (The Institute, Washington, DC) May 21, 2009. 24 p.

Full text at: <http://www.cato.org/pubs/pas/pa638.pdf>

["Given the problems facing our health care system -- high costs, uneven quality, millions of Americans without health insurance -- it sometimes seems that things couldn't possibly get any worse. But if the final health care reform plan contains most or all of these bad ideas, things could indeed get worse -- much worse. For the economy, Obamacare could mean trillions of dollars in new taxes and the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs. Health care providers could find their ability to practice medicine constrained and directed by far away government bureaucracies. But for individual health care consumers the consequences could be far worse: they would face far fewer choices and the possibility of far poorer care. Health care clearly needs reform -- but getting that reform right is more important than just doing something. Obamacare, unless it is drastically revised in the coming months, gets that reform wrong."]

[Request #S09-15-3712]

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PHYSICIANS

Medi-Cal Physician and Dentist Fees: A Comparison to Other Medicaid Programs and Medicare. By Stephen Zuckerman and others, Urban Institute. (California HealthCare Foundation, Oakland, California) April 2009. 30 p.

Full text at: <http://www.chcf.org/documents/policy/Medi-CalFeeComparison.pdf>

["Medi-Cal fees for physician services, on average, have for many years been near the bottom nationally among Medicaid programs, and well below the rates paid by Medicare. Overall, Medi-Cal fees were 83% of the Medicaid national average in 2008. California's fees rank 47th overall among states when adjusted for geographic differences in the cost of providing medical care. Among the ten largest state Medicaid programs, California ranks 9th. Considerable variation exists in Medi-Cal fees across procedures in relation to national averages, with relative fees ranging from less than 70% to more than 140% of the national average. From 2003 to 2008, Medi-Cal physician fees grew, on average, by only 2%. This compares to 15% growth in average Medicaid fees nationwide and 21% general inflation during this period."]

[Request #S09-15-3711]

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HOUSING

REAL ESTATE LOANS

Reducing Foreclosures: No Easy Answers. By Christopher Foote and others, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. (The Bank, Atlanta, Georgia) May 2009. 53 p.

Full text at: <http://www.frbatlanta.org/filelegacydocs/wp0915.pdf>

["This paper takes a skeptical look at a leading argument about what is causing the foreclosure crisis and what should be done to stop it. Unaffordable loans, defined as those with high mortgage payments relative to income at origination, are unlikely to be the main reason that borrowers decide to default. The efficiency of foreclosure for investors is a more plausible explanation for the low number of modifications to date than contract frictions related to securitization agreements between servicers and investors. While investors might be foreclosing when it would be socially efficient to modify, there is little evidence to suggest they are acting against their own interests when they do so. An important implication of our analysis is that policies designed to reduce foreclosures should focus on ameliorating the immediate effects of job loss and other adverse life events rather than modifying loans to make them more affordable on a long-term basis."][Request #S09-15-3716]

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TRANSPORTATION

FINANCING

"The Equity Implications of Financing the Nation's Surface Transportation System." By Sandra Rosenbloom. IN: TR News, no. 261 (March/April 2009) pp. 3-9.

Full text at: <http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/trnews/trnews261equity.pdf>

["Many analysts believe that travelers should be charged for creating such burdens as excessive demands for new capacity or for the environmental, health, and congestion costs imposed on other system users and on society. Users can be charged, for example, by pricing the use of new facilities, by imposing higher fees for traveling on a congested highway, or by taxing cars that are less fuel-efficient. But rarely do all system objectives fully complement one another; more commonly, they conflict. This happens with another major policy objective -- creating a fair and equitable transportation system. On the expenditure -- or service delivery -- side, questions arise over the equity implications of decisions about transportation infrastructure and operations. These range from concerns that highway expansion has disadvantaged public transit to challenges that new rail systems, which largely serve middle-and higher-income travelers, disadvantage bus services, which serve mostly lower-income travelers."][Request #S09-15-3700]

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INFRASTRUCTURE

Planning Complete Streets for an Aging America. By Jana Lynott, AARP Public Policy Institute, and others. (The Institute, Washington, DC) May 2009. 128 p.

Full text at: http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/il/2009_02_streets.pdf

["America needs streets designed to be safe and convenient for travel by automobile, foot, bicycle and transit regardless of age or ability. As the nation ages, Complete Streets planning presents an opportunity to increase the safety and availability of older adults' travel options. Despite the oncoming stream of older boomers, over two-thirds of transportation planners and engineers have not begun to consider the needs of older people in their multimodal street planning, and only one-third of the state and local Complete Streets policies adopted to date have made explicit mention of older road users. This report offers refinements to intersection design treatments recommended by the Federal Highway Administration. A public opinion telephone survey of the 50+ population, an online survey of more than 1,000 transportation planners and engineers, and an inventory of the 80 existing state Complete Streets policies inform this study."]

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PUBLIC TRANSIT

Job Impacts of Spending on Public Transportation: An Update. By the Economic Development Research Group, Inc. Prepared for the American Public Transportation Association. (The Association, Washington, DC) May 2009. 17 p.

Full text at: http://www.apta.com/research/info/online/documents/jobs_impact.pdf

["Looking across the entire \$47 billion spent on public transportation in the US each year, there is an average rate of approximately 36,000 jobs per billion dollars of public transportation spending (i.e., 36 jobs per million dollars of spending). This figure is based on the national mix of public transportation spending as of 2007. It includes a direct effect of spending in transportation related manufacturing, construction and operations as well as orders to suppliers or by re-spending of worker income on consumer purchases."]

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