

## Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

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### **CULTURE & SOCIETY**

***Electronic Communications and Public Records.*** By Nathan Dickerson. The Council of State Governments. Feb. 2012. 3 p.

[http://knowledgecenter.csg.org/drupal/system/files/electronic\\_communications\\_and\\_public\\_records.pdf](http://knowledgecenter.csg.org/drupal/system/files/electronic_communications_and_public_records.pdf)

Every state has some form of open records law, but “the growth of electronic communications in the form of email, text messages, instant messages and social media has created an evolving landscape of open records policies. The courts, attorneys general opinions and administrative agencies have taken the lead in delineating existing state laws in this new media world. Most states define open records based on the content of the record and/or whether the technology used for the communication is privately or publicly owned. Laws focusing on content are more easily transferable to social media, which often reside on a private company's server.”

### **DEMOGRAPHY**

***The Rise of Intermarriage: Rates, Characteristics Vary by Race and Gender.*** Pew Research Center on Social and Demographic Trends. Feb. 2012. 56 p.

<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/files/2012/02/SDT-Intermarriage-II.pdf>

“Intermarriage in the United States tilts West. About one-in-five (22%) of all newlyweds in Western states married someone of a different race or ethnicity between 2008 and 2010, compared with 14% in the South, 13% in the Northeast and 11% in the Midwest....More than four-in-ten Americans (43%) say that

more people of different races marrying each other has been a change for the better in our society, while 11% say it has been a change for the worse and 44% say it has made no difference.”

## ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT

***The Necessity of a Lower Dollar and the Route There.*** By Dean Baker. Center for Economic and Policy Research. Feb. 2012. 13 p.

<http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/lower-dollar-2012-02.pdf>

This report demonstrates that a reduction of the value of the dollar would not only correct the large trade deficit in the United States, but would also lead to a boom in the manufacturing sector, potentially creating millions of jobs. It begins by making a simple economic point: a large trade deficit means that a country *must* either have a large budget deficit, negative private savings, or some combination of the two. As neither of these are considered desirable, a lower trade deficit should be a top policy concern. And a lower-valued dollar is the only plausible mechanism for balancing the trade deficit. The author then shows which sectors of the economy would expand under a scenario in which the United States had a lower trade deficit.

***Supporting Our Military Families: Best Practices for Streamlining Occupational Licensing Across State Lines.*** U.S. Department of the Treasury and U.S. Department of Defense. Feb. 2012. 26 p.

[http://www.defense.gov/home/pdf/Occupational\\_Licensing\\_and\\_Military\\_Spouses\\_Report\\_vFINAL.PDF](http://www.defense.gov/home/pdf/Occupational_Licensing_and_Military_Spouses_Report_vFINAL.PDF)

“This report highlights best practices that states can pursue to help licensed military spouses. These best practices to help make licenses more portable come at little cost to states, but could make a meaningful difference in the lives of many military families.” Best practices in this report include: facilitating endorsement of a current license from another jurisdiction, providing a temporary or provisional license, and expediting application procedures.

## GENERAL GOVERNMENT

***Both Millionaire’s and Governor’s Tax Initiatives Favored by Majorities. Less Support for Munger Tax Plan.*** By Mark DiCamillo, et al. Field Research Corporation. Feb. 24, 2012. 7 p.

<http://www.field.com/fieldpollonline/subscribers/RIs2404.pdf>

Three proposed tax increase initiatives for the November general election ballot are aimed at helping California close its \$9 billion budget deficit. California Federation of Teacher’s tax initiative, with its call for increasing state income taxes on Californians earning more than \$1 million, received the most support from voters polled (63%). Governor Brown’s initiative has a 58% approval rating, while the proposal backed by civil rights attorney Molly Munger is opposed by 48%.

***Facts and Figures: How Does Your State Compare?*** The Tax Foundation. Feb. 2012. 52 p.

<http://www.taxfoundation.org/files/ff2012.pdf>

“By some measures, California’s tax burden lands the state in the nation’s top 10 – but you can’t blame Sacramento alone for the ranking. A study by the Tax Foundation found that the state’s state and local tax burden per person was \$4,910 in 2009, the sixth highest nationwide (No. 1 is Connecticut at \$7,256.) But local taxes were a key reason for California’s ranking being so high.” (*Orange County Register*. Feb. 15, 2012).

## HOUSING

***The Shrinking Supply of Affordable Housing.* By Megan Bolton. National Low Income Housing Coalition. Feb. 2012. 6 p.**

<http://nlihc.org/doc/HousingSpotlight2-1.pdf>

A rising “affordable housing gap” is developing in the U.S. This gap is measured by a comparison between the number of renter households with incomes under a specified level with the number of rental housing units that are affordable and available to them. With the economic downturn in recent years, the number of renter households falling in the extremely low income (ELI) category has grown. California has less than the national level of affordable and available units per 100 households at or below the ELI threshold.

## TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

***Emission Changes Resulting from the San Pedro Bay, California Ports Truck Retirement Program.* By Gary A. Bishop, et al. Environmental Science & Technology. Jan. 2012. 8 p.**

<http://pubs.acs.org/doi/pdfplus/10.1021/es202392g>

“Recent U.S. Environmental Protection Agency emissions regulations have resulted in lower emissions of particulate matter and oxides of nitrogen from heavy-duty diesel trucks. To accelerate fleet turnover the State of California in 2008 along with the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach (San Pedro Bay Ports) in 2006 passed regulations establishing timelines forcing the retirement of older diesel trucks. On-road emissions measurements of heavy-duty diesel trucks were collected...at a Port of Los Angeles location and an inland weigh station on the Riverside freeway (CA SR91).” The port location saw the average age of trucks drop to 2.5 years from 12.7 years, “with significant reductions in carbon monoxide (30%), oxides of nitrogen (48%) and infrared opacity (a measure of particulate matter, 54%).” Trucks at the Riverside location grew older, on average, with little improvement in emissions.

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