

Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

This issue introduces Tools of the Trade, a new section highlighting California State Library resources and other public websites that support the daily work of California's legislators and policy makers.

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CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

When Labels Don't Fit: Hispanics and Their Views of Identity. By Paul Taylor, et al. Pew Hispanic Center. Apr. 4, 2012. 64 p.

<http://www.pewhispanic.org/files/2012/04/Hispanic-Identity.pdf>

"Nearly four decades after the United States government mandated the use of the terms "Hispanic" or "Latino" to categorize Americans who trace their roots to Spanish-speaking countries, a new nationwide survey of Hispanic adults finds that these terms still haven't been fully embraced by Hispanics themselves. A majority (51%) say they most often identify themselves by their family's country of origin; just 24% say they prefer a pan-ethnic label....The survey finds that, regardless of where they were born, large majorities of Latinos say that life in the U.S. is better than in their family's country of origin. Also, nearly nine-in-ten (87%) say it is important for immigrant Hispanics to learn English in order to succeed in the U.S."

ECONOMY

The Texas Economic Model: Hard for Other States to Follow and Not All It Seems. By Elizabeth McNichol, et al. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Apr. 3, 2012. 11 p.

<http://www.cbpp.org/files/4-3-12sfp.pdf>

“The reality is that much of Texas' growth results not from its policies but rather from factors that state officials cannot control....Texas has been benefiting from cheap and plentiful land, a location that enables international immigration and trade, abundant natural resources such as oil and gas, and other advantages that cannot be exported.” This paper examines these factors, looks at the quality of jobs and quality of life in Texas, and ends with a forecast that its economy may not continue to outpace other states.

EDUCATION

A Golden Opportunity: Advancing California's Early Care and Education Workforce Professional Development System. By Lynn A. Karoly. RAND. Mar. 2012. 174 p.

http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2012/RAND_MG1188.pdf

Evaluation of California's early care and education (ECE) programs shows that center-based care is at least equivalent, if not better, than home based care. However, substantial room remains to improve ECE. “Although substantial public resources are invested in ECE workforce professional development in California, the lack of data for monitoring and evaluation limits the options for evidence-based decision-making regarding how best to advance the professional development of the ECE workforce.... Current data systems and research do not provide the information needed to understand which segments of the ECE workforce benefit from the public-sector investments in education and training and whether the resources spent actually achieve the objective of advancing the effectiveness of the ECE workforce.”

EMPLOYMENT

Federal Workforce Investment Act: More Effective State Planning and Oversight Is Necessary to Better Help California's Job Seekers Find Employment. California State Auditor. Mar. 2012. 57 p.

<http://www.bsa.ca.gov/pdfs/reports/2011-111.pdf>

“California's oversight of programs and activities funded by the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) has multiple shortcomings that involve those entities charged with implementing WIA.” The California Workforce and Investment Board has not developed a strategic workforce plan, something that impacts California's workforce investment system that ideally provides California with a workforce and businesses aimed at competing successfully in a global economy. The board also failed to maintain its majority membership of business-sector representatives. Finally, the board has not identified unnecessary duplication of programs and activities. This report identifies additional shortcomings and suggests what may help with compliance.

ENVIRONMENT

The Cost of Water in San Diego: the SDCWA-IID Water Transfer and SDCWA Water Rates. Draft Report. By Gregory Freeman, et al. Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation. Mar. 8, 2012. 45 p.

<http://www.mwdfacts.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/LAEDC.pdf>

The draft report by the Economic Consulting Practice of the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) analyzes the costs to the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) of water obtained under the SDCWA-Imperial Irrigation District (IID) Water Transfer, and to compare SDCWA water rates to Metropolitan Water District rates over a ten-year period. "The effective cost to SDCWA of water from the IID Water Transfer is higher than buying the equivalent amount from MWD. The higher cost includes payments for environmental mitigation." A rebuttal from SDCWA staff, included in this report, raises numerous conflict-of-interest allegations against one of the LAEDC draft report authors and methodological concerns about the draft report's analysis and conclusions.

Effects of Radiation from Fukushima Dai-ichi on the U.S. Marine Environment. By Eugene H. Buck, et al. Congressional Research Service. Apr. 2, 2012. 10 p.

<http://www.fas.org/sqp/crs/misc/R41751.pdf>

"[After the March 2011 events,] EPA rainfall monitors in California, Idaho, and Minnesota detected trace amounts of radioactive iodine, cesium, and tellurium consistent with the Japanese nuclear incident, at concentrations below any level of concern.... It is unknown whether marine organisms that migrate through or near Japanese waters to locations where they might subsequently be harvested by U.S. fishermen (possibly some albacore tuna or salmon in the North Pacific) might have been exposed to radiation in or near Japanese waters, or might have consumed prey that had accumulated radioactive contaminants."

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Special Report No. 198: Tax Freedom Day 2012. By William McBride. Tax Foundation. Apr. 2012. 3 p.

<http://www.taxfoundation.org/files/sr198.pdf>

"Tax Freedom Day," the date by which Americans will have earned enough to pay the calendar year's combined federal, state, and local tax bills, arrives on April 17, 2012, "four days later than last year due to higher federal income and corporate tax collections. That means Americans will work 107 days into the year... to pay this year's combined 29.2% federal, state, and local tax bill.... Americans will spend 15 days working to pay sales and excise taxes, 12 days to pay property taxes, and 7 days for other miscellaneous taxes (such as car taxes, severance taxes, and estate taxes)." The Tax Foundation estimates that \$2.62 trillion in taxes will be collected by the federal government and \$1.42 trillion by state and local governments during 2012.

Tax Foundation Figures Do Not Represent Typical Households' Tax Burdens. By Chuck Marr, et al. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Apr. 2, 2012. 5 p.

<http://www.cbpp.org/files/4-2-12tax.pdf>

"The Tax Foundation released its annual "Tax Freedom Day" report today that, once again, leaves a strikingly misleading impression of tax burdens – announcing an "average" tax rate across the United States that's likely higher than the tax rate that 80% of U.S. households actually pay.... The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office and other authoritative sources show that low- and middle-income (the other 80%) pay a *smaller* share of their income in taxes than the Tax Foundation report implies."

HEALTH

“Occupational Injury in America: An Analysis of Risk Factors Using Data from the General Social Survey (GSS)”. By Todd D. Smith, et al. *Journal of Safety Research*, vol. 43 (Feb. 2012) pp. 67–74. <http://preview.tinyurl.com/6phvvpb>

Each year, nearly 6,000 workers die and millions of others are injured in the workplace in the United States. This study analyzes data from the Quality of Work Life module of the 2002 General Social Survey. The authors examined the U.S. safety climate perceptions among a diverse sample of occupations and worker groups involving 1,525 workers, concluding that “[i]njury is a failure of management.... Organizations who blame individuals for injuries do not create a positive safety climate.” (UPI, Feb. 21, 2012).

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

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TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

2012 Data Breach Investigations Report. Verizon RISK Team. Mar. 2012. 80 p.
http://www.verizonbusiness.com/resources/reports/rp_data-breach-investigations-report-2012_en_xg.pdf

“[The] unrest that so typified 2011 was not constrained to the physical world. The online world was rife with the clashing of ideals, taking the form of activism, protests, retaliation, and pranks. While these activities encompassed more than data breaches (e.g., DDoS attacks), the theft of corporate and personal information was certainly a core tactic. This re-imagined and re-invigorated specter of ‘hacktivism’ rose to haunt organizations around the world.” In this report, Verizon works with government security agencies in the U.S., Europe and Australia to create a survey of data breaches that took place in 2011.

About *Studies in the News*

Studies in the News (SITN) is a service provided to the Legislature, the Governor’s Office, and State Constitutional Officers by the California Research Bureau, a division of the California State Library.

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