



Studies in the News

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CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

State and County Population Projections by Race, Ethnicity, Age and Gender, 2010-2060.
Demographic Research Unit, California Department of Finance. Jan. 31, 2013.

<http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports/projections/view.php>

“California’s population will cross the 50 million mark in 2049 and grow to nearly 52.7 million by 2060, according to new population projections released today by the Department of Finance. This population gain – nearly 15.4 million between 2010 and 2060 – would exceed the current populations of either Illinois or Pennsylvania, and would represent enough new residents to currently rank as the fifth largest state in

the Union. The 2060 population will be 39% higher than the state's most recent 2012 population estimate.... These population projections are used by state and local government agencies to anticipate and plan for future population needs and to measure incidence rates and program effectiveness.”

ECONOMY

***Tax Credits in California: Economic Growth Engine or Wasteful Corporate Welfare?* By Adam B. Summers, et al. The Reason Foundation, et al. Jan. 2013. 59 p.**

http://reason.org/files/tax_credits_california_corporate_welfare.pdf

“All states, to some extent, use their tax codes to advance specific policies. Those various policies can be reflected in differing tax rates on individuals, businesses or activities.... This study looks at certain corporation tax and sales and use tax credits, deductions and exemptions in order to evaluate whether they serve their purposes. The argument offered in support of such tax breaks is that they will improve the lives or livelihoods of certain classes of individuals, businesses or industries. But their costs are frequently ignored.... The relevant question then is: does such favorable treatment really result in a net gain to the economy and the state?”

EDUCATION

***California Education.* Public Policy Institute of California. Jan. 2013. 4 p.**

http://www.pplic.org/content/pubs/report/R_113LHR.pdf

The Public Policy Institute of California examines the state of California's education system after the passage of Proposition 30 and finds that, while it is more stable today than this time last year, there are still significant challenges. Education gaps continue between wealthy and poor students, many students lag behind in English and mathematic standards, and there is continued fiscal volatility. The brief provides suggestions for moving forward, such as: reform school finance; improve outcomes for English Language Learners; and move toward adopting a single-data system that tracks students from kindergarten through post-secondary education.

EMPLOYMENT

***Black Employment and Unemployment December 2012.* By UC Berkeley Labor Center. Jan. 2012. 21 p.**

http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/blackworkers/monthly/bwreport_2013-01-04_56.pdf

“The unemployment rate for Blacks was 14.0% last month. This is according to the latest report on the nation's employment situation released Friday morning by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in its monthly Employment Situation report. This rate was an increase from November, when unemployment in the Black community was 13.2%.... [T]he employment-population ratio for Blacks, 16 and over, was 52.6%. This was a decrease from 53.1% in November. For Black women, the employment-population ratio stood at 51.8% (a slight decrease from 52.1% in November). For Black men, the employment-population ratio was 53.6% (a decrease from 54.2% in November).”

ENERGY

Discussion Draft of California Hydraulic Fracturing Regulations. California Department of Conservation/Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources. Dec. 18, 2012.

<http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dog/Pages/Index.aspx>

Pre-Rulemaking Discussion Draft. 9 p.

http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dog/general_information/Documents/121712DiscussionDraftofHFRegs.pdf

“The Department of Conservation/Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources on December 18, 2012 released a ‘discussion draft’ of regulations for the oil and natural gas production technique known as hydraulic fracturing (‘fracking’). What does ‘discussion draft’ mean? It means that this version does not kick off the formal rulemaking process. Instead, it is a starting point for discussion by key stakeholders – industry, the environmental community, and other regulators, as well as interested members of the public – in preparation for the more formal process, which probably will begin in early 2013.”

Sustainable Energy in America 2013 Factbook. Bloomberg New Energy Finance. Jan. 2013. 98 p.

http://www.bcse.org/factbook/pdfs/BCSE_BNEF_Sustainable_Energy_in_America_2013_Factbook.pdf

“The US energy sector is undergoing a dramatic change. Total energy use fell 6.4% between 2007 and 2012, according to preliminary estimates, driven largely by advances in energy efficiency. Use of natural gas and renewable energy have increased, while other major energy sources such as coal and oil have experienced significant declines.... In the electricity sector, lower- and zero-carbon power sources are growing. Natural gas-fired power plants provided 31% of US electricity in 2012, up from just 22% in 2007. Renewable energy generation has meanwhile grown from 8.3% to 12.1% over that period. These technologies, which include wind, solar, geothermal and hydropower, represented the largest single source of new capacity growth in 2012, with more than 17GW added.”

ENVIRONMENT

“Irrigation in California’s Central Valley Strengthens the Southwestern U.S. Water Cycle”.

By Min-Hui Lo, et al. *Geophysical Research Letters*, vol. 40 (2013). 6 p.

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/grl.50108/abstract>

“California’s Central Valley is the most productive agricultural region in the United States and one of the most productive in the world. Because it is subject to intensive irrigation, the Central Valley is part of a unique and heavily managed hydrological system.... In this study, we explore the importance of Central Valley irrigation in regional precipitation changes, including its role in enhancing land-atmosphere interactions in the southwestern United States.”

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Veterans’ Disability Benefits: Timely Processing Remains a Daunting Challenge. Government Accountability Office. GAO-13-89. Dec. 2012. 58 p.

<http://gao.gov/products/GAO-13-89>

“For years, VA [Veterans Administration] has struggled with an increasing workload of disability compensation claims. The average time to complete a claim was 188 days in fiscal year 2011, and VA expects an increase in claims received as 1 million service members leave military service over the next 5 years. As GAO and other organizations have previously reported, VA has faced challenges in reducing the time it takes to decide veterans’ claims.... This report examines (1) the factors that contribute to lengthy processing times for disability claims and appeals, and (2) the status of VBA’s [Veterans Benefits Administration] recent efforts to improve disability claims and appeals processing timeliness.”

HEALTH

The Role of Nurse Practitioners in Meeting Increasing Demand for Primary Care. National Governors Association. Dec. 2012. 14 p.

<http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/1212NursePractitionersPaper.pdf>

“With the demand for primary care services already straining capacity in most states, more than 16 million individuals projected to gain health insurance coverage by 2016, and a rapidly aging population, many states are considering options to increase the number and role of primary care providers. One option for states is to reexamine their scope of practice laws governing nurse practitioners (NPs). NPs, the largest group of advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), currently serve patients in a wide variety of settings under varying degrees of physician supervision.”

HUMAN SERVICES

National Indicators and Social Wealth. By Erwin de Leon. Urban Institute. Dec. 2012. 48 p.

<http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/412711-National-Indicators-and-Social-Wealth.pdf>

“Gross domestic product (GDP) is a limited economic metric that does not fully reflect the depth and breadth of a country’s economic activity.... Across the world, scholars and governments are creating and using measures of economic success and social well-being that go beyond GDP.... While there are now many more indicators of individual and societal well-being, there is an urgent need for the creation of social wealth measures that focus on the critical matter of human capacity development and take into account the economic value of care work as well as indicators of the status of women and communities of color and their contributions to society and the economy.”

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

The California Water Boards’ Annual Performance Report – Fiscal Year 2011-12.

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/about_us/performance_report_1112/

“This fourth annual Performance Report provides a mechanism to measure and evaluate both what we do and how the environment is responding to our actions, and is part of our overall effort toward developing as performance-based organizations. The Water Boards regulate approximately 32,000 dischargers, and our core regulatory workload achievements for the fiscal year included review, update, or issuance of about 150 individual permits; inspection of almost 5,000 facilities; and completion of more than 270 penalty and compliance actions. Fiscal Year 2011-12 also brought a renewed emphasis on efficiency and accountability through completion of a Resource Alignment Report designed to assess and better align Water Board resources, priorities, and performance targets.”

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Passenger Rail Security: Consistent Incident Reporting and Analysis Needed to Achieve Program Objectives. Government Accountability Office. GAO-13-20, Dec. 19, 2012. 53 p.

<http://www.gao.gov/assets/660/650995.pdf>

“The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has inconsistently overseen and enforced its rail security incident reporting requirement because it does not have guidance and its oversight mechanisms are limited, leading to considerable variation in the types and number of incidents reported. Though some variation is expected in the number and type of incidents reported because of differences in rail agency size, location, and ridership, local TSA inspection officials have provided rail agencies with inconsistent interpretations of the reporting requirement.... GAO recommends, among other things, that TSA (1)

develop guidance on the types of incidents that should be reported, (2) enhance existing oversight mechanisms for compliance inspections and enforcement actions, (3) develop guidance to reduce errors from data entry problems, and (4) establish a process for regularly conducting trend analysis of incident data. TSA concurred and is taking actions in response.”

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