



Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

Issue 13-140

October 9, 2013

Due to the federal government shutdown, Studies in the News will not be including resources from federal websites that are currently offline.

Contents this week:

CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

Federal 'how-to' book on preventing kids from joining gangs

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

Patent infringement lawsuit data could improve review process

ECONOMY

Revisiting the limitations of state economic rankings

EDUCATION

Pilot study matches low-income students with colleges

EMPLOYMENT

25% of CA domestic workers are paid below state minimum wage

ENERGY

Cleaner sources of electricity found to be economically beneficial

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

CA fiscal health yields stronger credit standing

HEALTH

Combatting drug-resistant infections

HUMAN SERVICES

Survey: Policies needed for maltreated infants and toddlers

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

US DOT state transportation facts and rankings

VETERANS

VA services affected by the government shutdown

CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

Changing Course: Preventing Gang Membership. U.S. Dept. of Justice, et al. Sep. 16, 2013.

Full Report. 166 p.: <https://ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/239234.pdf>

Executive Summary. 20 p.:

<http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/preventgangmembership/executive-summary-508.pdf>

"Youth gang membership is a serious and persistent problem in the United States. One in three local law enforcement agencies report youth gang problems in their jurisdictions. One in four high school freshmen report gangs in their schools. Limited resources at the national, state, tribal and local levels make it more

important than ever that we make full use of the best available evidence and clearly demonstrate the benefit of strategies to prevent gang-joining.... It is critical that those who make decisions about resources – as well as those who work directly with youth, like teachers and police officers, community services providers and emergency department physicians – understand what the research evidence shows about how to prevent kids from joining gangs.”

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

Intellectual Property: Assessing Factors That Affect Patent Infringement Litigation Could Help Improve Patent Quality. By Franklin W. Rusco. General Accountability Office. GAO-13-465. Aug. 22, 2013. 61 p.

<http://www.gao.gov/assets/660/657103.pdf>

Section 34 of the 2011 Leahy-Smith America Invents Act mandated that GAO conduct a study on the consequences of patent litigation by non-practicing entities (NPEs). “The judicial system is implementing new initiatives to improve the handling of patent cases in the federal courts, including (1) a patent pilot program, to encourage the enhancement of expertise in patent cases among district court judges, and (2) new rules in some federal court districts that are designed to reduce the time and expense of patent infringement litigation.” GAO recommends that the Patent and Trademark Office “consider examining trends in patent infringement litigation and consider linking this information to internal patent examination data to improve patent quality and examination.”

ECONOMY

“How Can I Create My Favorite State Ranking?” By Yasuyuki Motoyama, et al. *Journal of Applied Research in Economic Development*, vol. 10 (Sep. 2013) 12 p.

<http://journal.c2er.org/2013/09/how-can-i-create-my-favorite-state-ranking/>

“State economic rankings are both pervasive and popular.... So business climate indexes have become a cottage industry within the economic development profession. Reacting to, and explaining why and how their state-community is ranked by business climate indexes has accordingly become a cottage industry among state and sub-state economic developers.... Despite their popularity and seemingly daunting sophistication, these rankings come with major limitations.” The article reviews the limitations and validity problems of state rankings of economic performance measures, focusing on measures of entrepreneurship and innovations. It includes four recommendations for a more multi-dimensional measure that better captures economic viability.

EDUCATION

Promoting College Match for Low-Income Students: Lessons for Practitioners. By D. Crystal Byndloss, et al. MDRC. Sep. 2013. 10 p.

<http://www.mdrc.org/publication/promoting-college-match-low-income-students>

Capable low income and minority students are more likely to graduate when placed in more demanding academic programs than in less demanding ones. MDRC’s program College Match has pilot-tested a program to provide students and their parents with crucial information to help them get into more selective programs than they would likely select on their own. The report suggests schools can encourage students to apply for college by teaching them to aim high when in the application process, encouraging parents to be involved in the discussion from the beginning, guiding students and parents to tools that can help them find good school and program matches, and raising the awareness of a school in the eyes of the target institution’s recruiters and admissions officers.

EMPLOYMENT

Home Truths: Domestic Workers in California. By Nik Theodore, et al. National Domestic Workers Alliance. Sep. 2013. 24 p.

<http://www.datacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/HomeTruths.pdf>

“Domestic workers play a significant role in the California economy ... 25% of domestic workers are paid below the California minimum wage, the result of a combination of poorly delineated tasks, long workdays, and low pay.... Among workers who were fired from a domestic work job, 22% were fired for calling in sick or for missing work to take care of a family member.... 58% of domestic workers spend more than half their income on rent.... While not all domestic work employers treat their nannies, caregivers, and housecleaners poorly, the lack of enforceable standards increases the likelihood of mistreatment. Sensible policies that protect domestic workers on the job are needed to redress the substandard conditions that exist in the industry.”

ENERGY

“The Social Cost of Carbon: Implications for Modernizing our Electricity System”. By Laurie T. Johnson, et al. *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*, vol. 10 (Sep. 13, 2013) 7 p.

<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13412-013-0149-5>

“We calculate, on a cents-per-kilowatt-hour basis, the environmental cost of CO2 emissions from fossil fuel generation and add it to production costs. With this, we compare the total social cost (generation plus environmental costs) of building new generation from traditional fossil fuels versus cleaner technologies. We also examine the cost of replacing existing coal generation with cleaner options, ranging from conventional natural gas to solar photovoltaic. We find that ... it is more economically efficient (from a social cost–benefit perspective) for the new generation to come from any of these cleaner sources rather than conventional coal, and in several instances, the cleanest sources are preferable to conventional natural gas.”

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Debt Affordability Report. Office of the State Treasurer. Oct. 2013. 35 p.

<http://www.treasurer.ca.gov/publications/2013dar.pdf>

“The last 12 months brought significant improvement to the State’s fiscal health, as it continued to strengthen its financial and debt management practices. The steady progress has paid off for taxpayers. California improved its credit standing and narrowed the interest-rate gap between its bonds and those of other governmental entities. This year’s Debt Affordability Report (DAR) describes the State’s stronger financial structure, and the positive results for California in the financial markets and on the State’s balance sheets.”

HEALTH

Antibiotic Resistance Threats in the United States, 2013. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Sep. 15, 2013. 114 p.

<http://www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/threat-report-2013/pdf/ar-threats-2013-508.pdf>

“The threat of a so-called ‘post-antibiotic era’ – a time when there are no longer any effective antibiotic treatments – could become a reality without a concerted and comprehensive effort to combat this global

threat. The evolution of drug resistance is an inherent risk of antibiotic use. The CDC report cited the development of new antibiotics and diagnostic tools, as well as programs and policies to support appropriate use of antibiotics, as being among the core strategies to combat resistance.” (Brookings Institution, *Up Front*, Sep. 20, 2013).

HUMAN SERVICES

***Changing the Course for Infants and Toddlers: A Survey of State Child Welfare Policies and Initiatives.* Child Trends. Sep. 17, 2013. 67 p.**

<http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/changing-the-course-for-infants-and-toddlers-FINAL.pdf>

“[This survey], conducted from September 2012 to March 2013, asked state child welfare agency representatives to respond to questions regarding the policies and practices that guide their work in addressing the needs of infants and toddlers who have been maltreated.... Few states have policies that differentiate services or timelines for infants and toddlers versus older children.... The rapid developmental changes in the infant and toddler years, together with the importance of attachment with critical adults in promoting healthy development, call for differentiating key policies that affect foundational aspects of children’s development.”

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

***United States Transportation Facts and Figures.* U.S. Department of Transportation, Research and Innovative Technology Administration, Bureau of Transportation Statistics.**

<http://gis.rita.dot.gov/StateFacts/>

“Find state-by-state transportation facts, comparisons and rankings on these topics: Infrastructure; Fatalities and Injuries; Distracted Driving and Safety Equipment; Freight Volumes and Values; Passenger Travel; Economy and Finance; Energy and Environment.”

VETERANS

***Veterans Field Guide to Government Shutdown.* U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Updated Oct. 2013. 2 p.**

http://www.va.gov/opa/docs/Field_Guide_20130927.pdf

This VA publication provides a list of veterans services that are impacted by the current shutdown of the federal government, as well as a list of services that will continue operation. Included is a list of operational national telephone numbers and an overview of the VA medical facilities and clinics that will remain in service. Among the services suspended during the shutdown: Freedom of Information Act queries; educational benefits; consumer affairs; and the inspector general hotline.

About *Studies in the News*

Studies in the News (SITN) is a service provided by the California Research Bureau (CRB), a division of the California State Library. CRB provides independent, nonpartisan research and analysis for the Governor, Legislature and State Constitutional Officers.

- SITN lists of current studies related to public policy issues are e-mailed weekly. Archived issues are available at <http://www.library.ca.gov/sitn/crb>.

- To add or remove your name from the SITN distribution list, or to update your e-mail address, please contact us at crb@library.ca.gov, or (916) 319-2691.
- SITN is available as an RSS feed at <http://www.library.ca.gov/sitn/crb/>.