



## Studies in the News

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### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT**

***Gangs Beyond Borders: California and the Fight Against Transnational Organized Crime.***  
Attorney General's Office. Mar. 2014. 118 p.

[https://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/toc/report\\_2014.pdf](https://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/toc/report_2014.pdf)

International criminal enterprises, operating in safe havens located in Eastern Europe, Africa, and China, are focusing their attention on California because of its wealth and innovation. California is an especially attractive target because "it leads all states in the number of computer systems hacked or infected by

malware, the number of victims of internet crimes, the number of financial losses suffered as a result and the number of victims of identity fraud.... [T]he state also is particularly vulnerable to thefts of intellectual property because of its leading role in developing new technologies and mass-media entertainment.” The report recommends changes in state law to combat money laundering and freeze criminal organization assets before indictments are handed down. (*CBS Sacramento*, Mar. 20, 2014).

## CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

***From Distant Admirers to Library Lovers: A Typology of Public Library Engagement in America.***  
By Kathryn Zickhur, et al. Pew Research Center. Mar. 2014. 131 p.  
<http://www.pewinternet.org/2014/03/13/library-engagement-typology/>

“Libraries loom large in the public imagination, and are generally viewed very positively: 90% of Americans ages 16 and older say that the closing of their local public library would have an impact on their community. This means that many people have a stake in the future of libraries, and as the digital age advances, there is much discussion about where they are headed.... This report describes nine groups of Americans that reflect different patterns of public library engagement. Respondents were sorted into groups based on a cluster analysis of factors such as: the importance of public libraries in their lives; how they use libraries; and how they view the role of libraries in communities.... Thirty percent of Americans ages 16 and older are highly engaged with public libraries, and an additional 39% fall into medium engagement categories.”

## ECONOMY

***California’s Position in Technology and Science: A Comparative Benchmarking Assessment.***  
By Kevin Klowden, et al. Milken Institute. Dec. 2013.  
Report. 106 p.: [http://www.milkeninstitute.org/pdf/State\\_Tech\\_Sci\\_2013.pdf](http://www.milkeninstitute.org/pdf/State_Tech_Sci_2013.pdf)  
50-state map/data: [www.statetechandscience.org](http://www.statetechandscience.org)

“When it comes to California’s performance in technology and science, in many ways it’s back to the future, as troubles in education funding bring California back to its 2010 ranking. The state dropped from third in 2012 to fourth in our latest national State Technology and Science Index, and this California-specific report investigates the factors behind this decline. This 2013 analysis provides a thorough examination of a California that has found its greatest opportunities for rebounding from the Great Recession in the fields of high-tech and knowledge-based industries. This study updates the data from the 2012 national State Technology and Science Index to provide tangible evidence of California’s current strengths and prospects for growth.”

## EDUCATION

***The 2014 Brown Center Report on American Education: How Well Are American Students Learning?*** By Tom Loveless. The Brown Center on Education Policy. Mar. 2014. 40 p.  
[www.brookings.edu/~media/Research/Files/Reports/2014/03/18%20Brown%20Center%20Report/2014%20Brown%20Center%20Report\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Research/Files/Reports/2014/03/18%20Brown%20Center%20Report/2014%20Brown%20Center%20Report_FINAL.pdf)

This report presents three studies that revisit topics investigated in previous reports. Part I summarizes the recent controversy involving the Programme for International Student Assessment and its treatment of Shanghai-China. Part II reviews evidence that suggests the homework load has not increased for the average student. Part III is on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which finds that “states with stronger implementations of the CCSS have made larger NAEP [National Assessment of Educational Progress] gains.”

## EMPLOYMENT

***STEM Education for the Innovative Economy.* By Amy Klobuchar, Joint Economic Committee. United States Congress. Jan. 2014. 10 p.**

[http://www.jec.senate.gov/public/?a=Files.Serve&File\\_id=9bfced75-07a0-466b-a94b-8ab399582995](http://www.jec.senate.gov/public/?a=Files.Serve&File_id=9bfced75-07a0-466b-a94b-8ab399582995)

“Due to the high demand for STEM-capable workers, wage and employment prospects for individuals with these skills are excellent. Even so, not enough Americans are studying STEM to meet the economy’s needs. Fewer than one-in-five students obtain a bachelor’s degree in STEM and the percentage of freshmen intending to study computer science dropped to 1.5% in 2010, down from 5.2% 10 years earlier. Efforts to increase the number of STEM-capable workers must focus not only on higher education, but also on helping those who want to retrain and transition into STEM occupations.... Policy suggestions include: Ensuring that schools and colleges have the resources to teach STEM skills; ... Encouraging women and minorities to enter STEM careers; Helping veterans transfer their STEM skills to the civilian workforce; Encouraging and funding research and innovation.”

## ENERGY

***Safety of Crude Oil by Rail.* By David Pumphrey, et al. Center for Strategic and International Studies. Mar. 14, 2014. 9 p.**

<http://csis.org/publication/safety-crude-oil-rail>

“Over the last seven months, a number of serious accidents have resulted in intense review of the safety of shipping large quantities of oil by rail. The focus has been on classification of the oil, the integrity of tank cars, and rail operations. Regulatory processes have been initiated to attempt to deal with these issues in a timely manner. This issue analysis provides facts that illuminate the players, concerns, current status of regulatory action, as well as the potential issues going forward.”

## ENVIRONMENT

***Pharmaceuticals in Water Series.* By Kellie Jean Hogue. California Research Bureau. Mar. 2014. 6 p.**

<http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/CRBReports.html>

Despite a large volume of scientific research, the definitive risks of active pharmaceutical ingredients to human health are largely unknown. Detection of low-level concentrations of pharmaceuticals and personal care products in California drinking water has raised interest in finding safe ways to dispose of unwanted, unused medications. Prepared at the request of the Senate Committee on Environmental Quality, a three-part series of Short Subjects—*Pharmaceuticals in Water: An Overview*, *Common Pharmaceuticals in California Water*, and *Reducing Pharmaceuticals in California Water*—examines this issue.

## GENERAL GOVERNMENT

***State Government Fiscal Stress and Federal Assistance.*** By Robert Jay Dilger. Congressional Research Service. Feb. 2014. 34 p.

[http://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc276854/m1/1/high\\_res\\_d/R41773\\_2014Feb04.pdf](http://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc276854/m1/1/high_res_d/R41773_2014Feb04.pdf)

“States closed nearly \$230 billion in state budget shortfalls in FY2009 and FY2010; and \$146.3 billion in state shortfalls in FY2011 and FY2012. Since then, state fiscal conditions have generally improved. In FY2013, state general fund spending surpassed pre-recession levels for the first time, reaching \$693.7 billion, and 45 states increased their general fund spending in FY2013 compared with FY2012. Although state fiscal conditions have improved, state budgetary officials predict continuing budgetary challenges in virtually all states in FY2014, in part due to relatively slow state revenue growth, the need to replenish reserves, and increased costs for health care and other social services.”

## HEALTH

***Psychosocial and Economic Health of Older African Americans in California.*** By Tonya D. Lindsey. California Research Bureau. Feb. 2014. 2 p.

<http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/14/S-14-002.pdf>

This report employs California Health Information Survey indicators of mental health, social environment, and economic security to better understand older African Americans' shorter lifespans. It is evident that a larger percentage of older African Americans experienced more psychological distress, less social connection in some ways, and more economic insecurity than all other older Californians. It is also clear that some (14%) suffered from psychological distress but did not have health insurance covering mental health.

## HOUSING

***Out of Reach 2014: Twenty-Five Years Later, the Affordable Housing Crisis Continues.***

By Althea Arnold, et al. National Low Income Housing Coalition. Mar. 2014. 248 p.

<http://nlihc.org/oor/2014>

“Today, one out of every four renter households is an extremely low income (ELI) household. There are a total of 10.2 million ELI renter households across the United States, and three in four (75%) ELI renters spend over 50% of their income on housing costs.” Using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, this report illustrates the problems associated with the gap between affordability and reality for low-income renters in the United States, and suggests that policymakers look into creating more affordable housing as part of the solution.

## HUMAN SERVICES

***Overview of Community Care Licensing.*** Legislative Analyst's Office. Feb. 11, 2014. 10 p.

<http://www.lao.ca.gov/handouts/socservices/2014/Overview-Community-Care-021114.pdf>

“The CCL division of the Department of Social Services develops and enforces regulations designed to protect the health and safety of individuals in 24-hour residential care facilities and day care. These facilities include child care centers, residential care facilities for the elderly (RCFEs), and foster family homes and group homes.... The CCL monitors and licenses 66,000 community care facilities, which are estimated to have the capacity to serve over 1.3 million Californians.... Prior to 2003, most licensed facilities were required to be inspected annually.... Currently, CCL is required to inspect most facilities

once every five years and randomly inspect 30% of facilities annually—requirements unchanged since 2007-08.”

## **TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE**

**2010-2012 California Household Travel Survey Final Report. California Department of Transportation. June 2013. 147 p.**

[http://dot.ca.gov/hq/tsip/otfa/tab/documents/chts\\_finalreport/FinalReport.pdf](http://dot.ca.gov/hq/tsip/otfa/tab/documents/chts_finalreport/FinalReport.pdf)

“From 2010 to 2012, researchers working for the California Department of Transportation asked about 110,000 people in more than 42,000 households to record the duration and distance of every trip they took during a random day, including running errands, going out to eat, and commuting to work or school. In the decade since the survey was last conducted, in 2001, the rate of Californians walking, biking or taking transit on a typical day doubled to 22%, according to the data. During the same time period, the rate of Californians driving on any given day fell by about 12 percentage points. From 2010 to 2012, more than 16% of daily trips were made on foot, the study said, taking an average of 10 minutes and covering one-third of a mile.” (*Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 13, 2014).

### **About *Studies in the News***

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