



Studies in the News

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

Do Local Realignment Policies Affect Recidivism in California? By Mia Bird, et al.

Public Policy Institute of California. Aug. 2014. 25 p.

<http://www.ppic.org/main/publication.asp?i=1111>

This report studies the recidivism rate in California counties following implementation of realignment policies. "In the aftermath of California's corrections realignment, recidivism patterns did not change dramatically among offenders released from state prison to county supervision. But early evidence suggests that recidivism declined in counties that emphasized reentry services rather than jails and traditional law enforcement." The study cautions that "recidivism outcomes reflect not only offender behavior, but also the degree of monitoring of offender behavior in local justice systems." The authors recommend data tracking that allows more robust analysis of recidivism outcomes.

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

“A State-by-state Look at Where Each Generation Lives.” By Mike Maciag. *Governing* (July 31, 2014) 6 p.

<http://www.governing.com/topics/urban/gov-generational-population-data-maps-by-state.html#.U9ptn96vW1Q.email>

Using 2012 Census estimates, this overview looks at where people live, sorted by cultural groups and by age. Millennials (ages 11-30) comprise large percentages of the population in Washington, D.C., Utah, Alaska, North Dakota, and Texas—with California closely following Texas. “Gen Xers, those in their mid-to-late 30s and 40s, account for about a fifth of the population in most states.... You'll find the greatest concentration of baby boomers in three northeastern states: Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont.... With less than 11% of the total population, the Silent Generation [ages 69-84] is the country's smallest age group.” Florida is home to the largest share of this age group.

ECONOMY

***The Other Aging of America: The Increasing Dominance of Older Firms.* By Ian Hathaway, et al. Brookings Institution. July 2014. 18 p.**

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2014/07/aging%20america%20increasing%20dominance%20older%20firms%20litan/other_aging_america_dominance_older_firms_hathaway_litan.pdf

The authors review economic activity across a broad range of industrial sectors, company size and regions throughout the country. Findings include: the share of firms aged 16 years or more was 23% in 1992, but leaped to 34% by 2011, an increase of 50%; the share of private sector workers employed in these mature firms increased from 60% to 72% during the same period; and, employment and firm shares declined in every other firm age group during this period. The trends might be cause for concern as new firms, rather than existing ones, have been driving the innovations that in the past led to a robust economy. The authors include recommendations designed to better facilitate entrepreneurship.

EDUCATION

***INNOVATE: A Blueprint for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics in California Public Education, a Report to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.* Californians Dedicated to Education Foundation, California Department of Education. May 2014. 52 p.**

<http://www.afterschoolnetwork.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/innovate.pdf>

“The California STEM Task Force was charged by California State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI) Tom Torlakson and Assemblywoman Susan Bonilla with drafting a new vision and direction for STEM education in the state, paying particular attention to remedying issues of access to high-quality learning experiences and professional STEM workforce needs.... This report details the results of the task force’s work and calls upon California’s policy makers and educators to ensure the realization of seven strategic action areas.” These areas include public awareness, resources, access, framework, professional learning, assessment and accountability, and guarantee that high-quality STEM education materials and resources will be available.

EMPLOYMENT

Shelved: How Wages and Working Conditions for California's Food Retail Workers Have Declined as the Industry Has Thrived. By Saru Jayaraman. Food Labor Research Center, UC Berkeley. June 2014. 124 p.

<http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/foodlabor/Food-Retail-Report.pdf>

“The report shows that while California’s food retail industry has enjoyed consistent growth over the past two decades, the expansion of a low-price, low-cost business model—and the choices that traditional, unionized grocers have made in the face of it—have produced a dramatic wage decline, with high rates of poverty and hunger among workers in a sector that once enjoyed relatively high wages and unionization rates. The report calls for a two-pronged strategy to arrest and reverse these trends: support for unionization, and public policies that support livable wages and benefits. This strategy would promote the creation of good jobs in the food retail sector and help build long-term prosperity for California’s families and communities.”

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

More Americans May Be Adequately Prepared for Retirement Than Previously Thought.

RAND. July 31, 2014. 3 p.

http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_briefs/RB9700/RB9792/RAND_RB9792.pdf

More Americans may be ready for retirement than commonly believed. Researchers found that among a survey group of 1,725 single and married individuals, ages 66-69, approximately 71% were “adequately economically prepared for retirement.” However, there were disparities among this group by education, sex, and marital status. Regarding marital status and education, for example, 55% of single individuals, and 36% of single individuals who did not complete high school, were adequately prepared for retirement. In contrast, 75% of married individuals, and 69% of single individuals with college degrees, were adequately prepared.

HEALTH

“Health Care Coverage under the Affordable Care Act—A Progress Report.” By David Blumenthal, et al. *New England Journal of Medicine*, vol. 371, no 3 (July 17, 2014) pp. 275-281.

<http://www.nejm.org/doi/pdf/10.1056/NEJMhpr1405667>

This health policy report assesses the record of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to date, commenting on enrollment through the individual marketplaces, the expansion of Medicaid eligibility, coverage of children enrollees up to age 26, and marketplaces created for small businesses. It also reports on early surveys conducted by RAND, Gallup and The Urban Institute in an attempt to determine numbers of previously-uninsured Americans who benefitted from enrollment in the ACA.

HUMAN SERVICES

The Growth and Spread of Concentrated Poverty, 2000 to 2008-2012. By Elizabeth Kneebone. Brookings Institution. July 31, 2014. 10 p.

<http://www.brookings.edu/research/interactives/2014/concentrated-poverty#/M10420>

“While poverty increased and spread in the 2000s, it also became more concentrated in high-poverty and economically distressed neighborhoods, and those neighborhoods were increasingly located in the suburbs. By 2008-2012, the suburbs accounted for 40% of residents living in such areas in the nation’s

100 largest metro areas.... The challenges of poor neighborhoods—including worse health outcomes, higher crime rates, failing schools, and fewer job opportunities—make it that much harder for individuals and families to escape poverty and often perpetuate and entrench poverty across generations.... Given the limited resources at hand to address these challenges, effectively tackling the scope of today’s need necessitates more integrated and cross-cutting approaches ... of making limited resources stretch further to confront the regional scale of poverty.”

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Electric Vehicle Explorer. UC Davis Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle Research Center. July 2014.
<http://gis.its.ucdavis.edu/evexplorer/>

“EV Explorer allows consumers to compare simultaneously up to four different vehicles on an energy cost basis. Just enter your start and finish commute locations and frequency of travel, and the yearly energy costs for the four vehicles will instantly appear side-by-side. You can even specify the location of a public charging station you use and its charging price to get an accurate cost for public charger use.... Moreover, the user-friendly EV Explorer also works with all types of vehicles—PEVs [Plug-in Electric Vehicles], hybrids, and traditional gasoline vehicles. With the tool, you can calculate the annual gasoline and electricity fuel costs of your commute or other travel in an easy-to-use chart that you can share with your friends.”

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Build California Better: Options for Long-Term Road and Highway Funding. American Council of Engineering Companies California. June 2014. 10 p.
<http://www.acec-ca.org/docusefiles/files/BuildCABetter.pdf>

“ACEC California consulted research issued by respected transportation policy analysts and interviewed national and local experts who are leading efforts to find new ways to finance infrastructure. This report looks at a handful of new and not-so-new funding possibilities, highlights the experience of states that have tried them, and provides some of the benefits and drawbacks of each. The programs are by no means the only potential solutions available, but they are currently among the best candidates, as indicated by funding experiments and debates occurring nationwide.... [P]ersuading taxpayers to embrace new ideas when it comes to solving transportation funding needs will be a difficult challenge requiring education and patience, but ... stakeholders must pursue every opportunity available to secure the future of California’s critical transportation infrastructure.”

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