



Studies in the News

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

California Data Breach Report. Office of the Attorney General. Oct. 2014. 56 p.

http://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/privacy/2014data_breach_rpt.pdf

“In 2013, the number of reported data breaches increased by 28%, and the number of Californians’ records affected increased by over 600%. This latter increase was due largely to two massive retailer breaches, one of which, the Target breach, involved the payment card data of 41 million individuals, including 7.5 million Californians.” This report includes recommendations to adopt promising security technologies such as chip cards and tokenization to protect retailers and consumers from “the theft and abuse of payment card data.”

EDUCATION

Blueprint for College Readiness: A 50-state Policy Analysis. By Emmy Glancy, et al. Education Commission of the States. Oct. 2014. 163 p.

<http://www.ecs.org/docs/ECSBlueprint.pdf>

“The Education Commission of the States launched the Blueprint for College Readiness initiative to provide guidance and support to the growing number of states working to improve student success and transition from high school into postsecondary. Designed by state leaders for state leaders, the Blueprint features a menu of 10 critical policies promoting college readiness and success. The following 50-state analysis explores the extent to which states are pursuing these policies. The accompanying resources, technical assistance and online database are designed to respond to the unique needs of states.”

EMPLOYMENT

Female Self-employment in the United States: An Update to 2012. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Oct. 2014. 20 p.

<http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2014/article/pdf/female-self-employment-in-the-united-states-an-update-to-2012.pdf>

“New trends in female self-employment suggest a positive shift in opportunities for women, especially for those who differ from the ‘typical’ self-employed women of the past. For instance, the percentage of female minorities in self-employment doubled from 1993 to 2012, and more divorced women and women without young children have become self-employed. Earnings trends have also been favorable. Although female business owners still have lower mean earnings compared with other worker groups, between 1993 and 2012 the gender gap in hourly earnings among the self-employed shrank by nearly 20 percentage points for full-time workers and by 17 percentage points for part-time workers.”

ENVIRONMENT

MATES IV: Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study DRAFT REPORT. South Coast Air Quality Management District. Oct. 2014. 122 p.

<http://www.aqmd.gov/home/library/air-quality-data-studies/health-studies/mates-iv>

“The Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study IV (MATES IV) is a monitoring and evaluation study conducted in the South Coast Air Basin... [It] includes a monitoring program, an updated emissions inventory of toxic air contaminants, and a modeling effort to characterize risk across the Basin. The study focuses on the carcinogenic risk from exposure to air toxics but does not estimate mortality or other health effects from particulate exposures. An additional focus of MATES IV is the inclusion of measurements of ultrafine particle concentrations.” The report, released for a 90-day review period, found reduced cancer risk from air pollution since 2005.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

City Fiscal Conditions 2014. By Christiana McFarland, et al. National League of Cities, Center for City Solutions and Applied Research. Oct. 2014. 16 p.

<http://www.nlc.org/find-city-solutions/city-solutions-and-applied-research/finance/city-fiscal-conditions-in-2014>

“In 2014, the nation’s city finance officers report that fiscal conditions are improving as the Great Recession recedes. However, local fiscal health has not yet fully returned to pre-recession levels as

economic activity clammers back from the downturn. While tax revenues continue to improve, increases in service costs, long-term infrastructure needs, employee wages, and pension and health care obligations, along with decreased levels of state and federal aid, continue to constrain the fiscal outlook.”

HEALTH

A Little Knowledge is a Risky Thing: Wide Gap in What People Think They Know About Health Insurance and What They Actually Know. By Kathryn A. Paez, et al. American Institutes for Research. Oct. 2014. 6 p.

http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/Health%20Insurance%20Literacy%20brief_Oct%202014_amended.pdf

A 2013 survey serves to gauge Americans’ health insurance literacy. “While about three out of four Americans aged 22-64 believe they know how to use health insurance, only about one in five could correctly calculate how much they owed for a routine doctor visit.... Generally, younger people, those who use fewer health care services, minorities, people with lower incomes and those with less education have more difficulties navigating health insurance. Assessing health insurance literacy can help identify what health insurance aspects pose the greatest problems for consumers, which groups need more assistance to enroll and use benefits, and what topics and skills consumer-counseling efforts should focus on.”

HUMAN SERVICES

A Win-Win for Working Families and State Budgets: Pairing Medicaid Expansion and a \$10.10 Minimum Wage. By Rachel West, et al. Center for American Progress. Oct. 2014. 36 p.

<http://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/MinWageMedicaidREPORT-10.16.pdf>

“This report finds that higher minimum wages lead to a statistically significant enrollment reduction in traditional Medicaid—that is, the portion of Medicaid for which states have always paid a substantial share of the cost.... [T]he dual policy package of Medicaid expansion and higher minimum wages represents a win-win situation for state policymakers and low-income working families. Unlike states’ traditional Medicaid programs, the federal government pays the full cost of care for those who are newly eligible for the first three years—and the lion’s share thereafter— under the Medicaid expansion. This reduction in enrollment will lead states and their residents to save money on traditional Medicaid.”

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

California's State Budget. Legislative Analyst’s Office. Oct. 24, 2014.

<http://lao.ca.gov/Infographics/californias-state-budget>

“This infographic presents information about the current state budget (2014-15) and compares the level of spending and revenues assumed in the current budget to historical levels since 1950-51. As a share of personal income—one broad measure of the size of the California economy—state spending has been relatively flat since the late 1970s. Spending on health and human services and corrections programs has generally increased over the period, while spending on higher education and transportation programs has generally decreased. Since 1950-51, the personal income tax has replaced the sales and use tax as the predominant source of General Fund revenue.”

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Measuring Cognitive Distraction in the Automobile II: Assessing In-Vehicle Voice-Based Interactive Technologies. By David L. Strayer, et al. AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. Oct. 2014. 44 p.

<http://publicaffairsresources.aaa.biz/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/1-AAFTS-Phase-2-Report-FINAL-10.3.2014.pdf>

“The goal of the current research was to measure and understand cognitive distraction stemming from voice-based technologies in the vehicle.... Because each task allowed the driver to keep his or her eyes on the road and hands on the steering wheel, any impairment to driving must be caused by the diversion of attention from the task of operating the motor vehicle.... We established that there are significant impairments to driving that stem from the diversion of attention from the task of operating a motor vehicle. The data suggest that voice-based interactions in the vehicle may have unintended consequences that adversely affect traffic safety.”

VETERANS

Mental Health Stigma in the Military. By Joie D. Acosta, et al. RAND. Sep. 2014. 329 p.

http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR426.html

“Despite the efforts of both the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and the Veterans Health Administration to enhance mental health services, many service members are not regularly seeking needed care when they have mental health symptoms or disorders.... The goal of this research was to assess DoD’s approach to stigma reduction—how well it is working and how it might be improved.” The report looks at the social and economic costs of untreated mental health disorders, analyzes current stigma-reduction efforts of mental health programs in the military, and presents policy recommendations that can contribute to stigma reduction for service members who seek treatment.

About *Studies in the News*

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