



## Studies in the News

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

***Special Review: Assessment of Electronic Monitoring of Sex Offenders on Parole and the Impact of Residency Restrictions.*** Office of the Inspector General. Oct. 2014. 85 p.

[http://www.oig.ca.gov/media/reports/Reports/Reviews/OIG\\_Special\\_Review\\_Electronic\\_Monitoring\\_of\\_Sex\\_Offenders\\_on\\_Parole\\_and\\_Impact\\_of\\_Residency\\_Restrictions\\_November\\_2014.pdf](http://www.oig.ca.gov/media/reports/Reports/Reviews/OIG_Special_Review_Electronic_Monitoring_of_Sex_Offenders_on_Parole_and_Impact_of_Residency_Restrictions_November_2014.pdf)

The Inspector General's Office conducted a review of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's electronic monitoring of sex offender parolees and its impact on residency restrictions for sex offender parolees, at the request of the Senate Rules Committee. It was found that the annual costs of GPS tracking has decreased over the past five fiscal years (FY2009-10--\$12.4M; FY2013-14--\$7.9M). There was little objective evidence to determine the effectiveness of GPS tracking as a crime deterrent. Residency restrictions that prohibit paroled sex offenders from living within 2,000 feet of a school or park

contributed to homelessness among paroled sex offenders. Transient sex offender parolees were more likely to violate the terms of their parole than those who had a permanent residence.

## **CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY**

***Gray Divorce: A Growing Risk Regardless of Class or Education.* By Susan L. Brown, et al. Council on Contemporary Families. Oct. 8, 2014. 4 p.**  
<https://contemporaryfamilies.org/growing-risk-brief-report/>

“In contrast to the seeming stabilization of divorce rates for the general population over the past two decades, the gray divorce rate has doubled: Married individuals aged 50 and older, including the college-educated, are twice as likely to experience a divorce today as they were in 1990. For married individuals aged 65 and older, the risk of divorce has more than doubled since 1990.... Today, one out of every four people experiencing divorce is over age 50. Nearly one in ten is 65 or older. This raises critical questions about how gray divorce is reshaping the aging experience in the U.S. Although for some older adults a gray divorce may be liberating, for others who are less advantaged it is a devastating experience with long-term negative consequences for their own lives and for society as a whole.” This is especially true for “those without adequate financial resources and who are in poor health.

## **ECONOMY**

***Military’s Impact on State Economies.* National Conference of State Legislatures. Nov. 14, 2014.**  
<http://www.ncsl.org/research/military-and-veterans-affairs/military-s-impact-on-state-economies.aspx>

“The Department of Defense (DoD) operates more than 420 military installations in 47 states, the District of Columbia, Guam and Puerto Rico. These installations—which may also be referred to as bases, camps, posts, stations, yards or centers—sustain the presence of U.S. forces at home and abroad.” Those within the United States serve a number of functions including to train and deploy troops, care for the wounded and provide housing, health care and education, contributing billions of dollars annually to the economy. The National Conference of State Legislatures has compiled 20 recent state military economic impact studies, providing key findings and a link to the study for each state.

## **EDUCATION**

***State Standard-setting Process in Brief.* By Jennifer Thomsen. Education Commission of the States. Dec. 2014. 22 p.**  
<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/16/20/11620.pdf>

“Concerns about academic standards, whether created by states from scratch or adopted by states under the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) banner, have drawn widespread media attention and are at the top of many state policymakers’ priority lists. Recently, a number of legislatures have required additional steps, such as waiting periods for public comment, that state education leaders must follow, and ECS anticipates that the 2015 sessions will see continued debate on this issue. This brief describes state standard-setting processes and provides profiles of eight states’ standard-setting and review processes, as well as the measures used by those states to validate their standards.” Though California is not among the eight states profiled, this study is useful for its analysis of state-level impacts.

## EMPLOYMENT

***Human Trafficking: Oversight of Contractors' Use of Foreign Workers in High-Risk Environments Needs to Be Strengthened.*** Government Accountability Office. GAO-15-102. Nov. 2014. 67 p.  
<http://www.gao.gov/assets/670/666998.pdf>

“Current policies and guidance governing the payment of recruitment fees by foreign workers on certain U.S. government contracts do not provide clear instructions to agencies or contractors regarding the components or amounts of permissible fees related to recruitment.... Such recruitment fees can lead to various abuses related to trafficking in persons (TIP), such as debt bondage.... GAO found that agency monitoring, called for by federal acquisition regulations and agency guidance, did not always include processes to specifically monitor contractor efforts to combat TIP.”

## ENVIRONMENT

***Integrating Storage in California's Changing Water System.*** By Jay Lund, et al. UC Davis Center for Watershed Sciences. Nov. 2014. 44 p.  
[https://watershed.ucdavis.edu/files/biblio/Storage\\_White\\_Paper\\_20Nov2014.pdf](https://watershed.ucdavis.edu/files/biblio/Storage_White_Paper_20Nov2014.pdf)

In the context of California's current drought, increasing water storage capacity in the state is often listed as a key priority. However, increasing storage can be at odds with other policy goals such as the preservation of native habitat and species. Additionally, more storage may not produce the anticipated benefits if future rainfall does not provide enough excess water to supply storage projects or if the state lacks the conveyance capacity to move excess rainfall to locations where it can be stored. This pilot study focused on the potential for increased water storage in the state and found that California's large-scale water system could probably utilize 5 to 6 million acre-feet of new surface and groundwater storage capacity. The report also advocates that future projects be planned on an integrated basis, rather than as stand-alone projects.

## HEALTH

***Trouble in Toyland: The 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Survey of Toy Safety.*** By Elizabeth Ridlington, et al. CALPIRG Education Fund. Nov. 2014. 45 p.  
[http://www.calpirg.org/sites/pirg/files/reports/CALPIRG\\_Trouble\\_in\\_Toyland\\_2014.pdf](http://www.calpirg.org/sites/pirg/files/reports/CALPIRG_Trouble_in_Toyland_2014.pdf)

This report highlights findings of hazards present in children's toys. “Among the toys surveyed this year, we found numerous choking hazards and five toys with concentrations of toxics exceeding federal standards. In addition to reporting on potentially hazardous products found in stores in 2014, this installment of the report describes the potential hazards in toys and children's products.” Policymakers and the public are encouraged to build on recent progress in the strengthening of toy safety standards.

## HUMAN SERVICES

***The 2014 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress: Part 1 Point-in-Time Estimates of Homelessness.*** The U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development. Oct. 2014. 68 p.  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4074/2014-ahar-part-1-pit-estimates-of-homelessness/>

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD's) latest assessment of homelessness is a point-in-time snapshot that estimates the extent of homelessness on a single night. In January 2014, 578,424 people were homeless on a given night. California had the highest percentage of homeless people counted (20%) in unsheltered locations. However, even though homelessness in 31 states

declined between 2007 and 2014, California experienced the largest decline in the number of homeless with 25,034 fewer people since 2007.

## TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

***California Local Streets & Roads Needs Assessment: 2014 Update.*** By Theresa Romell, et al. Save California Streets. Oct. 2014. 157 p.

<http://www.savecaliforniastreet.org/read-the-report/>

“The 2014 study sought answers to important questions: What are the current pavement conditions of local streets and roads? What will it cost to repair all streets and roads? What are the needs for the essential components to a functioning system? How large is the funding shortfall? What are the solutions?... This update surveyed all of California’s 58 counties and 482 cities in 2014. The information captured data from more than 99% of the state’s local streets and roads—a level of participation that makes clear the local interest in addressing the growing problems of crumbling streets and roads.” The report also stated that the total identified funding needs for the next ten years is \$108 billion.

## VETERANS

***Ready to Serve: Community-Based Provider Capacity to Deliver Culturally Competent, Quality Mental Health Care to Veterans and Their Families.*** By Terri Tanielian, et al. RAND. Nov. 12, 2014. 33 p.

[http://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR806.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR806.html)

“To better understand a key aspect of our nation's ability to provide veterans and their families with access to high-quality mental health care, RAND conducted a survey of civilian mental health providers to gather information about their competency with military and veteran culture and their training and experience treating posttraumatic stress disorder and depression. This report provides the results of that survey. The findings and recommendations from this study should be relevant to individuals, organizations, and policy officials concerned about the capacity of the civilian health care sector to deliver culturally competent, high-quality services to veterans and their families.”

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

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