



Studies in the News

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

Crime in California, 2013. Office of the Attorney General. Sep. 23, 2014. 74 p.

<http://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/cjisc/publications/candd/cd13/cd13.pdf>

This report “presents an overview of the criminal justice system in California. Current year statistics are presented for reported crimes, arrests, disposition of adult felony arrests, adult probation,... citizens’ complaints against peace officers, domestic violence-related calls for assistance, and law enforcement officers killed or assaulted.” Highlights of this publication include: the violent crime rate from 2012-2013 decreased 6.5%; homicide rate decreased 8% in 2013 (after a 4.2% increase in 2012); and “despite

increasing in 2012, all violent crime categories experienced double-digit decreases in number and rate from 2008 to 2013.”

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

Unauthorized Immigrant Totals Rise in 7 States, Fall in 14. By Jeffrey S. Passel, et al. Pew Research. Nov. 18, 2014. 54 p.

<http://www.pewhispanic.org/2014/11/18/unauthorized-immigrant-totals-rise-in-7-states-fall-in-14/>

“The U.S. unauthorized immigrant population has leveled off nationally after the Great Recession, but state trends have been more volatile.... Six Western states are among those with declines in unauthorized immigrant populations from 2009 to 2012—Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Oregon.... Why did unauthorized immigrant populations decline in 14 states from 2009 to 2012? According to a Pew Research analysis, the losses in 13 of them were due to drops in the number of unauthorized immigrants from Mexico. The exception was Massachusetts, where the overall decrease was due to a decline in the number of unauthorized immigrants from other countries.”

ECONOMY

The Myth of America’s Manufacturing Renaissance: The Real State of U.S. Manufacturing. By Adams B. Nager, et al. ITIF: The Information Technology & Innovation Foundation. Jan. 2015. 30 p.

<http://www2.itif.org/2015-myth-american-manufacturing-renaissance.pdf>

“One of the most encouraging aspects of the U.S. economic recovery is the halo effect on manufacturing, which accounts for 1 in 6 private-sector jobs. Yet a new study is dismissing that renaissance as little more than a ‘myth.’” U.S. government data indicate that American manufacturing has not recovered to 2007 output or employment levels and its growth may be temporary. This report provides an overview of American manufacturing statistics and trends, some dating back to 1970. With over a million jobs and over 15,000 establishments lost since the Great Recession, the authors stress the need for policymakers to assess steps needed to sustain U.S. manufacturing. (CNBC, Jan. 12, 2015).

EDUCATION

Student Progress Ignored: An Examination of California School Districts’ Compliance with the Stull Act. By Alejandro Sandoval. EdVoice Institute. Jan. 2015. 15 p.

<http://edvoice.org/sites/default/files/STUDENT%20PROGRESS%20IGNORED.pdf>

Since enactment in 1971, the Stull Act requires California public school districts to include pupil progress as part of teacher job evaluations—but many schools may not be complying with this law. A survey of 26 school districts in California finds that 19 have teacher evaluation forms that do not meet Stull Act requirements regarding pupil progress. And, despite some districts’ efforts to comply—by rewriting teacher contracts and evaluation forms, “there is still no actual evidence from these districts showing evaluations in the 2014-15 school year will include any evidence of whether or not children are learning in the classroom with an effective teacher.”

EMPLOYMENT

Just 36% of Voters Aware of State's Paid Family Leave Program. Field Poll. Jan. 14, 2015. 9 p.
<http://www.field.com/fieldpollonline/subscribers/RIs2494.pdf>

"Slightly more than one in three California registered voters (36%) reports being aware of the state's Paid Family Leave Program, that provides up to six weeks of paid family leave for eligible workers. This proportion is down from 43% who said this in a similar Field Poll completed in June 2011. While awareness of the program declined across nearly all major voter subgroups, particularly large declines were observed among ethnic voters, voters with no more than a high school education, and women."

ENERGY

The Economic and Budgetary Effects of Producing Oil and Natural Gas from Shale. By Ron Gecan, et al. Congressional Budget Office. Dec. 2014. 48 p.
http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/49815-Effects_of_Shale_Production.pdf

"Virtually nonexistent a decade ago, the development of shale resources has boomed in the United States, producing about 3.5 million barrels of tight oil per day and about 9.5 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of shale gas per year. Those amounts equal about 30% of U.S. production of liquid fuels (which include crude oil, biofuels, and natural gas liquids) and 40% of U.S. production of natural gas. Shale development has also affected the federal budget, chiefly by increasing tax revenues." This study reviews the effects of shale oil and gas on energy markets, U.S. economic output, and the federal budget, and describes policy options that could change U.S. export policies and increase GDP and federal revenues.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Spotlight on Retiree Health Care Benefits for State and Local Employees in 2014. By Alex Brown, et al. Center for State and Local Government Excellence. Dec. 2014. 6 p.
<http://slge.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/OPEB-Spotlight-12.14.pdf>

"In aggregate, states face a considerable unfunded OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefit) liability, with just a few states carrying a significant portion of that liability. Additionally, more states are beginning to accumulate assets to prefund future retiree health benefits, which is a trend that is expected to continue. Finally, retiree health benefits are generally malleable and have a diminished standard of constitutional protection compared to pension benefits. These protections, however, are being challenged and some decisions have been rendered. This, in turn, will shape retiree health care policy moving forward, requiring states to consider other options for reducing OPEB costs."

HEALTH

Outbreaks: Protecting Americans from Infectious Diseases. By Jeffrey Levi, et al. Trust for America's Health. Dec. 2014. 112 p.
<http://healthyamericans.org/reports/outbreaks2014/>

"To help assess policies and the capacity to protect against infectious disease outbreaks, this report examines a range of infectious disease concerns. The report highlights a series of 10 indicators in each state that, taken collectively, offer a composite snapshot of strengths and vulnerabilities across the health system. These indicators help illustrate the types of policy fundamentals that are important to have in place not just to prevent the spread of disease in the first place but also to detect, diagnose and respond to outbreaks."

HOUSING

***Selling into the Sun: Price Premium Analysis of a Multi-State Dataset of Solar Homes.* By Ben Hoen, et al. Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. Jan. 2015.**

Full report. 40 p.: <http://emp.lbl.gov/publications/selling-sun-price-premium>

Fact Sheet. 2 p.: <http://emp.lbl.gov/sites/all/files/selling-into-the-sun-fullreport-factsheet-jan12.pdf>

Homes with solar photovoltaic (PV) systems have become more popular than ever. It is estimated that by 2050, residential rooftop PV systems will cover the equivalent of 30 million homes. “As PV systems become an increasingly common feature of U.S. homes, the ability to value these homes appropriately will become increasingly important. At the same time, capturing the value of PV to homes will be important for facilitating a robust residential PV market.... The study more than doubles the number of PV home sales previously analyzed, examines transactions in eight states [including California], and spans the years 2002-2013. The results impart confidence that PV consistently adds value across a variety of states, housing and PV markets, and home types.”

HUMAN SERVICES

***Show Me The Evidence: Obama’s Fight for Rigor and Results in Social Policy.* By Ron Haskins, et al. Brookings Institution Press. 2014. 319 p.
(Available at the California State Library)**

This book analyzed the Obama administration’s six evidence-based initiatives—preschool and K-12 education, teen pregnancy, employment and training, health, and community-based programs—that incorporated evidence of effectiveness into the grant selection process. The strategy is “to encourage state and local organizations to use model programs that have been shown to be effective through rigorous evaluation.... The organizations that win grants must also carefully evaluate the impacts of their model programs in order to improve them if the programs are not having the intended impacts.... With over 700 projects sponsored under the six initiatives and with most of the projects being evaluated by rigorous design, a broad test of the evidence-based strategy is well under way. In 2015 and 2016, most of the projects will have begun to report results.”

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

“Life Cycle Air Quality Impacts of Conventional and Alternative Light-Duty Transportation in the United States.” By Christopher W. Tessum, et al. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, vol. 111, no. 52 (Dec. 30, 2014) pp. 18490-18495.

<http://www.pnas.org/content/111/52/18490.full>

“Our assessment of the life cycle air quality impacts on human health of 10 alternatives to conventional gasoline vehicles finds that electric vehicles (EVs) powered by electricity from natural gas or wind, water, or solar power are best for improving air quality, whereas vehicles powered by corn ethanol and EVs powered by coal are the worst. This work advances the current debate over the environmental impacts of conventional versus alternative transportation options by combining detailed spatially and temporally explicit emissions inventories with state-of-the-science air quality impact analysis using advanced chemical transport modeling. Our results reinforce previous findings that air quality-related health damages from transportation are generally comparable to or larger than climate change-related damages.”

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