



## Studies in the News

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

***Corrections Infrastructure Spending in California.* By Brandon Martin. Public Policy Institute of California. Mar. 2015. 2 p.**

[http://www.ppic.org/main/publication\\_show.asp?i=1142](http://www.ppic.org/main/publication_show.asp?i=1142)

Changes brought about by realignment, rehabilitation, and reducing recidivism, are being reflected in the infrastructure spending of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR). According to this PPIC report, some of these changes include: (1) California investing in short- and long-term prison and jail capacity; (2) over \$2 billion in bond revenue to finance medical and mental healthcare facilities; and (3) CDCR adding nearly 2,400 dorm beds by mid 2016 for low-level offenders. An additional \$2.2 billion in bond revenue made available by the state will add an estimated 14,000 beds across the state along with plans to “provide medical, educational, and other services to inmates—not just new jail cells.”

## CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

***Women and Leadership.*** By Kim Parker, et al. Pew Research. Jan. 14, 2015. 56 p.  
<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2015/01/14/women-and-leadership/>

“According to the majority of Americans, women are every bit as capable of being good political leaders as men. The same can be said of their ability to dominate the corporate boardroom....[M]ost Americans find women indistinguishable from men on key leadership traits such as intelligence and capacity for innovation....” Respondents believe that more women are not at the top in government and business because of “a double standard for women ... where they have to do more than their male counterparts to prove themselves.... As a result, the public is divided about whether, even in the face of the major advances women have made in the workplace, the imbalance in corporate America will change in the foreseeable future.”

## ECONOMY

***California’s High Housing Costs: Causes and Consequences.*** Legislative Analyst’s Office. Mar. 2015. 44 p.  
<http://www.lao.ca.gov/reports/2015/finance/housing-costs/housing-costs.pdf>

Housing is more expensive in California than just about anywhere else. “The purpose of this report is to provide the Legislature an overview of the state’s complex and expensive housing markets, encompassing both single-family homes and multi-family apartments. We pay particular attention to identifying what has caused housing prices to increase so quickly in recent decades, and provide information to assist the Legislature in making decisions that will affect the future performance of the state’s housing markets.”

## EDUCATION

***On the Origins of Gender Human Capital Gaps: Short and Long Term Consequences of Teachers’ Stereotypical Biases.*** By Victor Lavy, et al., National Bureau of Economic Research. NBER Working Paper Series No. 20909. Jan. 2015. 43 p.  
<http://www.nber.org/papers/w20909> (Available at the California State Library)

Researchers looked at the effect of primary school teachers’ gender bias on boys’ and girls’ academic achievements. Their results suggest “that teachers’ biases favoring boys have an asymmetric effect by gender—positive effect on boys’ achievements and negative effect on girls’. Such gender biases also impact students’ enrollment in advanced level math courses in high school—boys positively and girls negatively. These results suggest that teachers’ biased behavior at early stage of schooling have long run implications for occupational choices and earnings at adulthood, because enrollment in advanced courses in math and science in high school is a prerequisite for post-secondary schooling in engineering, computer science and so on.”

## ENERGY

***Wind Vision: A New Era for Wind Power in the United States.*** U.S. Department of Energy, Wind and Water Power Technologies Office. Mar. 2015. 350 p.

[http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/WindVision\\_Report\\_final.pdf](http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/WindVision_Report_final.pdf)

National average wind costs remain above the national average for natural gas- and coal-fired electricity generation. However, “the *Wind Vision* analysis envisions new wind power generation costs to be below national average costs for both new and existing fossil plants within the next decade.” The report explores one scenario in which wind could supply up to 35% of U.S. electricity by 2050, up from the current 4.5%.

## GENERAL GOVERNMENT

***The Politics of Financial Insecurity: A Democratic Tilt, Undercut by Low Participation.***

By Scott Keeter, et al. Pew Research Center. Jan. 2015. 23 p.

<http://www.people-press.org/files/2015/01/1-8-15-Financial-security-release.pdf>

Americans who are financially insecure are less likely to be politically engaged. The financially insecure—those who receive some type of government benefit and have trouble paying bills—are predominantly female, non-white, unmarried and have health conditions that limit their ability to work around the house or hold a job. In the 2010 midterm elections (latest figures available), only 30% of the financially insecure cast a ballot, while 69% of the financially secure did.

***Tax Incentive Programs: Evaluate Today, Improve Tomorrow.*** Pew Charitable Trusts. Jan. 2015.

17 p.

<http://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/Assets/2015/01/StateTaxIncentivesBriefJanuary2015.pdf?la=en>

“From 2012 to 2014, 10 states and the District of Columbia passed laws that will require regular evaluation of economic development tax incentives or will improve existing evaluation processes. These laws ... provide lawmakers with hard evidence on the outcomes of their incentives.... This report advises states on how to design and implement these laws, so that tax incentives are evaluated regularly .... [b]uilding on the best practices developed in the 11 jurisdictions and elsewhere, the recommendations focus on three steps ... to improve the accountability and performance of their tax incentives”: 1) create a plan that builds in evaluation; 2) measure its impact; and, 3) evaluate the results and inform policy and budget deliberations.

## HEALTH

***Life Expectancy: Indicators on Children and Youth.*** Child Trends. Jan. 2015. 13 p.

[http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/78\\_Life\\_Expectancy.pdf](http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/78_Life_Expectancy.pdf)

This demographic report illustrates life expectancy rates for newborns in the United States, including descriptive data by gender, race, socioeconomic status and locale. “Life expectancy is a single measure used to take into account all the factors that contribute to a long life.... Overall, mortality rates for infants and for children older than age one fell considerably during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, due in large part to advances in medical technology.... Despite this progress, children in the United States have a shorter life expectancy than those in 30 other countries with populations of one million or more.”

## HUMAN SERVICES

***Due to State Cuts, SSI/SSP Grants Lose Ground to Housing Costs.*** California Budget & Policy Center. Mar 2015. 2 p.

<http://calbudgetcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/Fact-Sheet-3.11.15-Due-to-State-Cuts-SSI-SSP-Grants-Lose-Ground-to-Housing-Costs.pdf>

“Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) grants are a critical source of basic income for 1.3 million low-income seniors and people with disabilities in California.... [Due to deep reductions to the state portion of the grant], SSI/SSP grants have lost ground to housing costs, which have risen throughout much of California in recent years.... People are at greater risk of becoming homeless when housing costs account for more than half of household income.” The fair market rent (FMR) for a studio apartment exceeds 50% of the maximum SSI/SSP grant in all 58 counties and is higher than the maximum in 15 counties.

## TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

***Road Safety with Self-Driving Vehicles: General Limitations and Road Sharing with Conventional Vehicles.*** By Michael Sivak, et al. University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute. Jan. 2015. 13 p.

<http://www.driverlesstransportation.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/UMTRI-2015-2.pdf>

“Self-driving vehicles are expected to improve road safety, improve the mobility of those who currently cannot use conventional vehicles, and reduce emissions. In this white paper we discuss issues related to road safety with self-driving vehicles... [and] support the following conclusions: (1) The expectation of zero fatalities with self-driving vehicles is not realistic. (2) It is not a foregone conclusion that a self-driving vehicle would ever perform more safely than an experienced, middle-aged driver. (3) During the transition period when conventional and self-driving vehicles would share the road, safety might actually worsen, at least for the conventional vehicles.”

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