



Studies in the News

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

***California's Changing Prison Population.* By Ryken Grattet, et al. Public Policy Institute of California. Apr. 2015. 2 p.**

http://www.ppic.org/main/publication_show.asp?i=702

This informational brief discusses demographic trends in California's prison population. As of March 2015, the total inmate population is 112,300 or 135.8% of capacity, which is below the 2009 U.S. Supreme Court order of 137.5% of institutional design capacity. Reforms have been largely responsible for a reduction in prison population, such as realignment, parole violators not returning to prison, and reclassification of some drug and property crimes to misdemeanors. Three of every four men in prison are non-white (Latinos-42%, African-Americans-29%, other races-6%), even though they comprise less than two thirds of California's adult male population.

ECONOMY

The United Nations World Water Development Report 2015: Water for a Sustainable World. By Richard Connor, et al. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). 2015. 139 p.

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002318/231823E.pdf>

This report discusses challenges in managing and allocating water across competing developmental sectors throughout the world. “In addition to describing the relationship between water and its social, economic and environmental dimensions, this WWDR also examines water’s role in addressing several of the most pressing developmental challenges of our time, from food and energy security to urbanization and climate change. The Report is further enriched by regional perspectives, and provides decision-makers and practitioners with specific examples of measures, actions and approaches to addressing these interconnected challenges through water.”

EDUCATION

Mapping the Growth of Statewide Voucher Programs in the United States. By Katherine Ciernak, et al. Center for Evaluation & Education Policy. Mar. 2015. 18 p.

http://ceep.indiana.edu/projects/PDF/Statewide_Vouchers_CEEP_EPB.pdf

Voucher programs have been expanding in U.S. schools in recent years—particularly in city or district-specific programs. This report summarizes the history and implementation of statewide voucher programs in Florida, Ohio, Indiana and Louisiana. The researchers found several patterns in the development of these statewide programs. They are pushing for increased quality and accountability for the “choice” schools and moving away from poor student performance as eligibility for a voucher, creating more emphasis on parental choice.

EMPLOYMENT

The Skills Gap in U.S. Manufacturing: 2015 and Beyond. The Manufacturing Institute. Apr. 2015. 32 p.

http://www.themanufacturinginstitute.org/~/_media/827DBC76533942679A15EF7067A704CD.ashx

“Over the next decade, nearly three and a half million manufacturing jobs likely need to be filled and the skills gap is expected to result in 2 million of those jobs going unfilled. There are two major contributing factors to the widening gap—baby boomer retirements and economic expansion.... Eighty percent of manufacturing executives reported they are willing to pay more than the market rates in workforce areas reeling under talent crisis. Still six out of 10 positions remain unfilled due to the talent shortage.... Creating a supply of workers with manufacturing skills—engineering, skilled trades, and production—will be critical to the future competitiveness of companies and the industry as a whole.”

ENVIRONMENT

California’s Water. By Ellen Hanak, et al. Public Policy Institute of California. Apr. 2015. 4 p.

<http://www.ppic.org/main/publication.asp?i=1130>

“Managing water remains one of the great challenges for California. Population growth, a shifting climate, and declining ecosystem health are putting pressure on the state’s water supply and flood management systems. New policies are needed to address these challenges. This publication highlights some of the most pressing issues, including climate change and water, managing droughts, [and] paying for water.”

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

E-Cigarettes: Challenges and Opportunities for California; A Report on the Regulatory, Tax Policy and Health Dangers of Nicotine's Newest Hook. California State Board of Equalization. Mar. 23, 2015. 8 p.

<http://www.boe.ca.gov/ma/pdf/e-CigReport.pdf>

This report provides an overview of the scope of the e-cigarette industry and the current state of regulation and taxation on these devices. It finds a total lack of regulation at the state and federal level, and "... in the eyes of the law, selling an e-cigarette device is no different than selling an iPod. Sales and use tax is paid by the consumer, but unlike other tobacco and nicotine products, the state does not recoup any additional revenues that can be used to offset the long-term costs the state incurs in providing healthcare to those who use these ... substances."

HEALTH

Public Health Implications of Raising the Minimum Age of Legal Access to Tobacco Products. Edited by Richard J. Bonnie, et al. Institute of Medicine of the National Academies. Mar. 12, 2015. 334 p.

<http://www.iom.edu/reports/2015/tobacominimumagereport.aspx>

(Free registration required)

"The public health benefits of barring people under age 21 from buying cigarettes could be tremendous, including '4.2 million fewer years of life lost' among the next generation of American adults, according to a report released this week by the Institute of Medicine.... Teenagers, especially those between 15 and 17, are most vulnerable to addiction at a time when their brains are still developing, the report notes, and would be the group that benefits most from raising the minimum age of legal access more in line with the minimum age to buy alcohol." (CNN, Mar. 13, 2015).

HUMAN SERVICES

Unaffordable America: Poverty, Housing, and Eviction. By Matthew Desmond. Institute for Research on Poverty. Mar. 2015. 6 p.

<http://www.irp.wisc.edu/publications/fastfocus/pdfs/FF22-2015.pdf>

"Owing to rising housing costs, stagnant or falling incomes among the poor, and a shortfall of federal housing assistance, most poor renting families today devote over half of their income to housing costs, and eviction has become commonplace in low-income communities. Poor single mothers with young children, particularly African Americans, are at especially high risk of displacement. This brief reviews the prevalence and consequences of eviction—for parents, children, and neighborhoods. It concludes with suggested policy remedies and a call to pull housing back to the center of the poverty debate."

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Upper Klamath Basin Collaborative Groundwater Monitoring Map. United States Geological Survey. Apr. 3, 2015.

http://or.water.usgs.gov/projs_dir/klamath_cooperative_monitoring/index.html

"The U.S. Geological Survey recently launched the Upper Klamath Basin Collaborative Groundwater Monitoring website to provide information on groundwater conditions in the upper Klamath Basin. The website provides a single source for water users, resource managers and the general public to view up-

to-date groundwater-level monitoring data collected by multiple agencies in Oregon and California.” (USGS News Release, Apr 4, 2015).

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Information Security: FAA Needs to Address Weaknesses in Air Traffic Control Systems.
By Gregory C. Wilshusen, et al. U.S. Government Accountability Office. GAO-15-221. Jan. 2015.
46 p.

<http://www.gao.gov/assets/670/668169.pdf>

“While the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has taken steps to protect its air traffic control systems from cyber-based and other threats, significant security control weaknesses remain, threatening the agency’s ability to ensure the safe and uninterrupted operation of the national airspace system (NAS)... Until FAA effectively implements security controls, establishes stronger agency-wide information security risk management processes, fully implements its NAS information security program, and ensures that remedial actions are addressed in a timely manner, the weaknesses GAO identified are likely to continue, placing the safe and uninterrupted operation of the nation’s air traffic control system at increased and unnecessary risk.”

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