



Studies in the News

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

Public Safety Realignment: Impacts So Far. By Magnus Lofstrom, et al. Public Policy Institute of California. Sep. 2015. 10 p.

http://www.ppic.org/main/publication_quick.asp?i=1164

"Prompted by a federal court order to reduce prison overcrowding, California's 2011 historic public safety realignment shifted many correctional responsibilities for lower-level felons from the state to counties. The reform was premised on the idea that locals can do a better job, and it was hoped that incarceration rates and corrections costs would fall.... Realignment has largely been successful, but the state and county correctional systems face significant challenges. The state needs to regain control of prison medical care ... [a]nd the state and the counties together must make progress in reducing stubbornly high recidivism rates."

ECONOMY

The Hidden Poor: Over Three-Quarters of a Million Older Californians Overlooked by Official Poverty Line. By D. Imelda Padilla-Frausto, et al. UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. Aug. 2015. 8 p.

<http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/publications/Documents/PDF/2015/HiddenPoor-brief-aug2015.pdf>

Almost three-quarters of a million (772,000) older Californians are among the 'hidden poor,' defined as "older adults with incomes above the federal poverty line (FPL) but below a minimally decent standard of living as determined by the Elder Economic Security Standard Index (Elder Index) in 2011.... The highest rates of the hidden poor among older adults are found among renters, Latinos, women, those who are raising grandchildren, and people in the oldest age groups. Raising the income and asset eligibility requirement thresholds for social support programs such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), housing, health care, and food assistance would help California's older hidden poor make ends meet."

EDUCATION

Using Online Learning for Credit Recovery: Getting Back on Track to Graduation. By Allison Powell, et al. International Association for K-12 Online Learning. Sep. 2015. 25 p.

http://www.inacol.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/iNACOL_UsingOnlineLearningForCreditRecovery.pdf

Online "credit recovery" can help at-risk students to stay on-track towards high school graduation for those who may have missed or failed certain classes. Researchers find that the more successful programs are those that combine a blended approach—online instruction and in-person counseling and tutoring—and offer personalized instruction combined with software that can help to focus on specific student needs.

EMPLOYMENT

Job Impacts of California's Existing and Proposed Renewables Portfolio Standard. By Betony Jones, et al. UC Berkeley, Donald Vial Center on Employment in the Green Economy. Aug. 28, 2015. 6 p.

<http://irle.berkeley.edu/vial/publications/job-impacts-ca-rps.pdf>

"This brief presents estimates of the jobs created from California's renewable energy investments from 2003 through 2014, and forecasts job creation from continued development of renewable energy in California between 2015 and 2030 to meet a 50% renewables portfolio standard.... Between 2003-2014, about 52,000 ... direct jobs were created due to the construction of renewable energy plants, measured in person job years.... [I]ncreasing California's renewable portfolio standard to 50% by 2030 would create about an additional 354,000 (low scenario) to 429,000 (high scenario) direct jobs from the construction of new renewable generation.... We estimate that for every MW [megawatt] produced out-of-state instead of in-state, on average 11.5 direct jobs and 28.7 total jobs ... would be lost."

ENERGY

Creating and Mapping an Urban Heat Island Index for California. By Haider Taha, et al. California Environmental Protection Agency. Apr. 2015 (Released Sep. 2015). 100 p.

<http://www.calepa.ca.gov/UrbanHeat/Report/Report.pdf>

Conducted in response to legislation, this study analyzes areas across California that may experience hotter temperatures during the summer as a result of urban development. "Heat island effects are related

to the size of the urban area. Large urban areas have average daily summer temperature increases up to 9°F compared with non-urban regions, while smaller cities average an increase of up to 5°F. The largest effect is in southern California, where the urban heat islands blur together to form an ‘urban heat archipelago’ with average temperatures up to 19°F higher in the Riverside-San Bernardino region at the eastern end of the basin.” (*Press Release*, Sep. 16, 2015).

ENVIRONMENT

“Scientific Evidence Supports a Ban on Microbeads.” By Chelsea M. Rochman, et al. *Environmental Science and Technology*, vol. 49 (Sep. 3, 2015). pp.10759-10761. <http://pubs.acs.org/doi/pdfplus/10.1021/acs.est.5b03909>

This report explains the negative environmental impacts of microbeads, and discusses ways in which policymakers may approach a successful ban on production and distribution of this pollutant. “In this analysis, and using extremely conservative methodology, the researchers estimated that 8 trillion microbeads per day are being emitted into aquatic habitats in the United States—enough to cover more than 300 tennis courts a day. But the other 99% of the microbeads—another 800 trillion—end up in sludge from sewage plants, which is often spread over areas of land. Many of those microbeads can then make their way into streams and oceans through runoff.” (*Oregon State University News and Communications*, Sep. 16, 2015).

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Governing with Tight Budgets: Long-Term Trends in State Finances. By Norton Francis, et al. Urban Institute. Sep. 2015. 20 p. <http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/alfresco/publication-pdfs/2000376-Long-Term-Trends-in-State-Finances.pdf>

“As states have recovered from the recession, seven cut individual income taxes (and increased sales taxes). Others, on the other hand, increased their sales tax after income tax cuts resulted in too little revenue.... The sales tax is less volatile than the income tax, which means it can be easier to forecast accurately from year to year. But it’s regressive, meaning it hurts lower-income earners more than it impacts rich people. And as the economy moves towards technology and services (things that are difficult to tax), the sales tax base is capturing an increasingly smaller piece of what consumers are actually spending. Finally, sales tax revenue as a whole is growing slower than personal income.” (*Governing*, Sep. 22, 2015).

HUMAN SERVICES

We Count, California!: Lessons Learned from Efforts to Improve Youth Inclusion in California’s 2015 Point-in-Time Counts. By Jessica Lin, et al. California Homeless Youth Project. Sep. 2015. 79 p. <http://cahomelessyouth.library.ca.gov/docs/pdf/WeCountCalifFinal.pdf>

This report highlights “promising practices for counting unaccompanied minors and transition-age youth (TAY) experiencing homelessness and share a look at the latest figures from communities’ 2015 Point-in-Time counts across the state. In the 2015 Point-In-Time (PIT) count, 11,365 unsheltered, unaccompanied children and youth were found in California, residing in a place not meant for human habitation on the night of the count. This report identifies many challenges at the local, state, and federal level and offers solutions based on input from youth, service providers, education liaisons, and Continuums of Care across the state.” (*California Homeless Youth Project* (website), Sep. 2015).

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

***LA Energy Atlas.* By Stephanie Pincetl, et al. California Center for Sustainable Communities at University of California, Los Angeles. Sep. 2015.**

<http://www.energyatlas.ucla.edu/>

“The LA Energy Atlas provides in-depth knowledge of the region’s energy consumption at the neighborhood, city and county scales across a range of indicators, including building type and age. Users can access and download data previously inaccessible to get a comprehensive understanding of energy use trends over time, as well as variations across the region and building types. This atlas will serve as an invaluable tool to policymakers, researchers and energy stakeholders to help meet energy conservation targets and work towards greater sustainability.” (*Los Angeles County Enterprise GIS*, Sep. 29, 2015).

VETERANS

***Veterans’ Discharge Paperwork: LGBT Veterans Say Change Is Needed.* By Tonya D. Lindsey, et al. California Research Bureau. Sep. 2015. 2 p.**

<http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/15/S-15-004.pdf>

“California is home to the largest number of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) veterans in the country – more than double the next closest state. When these service members left active duty military service, the Department of Defense issued them discharge papers that characterized their military service. For LGBT veterans, discharge papers reflecting outdated gender identities and outdated policies—such as ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’—can cause a loss of access to earned military benefits and services.” (*California Research Bureau* (website), Sep. 2015).

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