

Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

Contents this week:

CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

CA former inmates report non-consensual sex incidents

ECONOMY

Call for innovative water management policies for a growing population

EDUCATION

CA's General Fund spending for four-year colleges has gone down

Innovative algebra curriculum will likely cost more than traditional methods

ENVIRONMENT

Evidence of contaminants in coastal fish

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Case study: Prop. 13 and L.A. County's fiscal governance policies

HEALTH

Nonelderly veterans need help with their health care options

HOUSING

Helping older renters remain in their homes

HUMAN SERVICES

States charging more to deliver TANF services

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

NCSL Election Reform Legislation Database

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

CPUC: PG&E violated federal, state laws

CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

Sexual Victimization Reported by Former State Prisoners, 2008. By Allen J. Beck, et al. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics. May 17, 2012. 52 p.

<http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/svrfsp08.pdf>

Almost 10% of state prisoners report one or more incidents of sexual victimization while in state custody. Approximately 2% of local jail prisoners, 7.5% of state inmates and 0.1% of post-release community treatment program participants report being involved in non-consensual sex acts. Over 5% of state prison inmates report that non-consensual sex acts occur with other inmates, and 5% report being forced to have sex with prison employees. Although the rate of non-consensual sex in prisons has increased over the last Bureau of Justice Statistics survey, this may be reflective of longer incarceration periods rather than other factors.

ECONOMY

***Water and the California Economy.* By Ellen Hanak, et al. Public Policy Institute of California. May 2012. 32 p.**

<http://www.ppic.org/main/publication.asp?i=1015>

“What are the key economic issues related to water management in California today? This report offers a consensus view, drawn from a wide-ranging group of experts ... and finds that despite many beneficial innovations in water management over the past few decades, risks to the economy remain. California’s economy can grow and prosper despite droughts and water shortages caused by a changing climate – but only if threats to the water system are addressed now. So far, innovative water management has supported the needs of a growing population but serious concerns remain, including water supply reliability and declining groundwater basins.”

EDUCATION

***State Spending on Higher Education. Federal Funds Information for States.* May 2012. 15 p.**
http://www.ffis.org/state_policy_reports/vol-30_is-7 (Available through the California State Library)

“In recent years, state spending on higher education has come into focus as the revenue effects of the Great Recession made it hard for many states to maintain funds for higher education expenditures. While overall spending on higher education has increased, state spending as a percent of total expenditures has decreased since FY 2007. The decrease in state funding has implications both for the cost of public higher education and the federal funding states receive.”

***Analysis of Costs in an Algebra I Curriculum Effectiveness Study.* By Linda Daugherty. RAND. May 2012. 64 p.**

http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical_reports/2012/RAND_TR1171.pdf

The Carnegie Learning's Cognitive Tutor Algebra I (CTAI) curriculum is a technology-based curriculum that combines classroom instruction with individualized instruction by a computer-based tutor. In an evaluation of its effectiveness, RAND found that the CTAI curriculum was likely to cost significantly more than was spent on the average algebra I curriculum. “The authors report on the per-student costs for each curriculum in three categories: materials, which include textbooks and software; software implementation resources, such as computers; and teacher training.”

ENVIRONMENT

***Contaminants in Fish from the California Coast, 2009-2010: Summary Report on a Two-Year Screening Survey.* By J. A. Davis, et al. California State Water Resources Control Board. May 24, 2012. 87 p.**

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/swamp/docs/coast_study/bog2012may/coast2012_report_lowres.pdf

Methylmercury and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) continue to be significant concerns in sport fish on the California coast, according to a two-year state survey of contaminants in fish at 68 coastal locations. Other pollutants, including dieldrin, DDT, chlordanes and selenium, weren't found at high enough concentrations to be a problem. This survey, the largest of its kind ever conducted, included data from relatively undeveloped Northern and Central Coast sites. This initial screening is the first step in an effort to identify and quantify contaminants in California's coastal waters, evaluate human and wildlife exposure to these contaminants, and establish priorities for cleanup actions.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

“Fiscal Sustainability in Los Angeles County.” By Mark Pisano, et al. *National Civic Review*, vol. 101, no. 1 (Spring 2012). 7 p.

<http://www.ncl.org/pdfs/101-1/LA%20Case%20Study.pdf>

This case study on Los Angeles County fiscal governance argues that the county experienced a “dramatic change in culture” in the wake of Proposition 13 in 1978, from a “needs-dependence” culture to one based on “fiscal sustainability.” This cultural shift, ironically, was supported by the county’s large size because “long-serving staff members were able to specialize and develop areas of expertise, which aided the organization in finding innovative budget solutions.”

HEALTH

Uninsured Veterans and Family Members: Who Are They and Where Do They Live? By Jennifer Haley, et al. Urban Institute. May 2012. 17 p.

<http://www.rwjf.org/files/research/74428.quickstrike.veterans.052412.pdf>

“While veterans are less likely than the rest of the nonelderly population to be uninsured, there are an estimated 1.3 million uninsured veterans nationwide.... Both uninsured veterans and their family members report significantly less access to needed health care than their counterparts with insurance coverage.” In California, 10% of nonelderly veterans are uninsured, which is slightly lower than the national average. The Affordable Care Act has the potential to increase coverage among U.S. citizens beginning in 2014, including nonelderly veterans and their families. Success in reducing the numbers of uninsured veterans will depend on states’ efforts to enroll them in the appropriate insurance programs.

HOUSING

Housing as a Platform for Improving Outcomes for Older Renters. By Brenda C. Spillman, et al. Urban Institute. Apr. 2012. 28 p.

http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/412553-Housing-as-a-Platform-for-Improving-Outcomes-for-Older-Renters.pdf?RSSFeed=UI_Housing.xml

Low-income older renters have special needs as they age. This population group tends to have more disabilities and to live alone. Policies that focus on providing subsidized housing, with expanded Medicaid community-based support services, will allow them to “age-in-place,” a preferred housing arrangement among most older Americans.

HUMAN SERVICES

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families: State Maintenance of Effort Requirements and Trends. General Accountability Office Report. (GAO-12-713T). May 17, 2012. 22 p.

<http://gao.gov/assets/600/590958.pdf>

The federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant program includes requirements for specified state spending levels to demonstrate “maintenance of effort” on delivery of services to targeted, needy populations. “Total MOE spending reported by states remained relatively stable around the required minimum spending level of \$11 billion through fiscal year 2005, and then increased to about \$4 billion higher than this minimum in fiscal years 2009 and 2010. Several reasons likely accounted for these increases, including states’ reliance on MOE spending to help them meet TANF work participation

rates.... GAO's previous work makes clear that MOE provisions are often difficult to administer and oversee, but can be important tools for helping ensure that federal spending achieves its intended effect.”

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

NCSL Election Reform Legislation Database

NCSL's database on Election Reform Legislation is searchable by state, year, status of the legislation, nearly a hundred subtopics, and/or an exact phrase. Multiple items may be searched simultaneously. For more information, visit <http://www.ncsl.org/legislatures-elections/elections/2001-2010-database-of-election-reform-legislation.aspx>.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Investigative Report into the Operations and Practices of Pacific Gas & Electric Company's Natural Gas Transmission Pipeline System in Locations with Higher Population Density.
Consumer Product & Safety Division, California Public Utilities Commission. Report I.11-11-009. May 25, 2012. 66 p.

<http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/NR/rdonlyres/3E77F740-BD3F-4F32-BFB7-0B619F1AABD4/0/REPORTI1111009CPSDClassLocationOII.pdf>

The natural gas industry organizes certain safety standards for pipelines by “class locations” tied to population density in proximity to a given stretch of pipeline. The central issue with this investigation concerns Pacific Gas & Electric's natural gas transmission operations in areas with high population densities. This staff report contends “that between 1971 and 2012, PG&E has committed numerous and serious violations” of applicable Federal regulations, state code, CPUC regulations, and PG&E's own procedures. The staff report “urges the Commission to levy significant penalties on PG&E for the violations discussed here in order to discourage any future complacency in the company's class location, patrolling, and continuing surveillance programs.”

About *Studies in the News*

Studies in the News (SITN) is a service provided to the Legislature, the Governor's Office, and State Constitutional Officers by the California Research Bureau, a division of the California State Library.

- SITN lists of current studies related to public policy issues are e-mailed periodically. Prior lists can be viewed at the California State Library's website at <http://www.library.ca.gov/sitn/crb>.
- To update your e-mail address, or add/remove your name from the SITN distribution list, please contact us at crb@library.ca.gov, or (916) 319-2691.
- SITN is available as an RSS feed at <http://www.library.ca.gov/sitn/crb/>.