

Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

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ECONOMY

***Land of Promise: An Economic History of the United States.* By Michael Lind. HarperCollins Publishing. 2012. 586 p. (Available in the California State Library)**

"From the eighteenth to the twenty-first centuries, the American economy has been transformed by wave after wave of emerging technology ... yet, such change leads to growing misalignment between an innovative economy and anachronistic legal and political structures until the gap is closed by the modernization of America's institutions.... When the U.S. economy has flourished, government and business, labor and universities, have worked together as partners in a never-ending project of economic nation building.... This book demonstrates that Americans, since the earliest days of the republic, have reinvented the American economy – and have the power to do so again."

***New Engines of Growth: Five Roles for Arts, Culture, and Design.* By Erin Sparks, et al. National Governors Association. May 2012. 52 p.**

<http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/1204NEWENGINESOFGROWTH.PDF>

“With concerns over job creation and business growth holding a prominent – and persistent – position on policy agendas today, governors are increasingly finding innovative ways to support economic growth.... This report focuses on the role that arts, culture and design can play in governors’ policies to create jobs and boost their economies in the short run and transition to an innovation-based economy in the long run. The roles identified include: provide a fast-growth, dynamic industry cluster; help mature industries become more competitive; provide the critical ingredients for innovative places; catalyze community revitalization; and deliver a better prepared workforce.”

EDUCATION

***The Road Ahead: Higher Education, California’s Promise and Our Future Economy.* California Competes: Higher Education for a Strong Economy. June 2012. 16 p.**

http://californiacompetes.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/CaCompetes_Report_Final-2.pdf

“In the second half of the twentieth century, California emerged as an economic powerhouse.... The future of every Californian is dependent on maintaining that leadership by developing talent and productivity of Californians through higher education, the keystone to California’s diverse economy. Our colleges, universities and professional training programs have provided the intellectual and technical know-how to make California a hub of innovation and job creation.... We can secure a stronger economy by building a talent pool whose creativity, innovation, entrepreneurship and industriousness match the needs of the 21st century.”

***School Finance Reform: A Weighted Pupil Formula for California.* By Mary Perry. Policy Analysis for California Education. May 2012. 6 p.**

http://www.stanford.edu/group/pace/PUBLICATIONS/school_finance_reform.pdf

The report “offers an overview and analysis of the policy change that the Governor has proposed. The author reviews criticisms of California’s current school funding system, the basic principles that define a weighted pupil funding formula, the key features of Governor Brown’s proposal to the Legislature, and some of the political and practical issues raised by a move to weighted pupil funding.”

EMPLOYMENT

***Estimated Impact of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act on Employment and Economic Output from January 2012 Through March 2012.* Congressional Budget Office. May 2012. 9 p.**

http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/05-25-Impact_of_ARRA.pdf

Estimates suggest that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) “... will increase the number of people employed in 2012 by between 0.2 million and 1.1 million.” This number better captures the Act’s impact on employment because it includes outcomes beyond the number of employee hours paid for with ARRA funds as an indicator of full-time-equivalent (FTE) jobs. First-quarter, direct reports from recipients of ARRA funds reported 162,870 FTE jobs created.

ENERGY

2013 Building Energy Efficiency Standards Rulemaking. California Energy Commission. June 2012.

<http://www.energy.ca.gov/title24/2013standards/>

“The California Energy Commission ... approved what it called nation-leading efficiency standards for new homes and commercial buildings. Approved by a 4-0 vote, the upgraded standards include improved windows, insulation, lighting, air-conditioning systems and other features to reduce energy consumption in California homes and businesses by a projected 25% or more, compared with previous standards approved in 2008. The amended standards are due to take effect on Jan. 1, 2014, applying to new construction of houses and buildings.” (*Sacramento Bee*, June 1, 2012).

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

California Climate Change Adaptation Policy Guide: Draft. California Emergency Management Agency and California Natural Resources Agency. Apr. 2012. 214 p.

[http://resources.ca.gov/climate_adaptation/docs/APG - PUBLIC DRAFT 4.9.12_small.pdf](http://resources.ca.gov/climate_adaptation/docs/APG_-_PUBLIC_DRAFT_4.9.12_small.pdf)

“Because the most effective adaptation policy is based on local conditions, needs, and resources, the APG [Adaptation Policy Guide] is not prescriptive in its approach. Instead, a decision-making framework is presented that provides straightforward, yet flexible, guidance for communities to begin taking direct actions in response to climate impacts. The steps presented include the interpretation of climate science for evaluation of local consequences, an examination of local vulnerability, and development of systematic rationale for reducing risks caused, or exacerbated, by climate change.”

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

A Review of Government Reorganization Plan No. 2: Recommendation to the Legislature. Little Hoover Commission. May 2012. 66 p.

<http://www.lhc.ca.gov/studies/211/Report211.pdf>

This report reviews Governor Brown’s Reorganization Plan No. 2, which proposes the creation of three new agencies (Transportation, Government Operations, and Business and Consumer Services) by relocating departments in existing agencies and subsuming several independent boards and commissions under new agency structures. “Changes in society and in technology make it essential for California to modernize the enterprise of governing.... Governor Brown’s Government Reorganization Plan No. 2 responds to this need in an ambitious and long-overdue restructuring that combines similar functions that have been separated, pulling in stand-alone operations that will benefit from greater administrative support.”

HEALTH

Medi-Cal at a Crossroads: What Enrollees Say About the Program. By Lake Research Partners. California HealthCare Foundation. May 2012. 32 p.

<http://www.chcf.org/~media/MEDIA%20LIBRARY%20Files/PDF/M/PDF%20MediCalCrossroadsWhatEnrolleesSay.pdf>

If enacted as legislated, the Affordable Care Act will increase eligibility for Medi-Cal enrollment for millions of individuals. Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the program from the user perspective will

assist policymakers in identifying “needed changes and provide a baseline for measuring the impact of any changes.” Using information gleaned from current enrollees, this survey “explores who is enrolled; challenges they face; what is working; the enrollment process; and access to care.”

HUMAN SERVICES

California’s Welfare Recipients: Family Circumstances, Income, and Time on Aid Among CalWORKs Families. By Caroline Danielson. Public Policy Institute of California. May 2012. 29 p.
http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_512CDR.pdf

“[F]amilies on CalWORKs are clearly disadvantaged – they have low incomes and low educational attainment.... Roughly half of families currently on CalWORKs have a record of assistance that is two years or shorter.... Over half of families who have ever made use of CalWORKs have an assistance history that is two years or less.... These findings indicate that CalWORKs families are in immediate need, but that receiving aid is a relatively transitory situation for many.... Long stays are relatively longer for families with greater disadvantage.”

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Federal-State Partnership Produces Benefits and Poses Oversight Risks. Government Accountability Office. Apr. 26, 2012. 54 p.
<http://gao.gov/assets/600/590499.pdf>

As the Federal highway program has grown more complex, the Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) oversight resources have not kept pace. Legislation approved by the U.S. Senate in March 2012 would establish a more performance-based highway program, including introducing performance measures and requiring FHWA to monitor states’ performance on those measures. “The fundamental reexamination of surface transportation programs, including the highway program, that GAO previously recommended presents an opportunity to narrow FHWA’s responsibilities so that it is better equipped to transition to a performance-based system.”

About *Studies in the News*

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