

Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

***Corrections Realignment: One Year Later.* By Dean Misczynski. Public Policy Institute of California. Aug. 2012. 40 p.**

http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_812DMR.pdf

According to the author, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation sees realignment as a success: prison populations are declining and CDCR is close to meeting its court-mandated goals for population restrictions. Counties are experiencing uneven jail population growth. While the statewide jail population remains less than the total number of jail beds available, some counties have more inmates than beds. Counties are pressed to hire more parole officers to manage felons released on post-release community supervision. Finally, there is no discernable connection between realignment and the crime rate increase or decrease in a county.

Evaluating the Effects of California's Corrections Realignment on Public Safety. By Magnus Lofstrom, et al. Public Policy Institute of California. Aug. 2012. 18 p.
http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_812MLR.pdf

"The need for statewide monitoring and assessment [of corrections realignment] is self-evident, but who should be responsible for these tasks is less clear. The BSCC [Board of State and Community Corrections] may be best suited to undertake such endeavors, but a state mandate may not be politically or fiscally feasible. The approach taken by the state so far has been to charge BSCC with the task of developing a structure for tracking corrections realignment...."

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

Californians Strongly Support Nation's Health Reform Law but Believe More Changes Are Needed to the Health Care System. By Mark DiCamillo, et al. The Field Poll. Aug. 20, 2012. 43 p.
<http://www.field.com/fieldpollonline/subscribers/RIs2423.pdf>

"California voters, much more than the national public, offer a positive assessment of the Affordable Care Act (ACA).... While nearly half (46%) do not expect the law to significantly impact their own lives, uninsured voters and those who have gone without health coverage recently are more likely to say they will be positively [rather] than negatively affected by the law. In addition, larger proportions of voters within each of the state's major ethnic voter populations examined in the survey, including Latinos, African-Americans, Chinese-Americans, Filipino-Americans, Korean-Americans and Vietnamese-Americans, believe their family will be better off than worse off under the law."

Fewer, Poorer, Gloomier: The Lost Decade of the Middle Class. Pew Social & Demographic Trends. Aug. 22, 2012. 140 p.
<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/files/2012/08/pew-social-trends-lost-decade-of-the-middle-class.pdf>

"As the 2012 presidential candidates prepare their closing arguments to America's middle class, they are courting a group that has endured a lost decade for economic well-being. Since 2000, the middle class has shrunk in size, fallen backward in income and wealth, and shed some – but by no means all – of its characteristic faith in the future.... Fully 85% of self-described middle-class adults say it is more difficult now than it was a decade ago for middle-class people to maintain their standard of living."

EDUCATION

New Schools, Overcrowding Relief, and Achievement Gains in Los Angeles – Strong Returns from a \$19.5 Billion Investment. By William Welsh, et al. Policy Analysis for California Education. Aug. 2012. 12 p.
http://www.stanford.edu/group/pace/PUBLICATIONS/PB/pace_pb_08.pdf

"By tracking thousands of students who moved from overcrowded to new facilities [in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD)] over the 2002-2008 period, we discovered robust achievement gains.... Key findings include: The steady opening of new schools dramatically relieved overcrowding in elementary and secondary schools and set in motion a complex migration of students, both to new facilities as well as to a growing number of charter and pilot schools. Significant achievement gains are discernible for elementary-school pupils who switched from an old facility to a newly constructed facility. On average, these 'switching pupils' outpaced the average LAUSD student by a gain equal to about 35 additional days of instruction each year."

The Impact of Charter Schools on Public and Private School Enrollments. By Richard Buddin. Cato Institute. Aug. 28, 2012. 64 p.
<http://www.cato.org/pubs/pas/PA707.pdf>

Charter schools draw most of their enrollment from traditional public schools. Increasingly, they are drawing students from private schools. Private schools in high-urban areas are particularly susceptible to having their students transfer from private to charter schools. Catholic schools are especially vulnerable, particularly with students in elementary grades. The shift from private to charter schools has implications for public financing of education. When a student transfers from a private to a charter school, increased tax dollars are needed to educate that student. This study reviews the impact and trends of transfers from traditional public and private schools to charters in all 41 states where charters are currently active.

EMPLOYMENT

Temporary Workers in California Are Twice as Likely as Non-Temps to Live in Poverty: Problems with Temporary and Subcontracted Work in California. By Miranda Dietz. UC Berkeley Labor Center. Aug. 2012. 34 p.
http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/jobquality/temp_workers.pdf

“In California almost one-quarter of a million people worked in the temporary help services industry in 2010; another 37,000 people worked in employee leasing firms totaling 282,000 workers in these two industries. This accounted for approximately 2.0% of all non-farm employment in California in 2010 ... span[ing] a wide range of occupations, from professional white collar occupations like nursing, accounting and computer programming, to blue color work in transportation ... housekeeping ... and manufacturing. Temporary workers face lower wages, fewer benefits, and less job security,” which in turn affect their health and well-being. This paper reviews the issues associated with temp work and reviews alternatives and solutions.

What Clean Energy Jobs? These Clean Energy Jobs! Second Quarter 2012 Clean Energy Jobs Roundup. By Lauren Kubiak, et al. E2 Environmental Entrepreneurs. Aug. 2012. 7 p.
<http://www.e2.org/ext/doc/E2%20CleanJobsQ22012.pdf>

In the second quarter of 2012, California ranked first in the total number of clean energy jobs in operation, in progress, and announced for future development. “As noted in prior *What Clean Energy Jobs?* reports, clean energy projects cross over party lines. Clean energy jobs announcements this quarter spanned 57 congressional districts, Democratic and Republican alike. A total of 35 clean energy projects were announced in Democratic districts and 31 in Republican districts. Nine projects spanned more than one congressional district, overlapping districts represented by both Democratic and Republican lawmakers.”

ENERGY

2011 Wind Technologies Market Report. By Ryan Wiser, et al. U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Scientific and Technical Information. Aug. 2012. 93 p.
<http://eetd.lbl.gov/ea/emp/reports/lbnl-5559e.pdf>

“With federal tax incentives for wind energy currently slated to expire at the end of 2012, new capacity additions in 2012 are anticipated to exceed 2011 levels and perhaps even the highs in 2009 as developers rush to commission projects. At the same time, despite the improved cost, performance, and price of wind energy, policy uncertainty – in concert with continued low natural gas prices, modest electricity demand growth, and the aforementioned slack in existing state policies – threatens to dramatically slow new builds in 2013 and beyond. Forecasts for 2013 and beyond therefore span a particularly wide range, depending in large measure on assumptions about the possible extension of federal incentives.”

HOUSING

Renter's Tax Credit Would Promote Equity and Advance Balanced Housing Policy. By Barbara Sard, et al. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Revised July 25, 2012. 44 p.

<http://www.cbpp.org/files/7-13-12hous.pdf>

A renter's credit program that is a combined public-private partnership, administered by the states, could reduce low-income renters' monthly rent and reduce the number of people in that group who spend more than 50% of their income on housing. Such a program could create a more balanced approach to housing policy – spending less on federal housing subsidies to taxpayers with incomes above \$200,000 – and enabling low-income renters to have more stable housing.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

“High-Speed Rail with Emerging Automobiles and Aircraft Can Reduce Environmental Impacts in California's Future.” By Mikhail Chester, et al. *Environmental Research Letters*, vol. 7, no. 3 (July 2012) pp 1-11.

http://iopscience.iop.org/1748-9326/7/3/034012/pdf/1748-9326_7_3_034012.pdf

“Using the California corridor, future automobiles, high-speed rail and aircraft long-distance travel are evaluated, considering emerging fuel-efficient vehicles, new train designs and the possibility that the region will meet renewable electricity goals.... The environmental payback is most sensitive to the number of automobile trips shifted to high-speed rail, and for greenhouse gases is likely to occur in 20–30 years. A high-speed rail system that is deployed with state-of-the-art trains, electricity that has met renewable goals, and in a configuration that endorses high ridership will provide significant environmental benefits over existing modes.”

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