



## Studies in the News

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## **CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT**

*Funding Public Safety Realignment.* By Mia Bird, et al. Public Policy Institute of California. Nov. 2013.

Full report. 31 p.: [http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R\\_1113MBR.pdf](http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_1113MBR.pdf)

Technical appendix. 15 p.: [http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/other/1113MBR\\_appendix.pdf](http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/other/1113MBR_appendix.pdf)

“California has transferred considerable authority—and funds—from the state to the counties to manage lower-level felon populations. This report describes how these funding allocations have evolved and proposes a new funding model, with special attention to county characteristics and incentives for reducing recidivism.”

## ECONOMY

***Emerging Energy Industries and Rural Growth.*** By Jason P. Brown, et al. The Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Economic Research Report Number 159. Nov. 2013. 53 p. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/ersDownloadHandler.ashx?file=/media/1229549/err159.pdf>

“Expansion of emerging energy industries—unconventional natural gas extraction, wind power development, and corn-based ethanol production—in rural areas of the United States during the last decade has led, on average, to net gains in local employment. Unconventional natural gas (so-called because it uses unconventional extraction methods—hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling—to reach gas trapped in relatively impermeable shale and sandstone) had the biggest employment effect, largely reflecting the scale of the activity.... This report synthesizes and builds on findings from recent studies ... investigating the local economic effects of these energy industries.”

## EDUCATION

***Investing in Our Future: The Evidence Base on Preschool Education.*** By Hirokazu Yoshikawa, et al. Foundation for Child Development. Oct. 2013. 24 p. <http://fcd-us.org/resources/evidence-base-preschool>

Significant brain development occurs in children prior to entering kindergarten, making pre-K experiences an important factor in child development. Early learning programs are correlated with higher language, literacy and mathematics skills during elementary school, higher socioemotional development, and improved health. Longer term, the study found that the impact on test scores tends to disappear in later grades; however, involvement in early childhood learning programs was associated with other positive outcomes such as higher graduation rates, higher earnings as adults, less criminal behavior, and better health outcomes as teens and adults. In all, the report found that every dollar spent on high quality preschool resulted in between \$3 and \$7 in economic return.

## EMPLOYMENT

***Federal Neglect Leaves State Unemployment Systems in a State of Disrepair.*** By Rebecca Dixon. National Employment Law Project. Nov. 2013. 28 p. <http://www.nelp.org/page/-/UI/2013/NELP-Report-State-of-Disrepair-Federal-Neglect-Unemployment-Systems.pdf?nocdn=1>

“This report documents a UI [Unemployment Insurance] system in a state of disrepair, with the average state benefits technology 26 years old and 9 out of 10 states still using legacy COBOL systems and other outdated program languages.” System failures increase backlogs and “make the program more vulnerable to waste, fraud, abuse and major cost overruns for IT repairs.” California was among the 39% of states in 2009 that fell behind federal standards of deciding 60% of appeals within 30 days. Instead, California decides less than 30% of its appeals within that time frame. Among the recommendations for federal and state reforms: “Provide a one-time \$300 million appropriation to upgrade state UI technology. Increase federal oversight through customer service standards and targeted enforcement.”

## ENERGY

***Western Wind and Solar Integration Study: Phase 2 Results.*** By Debra Lew, et al. National Renewable Energy Laboratory. Sep. 2013. 244 p.  
[http://www.nrel.gov/electricity/transmission/western\\_wind.html](http://www.nrel.gov/electricity/transmission/western_wind.html)

“The WWIS Study explores the question: Can we integrate large amounts of wind and solar energy into the electric power system of the West? .... [T]he negative impact of cycling on overall plant emissions is relatively small. The increase in plant emissions from cycling to accommodate variable renewables are more than offset by the overall reduction in CO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, and SO<sub>2</sub>. In the high wind and solar scenario, net carbon emissions were reduced by one third.”

## GENERAL GOVERNMENT

***State Government R&D Expenditures Increase 11.3% from FY 2010 to FY 2011.*** By Christopher Pece. National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics. Nov. 2013. 5 p.  
<http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/infbrief/nsf14300/nsf14300.pdf>

“State government agency expenditures for research and development [R&D] totaled \$1.404 billion in FY 2011, an 11.3% increase over the \$1.261 billion reported in FY 2010. Expenditures for R&D facilities (construction projects, major building renovations, and land and building acquisitions intended primarily for R&D use) totaled \$109 million in FY 2011, a 1.7% increase over the \$107 million reported in FY 2010.” In California, the largest share of R&D expenditures was in energy projects. At \$111 million, California ranked number two, after Ohio, in R&D funding (academic institutions, companies and individuals).

## HEALTH

***Majority of Young Children in California Eat Fast Food Regularly but Drink Less Soda.*** By Sue Holtby, et al. UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. Nov. 2013. 8 p.  
<http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/publications/Documents/PDF/fastfoodbrief-nov2013.pdf>

“This policy brief examines the eating habits of children ages two to five years. Despite steady declines in soda consumption, 60% of children in this age group continue to eat fast food at least once a week.... Given the poor trajectory for children who are overweight before they reach age six, investments in programs that help reduce fast food consumption and promote eating more fruits and vegetables (for example, serving fruit instead of fruit juice) may be among the policy solutions that will help improve young children’s health.”

## HOUSING

***The 2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress: Pt. 1: Point-in-Time Homeless Estimates.*** By Meghan Henry, et al. Abt Associates. Nov. 2013. 64 p.  
<https://www.onecpd.info/resources/documents/AHAR-2013-Part1.pdf>

The Housing and Urban Development agency’s annual ‘point-in-time’ estimates measure the scope of homelessness on a single night in January of each year. Though California showed the greatest decline in homelessness from 2006 to 2013 among the states, it also had one of the largest year-to-year increases—4.5% in 2012-2013. Also, California (22% percent of population) was one of the five states which accounted for more than half the homeless population in the United States and ranked the highest among states with the percentage of homeless people who were unsheltered (66% of homeless).

## HUMAN SERVICES

***Poverty in the United States: 2012.*** By Thomas Gabe. Congressional Research Service. RL33069. Nov. 13, 2013. 85 p.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL33069.pdf>

“In 2012, the U.S. poverty rate was 15.0%—46.5 million persons were estimated as having income below the official poverty line. Neither the poverty rate nor the number of persons counted as poor in 2012 differed statistically from 2011 or 2010.... Given the depth and duration of the recession, and the projected slow recovery, it will likely take several years or more before poverty rates recede to their 2006 pre-recession level.” This CRS report discusses poverty trends among various groups and in geographic differences.

## TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

***Preparing a Nation for Autonomous Vehicles: Opportunities, Barriers and Policy Recommendations.*** By Daniel Fagnant. Eno Center for Transportation. Oct. 2013. 24 p.

<https://www.enotrans.org/store/research-papers/preparing-a-nation-for-autonomous-vehicles-opportunities-barriers-and-policy-recommendations>

“States are proceeding with AV-enabling legislation: California, Florida, and Nevada have enacted bills to regulate AV licensing and operation, with instructions to their respective Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for fleshing out details. Yet some of these efforts are in direct conflict with federal guidance. NHTSA (The National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration) has issued a statement advocating that states should begin establishing procedures for allowing testing on public roads, though should not yet begin licensing AV sales.... This paper seeks to explore the feasible aspects of AVs and discuss their potential impacts on the transportation system.”

## VETERANS

***Veterans Homelessness Prevention Demonstration Evaluation: Interim Report.***

By Mary Cunningham, et al. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research. Sep. 2013. 210 p.

[http://www.huduser.org/publications/pdf/HUD519\\_VHPD\\_InterimReport.pdf](http://www.huduser.org/publications/pdf/HUD519_VHPD_InterimReport.pdf)

“The Veterans Homelessness Prevention Demonstration (VHPD), a 3-year, \$15 million collaborative effort between the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Veterans Affairs, and Labor, is the first federal program to offer homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing assistance to veterans and their families.... [This] interim report about the VHPD describes the first year of implementation, including the characteristics of clients from the program’s five sites and the challenges of administering the program.” The sites are in Utica, New York; Tampa Bay, Florida; Tacoma, Washington; San Diego, California; and Austin, Texas. (*HUD PD&R Updates*, Oct. 23, 2013).

## **About *Studies in the News***

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