CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY
School shootings, Trump influencing 18- and 19-year-olds to vote

ECONOMY
1 in 4 CA rural renters spend more than 50% of income on housing

EDUCATION
National portrait of caregivers in early care and education serving Latino kids

EMPLOYMENT
Why women of color continue to be underrepresented in the workplace

GENERAL GOVERNMENT
$67.5 million in outside spending on CA House races, double 2016 spending
Little Hoover: DMV New Motor Voter Program needs data collection, evaluation
CA could lose $100 billion in transportation revenue if voters pass Proposition 6

HEALTH
CA’s low death rate driven by its large minority population
Infographic: State of health care in CA

HUMAN SERVICES
How purchasing power of SNAP affects children’s health care utilization

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE
Study finds CA would benefit from groundwater recharge guidance

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY


“In February of 2018, the Parkland school shootings sparked a wave of student activism that included rallies and voter registration drives held throughout the nation. As these students turn 18 and 19 years old and contemplate voting in their first general election, close to half (40 percent) report that their level of political engagement has been influenced quite a lot or a great deal by those shootings. In fact, school shootings are viewed by first-time voters in this age group as the most important social and political problem facing the country today…. Sixty-three percent of the respondents say they plan to vote in the
November 2018 general election…. Family members are the top source of information for possible voters. It is possible that respondents need more information: nearly half cannot name a single candidate in the November 2018 races.”

ECONOMY

https://www.urban.org/research/publication/rental-housing-21st-century-rural-america

“An October report by the Urban Institute found that one in four rural renters spends more than 50 percent of their income on rent. And the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies found that in 2017, nearly half of all renters across the country were rent-burdened, spending about a third of their income on housing, thanks to high construction costs, restrictive zoning laws and a shortage of private, low-cost housing” ([Pew Charitable Trusts](https://www.urban.org/research/publication/rental-housing-21st-century-rural-america), Oct. 15, 2018). “The 10 states with the highest rural and small town rental housing rates, ranging from 30 to 38%, are Hawaii, California, Rhode Island, Alaska, Massachusetts, Oregon, Connecticut, Georgia, Washington, and Kansas…. About 6.4% of eligible counties (196) had overcrowding rates higher than 5.0%, with overcrowding most severe in the West (especially in California).”

EDUCATION


Within the context of early care (ECE) for Latino children, this brief “examines three aspects of the ECE workforce that are linked with how children learn, their socioemotional development, and classroom environment and quality of care, training, experience, and education attitudes, including motivations for working with children. The researchers found that: “1) Teachers and caregivers in high-Hispanic-serving settings are more ethnically diverse and more likely to speak Spanish with the children they serve, relative to their peers in low-Hispanic-serving settings. 2) Few high- or low-Hispanic-serving teachers and caregivers have a Bachelor’s degree or higher.3) Teachers and caregivers who work in settings that serve either high or low proportions of Hispanic children have similar years of experience caring for young children, and 4) Differences in teacher and caregiver characteristics between high- and low-Hispanic-serving settings may be a function of their funding sources.”

EMPLOYMENT

https://womenintheworkplace.com/

“Based on four years of data from 462 companies employing more than 19.6 million people, including the 279 companies participating in this year’s study, two things are clear: one, women remain underrepresented, particularly women of color. Two, companies need to change the way they hire and promote entry and manager-level employees to make real progress…. For the fourth year in a row, attrition does not explain the underrepresentation of women…. [Women] are less likely to be hired into entry-level jobs. [Then] at the first critical step up to manager, the disparity widens further.” Macroaggressions, sexual harassment, and being the “the only one” contribute to a lack of gender diversity in the workplace. “This report includes concrete, evidence-based steps that companies can take right now that will make a major difference.” ([McKinsey & Co. Featured Insights](https://womenintheworkplace.com/), Oct. 2018).
With the midterms looming, the avalanche of cash in California is on…. Federal independent expenditures jumped $27 million over the last week, with $13 million of that increase occurring in the span of a few hours Wednesday evening (chiefly, $8.5 million from Mike Bloomberg's Independence USA in just two House races). Over $67.5 million has been spent by outside groups in the general election, more than doubling the $32.7 million in general election [independent expenditures] spent for California’s House races in the November 2016 election.” (Politico, Oct. 26, 2018).


"[T]he Commission has found that in the first quarter of the New Motor Voter Program, over 1.4 million eligible voters were not registered to vote under the program, either because they opted out of registering or their intent to register was unclear. No data is being collected and analyzed to determine why so many eligible voters aren’t signing up. At a cost of $436,000, the Secretary of State (SOS) sends a postcard to some … there is no follow up to determine whether this outreach works or is worth the money…. In addition, there have been serious rollout issues with the New Motor Voter Program since its implementation in April 2018. More than 70,000 voter records have been negatively altered and 1,500 people have been improperly registered to vote.”


"A new report … projects that, between now and 2040, California will lose approximately $100 billion in transportation revenue if voters repeal SB1 [the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017]…. [I]n 2040, the mean projection is that the state will collect $8.6 billion with SB1 and $3.4 billion without, a $5.2 billion difference…. The report also reviews the history of raising transportation revenue in California and documents public opinion about different transportation revenue options based on evidence from voting outcomes and public opinion research. 'Whether SB1 is repealed or retained by voters in November 2018, transportation revenue will decrease over time due to inflation and, most importantly, because of dramatic increases in fuel efficiency and the widespread adoption of zero emission vehicles,' notes study co-author Hannah King.” (Mass Transit Magazine, Oct. 12, 2018).

HEALTH


“High poverty rates, low education and lack of insurance are all social determinants that are expected to lead to high mortality rates and negative health outcomes. Despite a 62 percent minority population with these characteristics in California, the state's health profile was significantly better than the nation's as a whole. This profile was largely driven by the state's minority population. California's death rate from all causes in 2016 was 691.1 per 100,000 population, compared with the nation's 729.9. Broken down by racial/ethnic group, death rates were 686.4 for non-Hispanic whites, 514.4 for Latinos, 807.6 for African-Americans, 394.5 for Asian/Pacific Islanders, and 380.2 for American Indian/Alaska Natives…. Cultural differences in the ways that racial and ethnic minorities interact and take action to compensate for lack of
access to health care and other public and private services may help to facilitate good health outcomes.” (UCLA Health, Sep. 6, 2018).


This two-page infographic illustrates how “[s]tatewide and local initiatives have helped improve various health outcomes in California. In San Diego, a public-private partnership that disseminates evidence-based practices to improve hypertension, lipid, and blood sugar control was associated with a lowering of hospitalizations due to heart attack…. Meanwhile, across California, maternal mortality rates began to fall after the state launched a series of data-driven quality improvement projects.”

HUMAN SERVICES


“Unlike most other safety net programs, SNAP [the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program] varies little across states and over time, which creates challenges for quasi-experimental evaluation. Notably, SNAP benefits are fixed across 48 states; but local food prices vary, leading to geographic variation in the real value—or purchasing power—of SNAP benefits. In this study, we provide the first estimates that leverage variation in SNAP purchasing power across markets to examine effects of SNAP on child health…. We find that lower SNAP purchasing power leads to lower utilization of preventive health care and more days of school missed due to illness. We find no effect on reported health status.”

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE


Current state law requires a permit from the State Water Resources Control Board to divert surface water for groundwater recharge. The current lack of specific guidance for qualifying recharge purposes creates uncertainty and acts as a disincentive for entities seeking to undertake some recharge projects, including non-extractive uses “combatting subsidence, raising regional groundwater levels, or supporting baseflow or ground-water dependent wetlands.” The authors of this report argue that the state could promote greater investment and activity in groundwater recharge by issuing further guidance regarding when and how such projects qualify as beneficial uses.

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