CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT
Study identifies policies ‘most strongly associated with lower rates of firearm homicide’

ECONOMY
Tax codes, government spending, tech firms all drive automation
Improvements in automation tech drive income inequality

EDUCATION
CA teachers increasingly unable to afford housing, especially in SF Bay Area

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT
Stanford paper discusses ways to reverse saltwater intrusion into freshwater streams

GENERAL GOVERNMENT
LA County declines to use data screening tool said to predict homelessness

HEALTH
World health officials issue strict guidelines on screen time for children under age 5

HUMAN SERVICES
Barriers to safety-net program for low-income immigrant families

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE
Combining manmade, natural infrastructure for ‘climate resiliency’

CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT


The analysis found “three priority pieces of legislation that would have the greatest impact in reducing overall firearm homicide rates: universal background checks,… prohibition of gun possession by people with a history of any violent misdemeanor, threatened violence, serious alcohol-related crime, or subject to a domestic violence restraining order…. and extreme risk protection order laws that allow removal of firearms from an individual who, after due process, is deemed to represent a threat to themselves or
others.” The research compares the “impact of multiple laws at the same time, giving a sense of what laws appear to be most strongly associated with lower rates of firearm homicide.”

**ECONOMY**


“Our empirical decomposition suggests that the slower growth of employment over the last three decades is accounted for by an acceleration in the displacement effect, especially in manufacturing, a weaker reinstatement effect, and slower growth of productivity than in previous decades. There are several factors that may push in this direction: US tax code aggressively subsidizes the use of equipment (e.g., via various tax credits and accelerated amortization) and taxes the employment of labor (e.g., via payroll taxes) … boosted both by the central role that large tech companies have come to play in innovation with their business model based on automation and small workforces, and by the vision of many of the luminaries of the tech world (think of the efforts of Tesla to automate everything, which turned out to be very costly). Finally, the declining government support for innovation may have also contributed by discouraging research with longer horizon, which likely further disadvantaged the creation of new tasks (which bear fruit more slowly) relative to automation.”


“After the 1980s, income distribution in the US has become more skewed. While rich people are getting richer, the super-rich have become even more so. In this paper, we argued that improvement in the automation technology contributed to widening gap between the rich people. In this paper, we showed that the improvements in automation technology result in a thicker right tail for the income distribution. Automation not only increased the productivity of capital, it also decreased the dependency on labor. Since managing labor is more resource consuming than capital, like monitoring costs, relaxing the dependency on labor enables entrepreneurs to scale up their production. Because the more productive entrepreneurs increase their production more than relatively less productive entrepreneurs, the profit distribution becomes more skewed, hence inequality among the top earners increases.”

**EDUCATION**


“Teachers across California, especially those in coastal areas and at the bottom of the salary scale, are being shut out of affordable housing. First year teachers could not afford to rent a modest one bedroom apartment in nearly 40% the 680 districts that reported salary data. The situation is most severe for teachers starting their careers in coastal areas. Nowhere is the gap between teacher pay and housing costs wider than in the Bay Area. Teachers earning an average salary in nearly 90% of the districts in the region did not earn enough to rent an affordable two-bedroom apartment.”
ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT


This research paper discusses potential ways to detect and reverse saltwater intrusion into freshwater streams, which could protect coastlines threatened by saltwater intrusion. "A Stanford-led team of researchers used remote sensing to identify areas of saltwater intrusion, a common cause of drinking water contamination in coastal areas—home to approximately 40% of the global population. Their novel solution … could provide valuable insight into aquifer systems, and increase the likelihood of freshwater security worldwide.” (Water in the West, Apr. 18, 2019).

GENERAL GOVERNMENT


“Hoping to lower the cost of mitigating homelessness by preventing people from becoming homeless in the first place, a Los Angeles research group says it has created a screening tool that can predict who is likely to become chronically homeless after losing a job or leaving the foster-care system…. But county officials are declining to use it. Instead, they have accused the [Economic] Roundtable—a nonprofit that has conducted extensive studies on homelessness — of misusing millions of records from county and state agencies…. [Roundtable President] Flaming said the statistical model can identify the 1% of unemployed workers most likely to become persistently homeless with 81% accuracy. For youth leaving the foster care system, the accuracy is 72%.” (Los Angeles Times, Mar. 21, 2019).

HEALTH


“The World Health Organization issued strict new guidelines Wednesday on one of the most anxiety-producing issues of 21st century family life: How much should parents resort to videos and online games to entertain, educate or simply distract their young children? The answer, according to WHO, is never for children in their first year of life and rarely in their second. Those aged 2 to 4, the international health agency said, should spend no more than an hour a day in front of a screen. The WHO drew on emerging—but as yet unsettled—science about the risks screens pose to the development of young minds at a time when surveys show children are spending increasing amounts of time watching smartphones and other mobile devices.” The WHO also provided recommendations on the appropriate amount of physical activity and hours of sleep for infants and children in specific age group. (Washington Post, Apr. 24, 2019).
HUMAN SERVICES


“This report highlights key barriers facing low-income immigrant families in the U.S. immigration policy and enforcement context and discusses strategies that aim to mitigate or overcome barriers to safety-net program access for low-income immigrant families…. The barriers facing this population’s access to health and human services generally fall into the following categories: ineligibility due to their immigration status, fear of deportation and the resulting chilling effect, lack of transportation and physical mobility, and language barriers. Some of these barriers to access have become even more pronounced for mixed-status families since the increase in immigration enforcement policies and climate that began in 2016.”

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE


“Traditional infrastructure systems worldwide rely on built solutions to support the smooth and safe functioning of societies. [I]n the face of multiplying environmental threats, this approach alone can no longer provide the climate resiliency and level of services required in the 21st century. Natural systems such as forests, floodplains, and soils can contribute to clean, reliable water supply and protect against floods and drought. In many circumstances, combining this ‘green infrastructure’ with traditional ‘gray infrastructure,’ such as dams, levees, reservoirs, treatment systems, and pipes, can enhance system performance, boost resilience, lower costs, and better protect communities.”

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