Studies in the News
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**ECONOMY**


“An ever-decreasing number of large firms now accounts for a growing share of economic activity. This, in turn, translates into massive profits for the Googles, the Facebooks, and the Amazons of the world.... If the ‘superstar firms are simply better’ narrative is true, if today’s superstar firms are indeed more productive, why is this not reflected in the data?...According to Philippon’s and Gutierrez's findings, contrary to the popular narrative, superstar firms have not become more efficient or more productive over the years. Perhaps most importantly, the superstars of today contribute less to productivity growth than their counterparts in previous decades: The contribution of superstar firms to US productivity growth has
decreased by over 40% over the past 20 years.... Philippon believes their findings are consistent with previous studies that show the US has a market power problem." (*Pro-Market*, Mar. 4, 2019).

**EDUCATION**


This study examines the teacher wage penalty—how much less teachers earn in wages compared to other workers—between 2010 and 2018. The researchers found that “[t]he public school teacher weekly wage penalty grew from 13.5% to 21.4% between 2010 and 2018. Teacher benefits improved relative to benefits for other professionals from 2010 to 2018, boosting the teacher benefits advantage from 4.8% to 8.4%. Despite this improvement, the total compensation (wage and benefit) penalty for public school teachers grew from 8.7% in 2010 to 13.1% in 2018.” California’s teacher wage penalty is estimated to be about 16.5%.

https://www.educationnext.org/you-might-be-surprised-states-prioritize-higher-teacher-salaries/

This study looks at the teacher salary-to-spending ratio—a comparison of average teacher salaries to average per-pupil spending—by state, and over time, all in inflation-adjusted dollars. The results show California ranking No. 1—with a ratio of 6.5—well-above the national average of 4.5. The next four leading states—Nevada, Utah, Idaho and Arizona—are at 5.4 and above, with New York, Wyoming, Maine and Vermont rounding out the bottom states with ratios of 3.3 or below. The researcher explains that this ratio may help explain how states prioritize their school spending, as they choose between spending more on teacher salaries, or per-pupil spending.

**EMPLOYMENT**


“Potential retirees at the lower and middle end of the economic spectrum simply can't afford to stop working, given the high costs of health care and housing, especially when you consider that only 1 in 3 Americans have access to retirement benefits through their employer. That means that a larger and larger percentage of Americans at or near retirement age need to work longer and longer. In fact, only about 20% of Americans expect to stop working at the traditional retirement age.”(*CNBC*, May 6, 2019).

**ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT**

https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1132-4  (Available from the California Research Bureau)


“The team searched the literature for data on the range of survivable temperatures for 318 terrestrial and 88 marine species from 15 different classes of coldblooded animals, such as lizards, fish and spiders.
They were curious what temperature range each animal could handle, and how close it was living to its thermal maximum. They also asked how the habitats in this safe temperature range will move as climate change progresses. Their key finding was that more species are living in the higher end of their temperature tolerances in the ocean than on land. (University of California News, Apr. 29, 2019).

GENERAL GOVERNMENT


“How do all the financial incentives that states offer actually influence fiscal health?… Researchers … tallied all incentives offered by 32 states from 1990 to 2015, effectively covering 90% of incentives nationally…. Most of the programs they looked at—investment tax credits, property tax abatements, and tax credits for research and development—were linked with worse overall fiscal health for the jurisdiction that enacted them…. Job-creation tax breaks—accounting for the single largest portion of total incentive spending—didn’t yield a statistically significant relationship with fiscal health…. Certainly, incentives may generate new tax revenue from economic activity. But it’s important to consider that this comes at a cost, as new jobs and other gains result in greater demand for government services. ‘When considering incentives … policymakers should also be aware of the full range of budget impacts beyond the ‘sticker cost’ of the incentive.’” (Governing, May 2019).
**HEALTH**


“African-American, Native American and Alaska Native women die of pregnancy-related causes at a rate about three times higher than those of white women, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported on Tuesday. The racial disparity has persisted, even grown, for years despite frequent calls to improve access to medical care for women of color. Sixty percent of all pregnancy-related deaths can be prevented with better health care, communication and support, as well as access to stable housing and transportation, the researchers concluded…. Indeed, a greater proportion of the deaths among black women occurred in the later postpartum period, between seven weeks and a year after the delivery, compared with white women, the C.D.C. found.” (New York Times, May 7, 2019).

**HUMAN SERVICES**


“Child care subsidies are provided through a federal block grant program called the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). CCDF provides funding to the States, Territories, and Tribes. They use the money to administer child care subsidy programs for low-income families…. In this brief, we present some of the policy differences across the States and Territories. The policies are taken from the CCDF Policies Database, [which] tracks State/Territory policies over time, with hundreds of variables describing policies related to: family eligibility, application and wait list procedures, family copayments, provider reimbursement rates, and other provider policies.”

**SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**


“The researchers built a new dataset of 657 US cleantech startups and the more than 2,000 partnerships those companies established between 2008 and 2012, to gauge the different outcomes for private and public alliances…. The research included companies across the sustainable sector: from wind to marine power, and recycling to batteries. In addition to the benefits seen in patenting and investment, researchers also found that alliances with some of the stronger innovation outcomes were outside of major tech hubs such as Silicon Valley—suggesting the potential for building ‘regional ecosystems.’” (Science Daily, Mar. 19, 2019).

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