CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY
How Fox News significantly polarized viewer opinions on Green New Deal

ECONOMY
Survey: 61% of business leaders believe they benefit from ‘government favoritism’

EDUCATION
Two studies link later school start times to improved academic performance

EMPLOYMENT
Job-hunting: rates of gaining employment still not at pre-recession levels

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT
DOE: Geothermal energy offers grid stability, economic development opportunities

GENERAL GOVERNMENT
Examples of local zoning laws across U.S. being used for environmental justice

HEALTH
L.A. study finds reduced air pollution tied to lower rates of new asthma in children

HUMAN SERVICES
SNAP: successful in increasing food expenditure, but not changing nutritional quality

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
‘Tap to pay’ credit cards poised to gain ground in U.S.

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY


“Researchers report that, between December of 2018 and April of 2019, support for [the Green New Deal] rapidly devolved from bipartisan approval to a deep split along party lines…. The decline in support was far greater among Republicans who regularly watch Fox News than among those who do not…. These shifting views of the Green New Deal are an example of how quickly partisan polarization can develop
over a short period of time.… [O]f those Republicans who watch Fox News more than once per week, only 22% support the Green New Deal [in April]—a decrease of 32 points from December.… Among the 65% of Republicans who do not regularly watch the channel, support also went down over those four months, but far less steeply, from 71% to 56%. In other words, the proposal still had majority Republican support—if you exclude regular Fox News viewers. (Pacific Standard, May 13, 2019).

ECONOMY

A Culture of Favoritism: Corporate Privilege and Beliefs about Markets and Government.

A national survey of business leaders "sought to determine how government favoritism toward particular firms correlates with attitudes about government, the market, and selectively favorable economic policy."

EDUCATION

https://www.educationnext.org/rise-shine-how-school-start-times-affect-academic-performance/


This brief summarizes the results of a test on later school start times for students in Florida’s Panhandle. The researchers found that "[a] one-hour delay in start times relative to sunrise increases math scores by 8 percent of a standard deviation for adolescents—the equivalent of roughly three months of student learning—but by only 1 percent of a standard deviation for younger children. The effects on reading scores are similar, but smaller. The benefits of starting school later increase sharply at age 11 for girls and 13 for boys—the gender-specific ages when puberty typically begins, which we take as evidence that the causal pathway is linked to biological changes that affect students’ sleep."

https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/4/12/eaau6200 (Available from the California Research Bureau)

“Most teenagers are chronically sleep deprived. One strategy proposed to lengthen adolescent sleep is to delay secondary school start times. This would allow students to wake up later without shifting their bedtime, which is biologically determined by the circadian clock, resulting in a net increase in sleep. So far, there is no objective quantitative data showing that a single intervention such as delaying the school start time significantly increases daily sleep. The Seattle School District delayed the secondary school start time by nearly an hour. We carried out a pre-post-research study and show that there was an increase in the daily median sleep duration of 34 min, associated with a 4.5% increase in the median grades of the students and an improvement in attendance.”
EMPLOYMENT

https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2019/05/02/how-difficult-is-it-to-find-a-job/

“The U.S. labor market has been steadily improving for years: the unemployment rate has been falling for nearly a decade to rates not seen since the late 1960s, and we’ve seen the longest streak of private sector job creation on record. Given these impressive headline statistics, it may come as a surprise that unemployed workers have slightly more trouble finding a job than they did at the peak of the last business cycle (in 2006) and have a much lower probability of finding a job than in 2000.”

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT


“The U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE’s) Geothermal Technologies Office (GTO) engaged in a multiyear research collaboration among national laboratories, industry experts, and academia to identify a vision for growth of the domestic geothermal industry across a range of geothermal energy types…. The GeoVision analysis demonstrates the unique characteristics of geothermal energy and its unrealized potential, including: Constant and secure renewable electric power generation with flexible and load-following capabilities that provide essential services contributing to grid stability and resiliency.”

GENERAL GOVERNMENT


“Environmental hazards like hazardous waste facilities, fossil fuel storage and transportation sites, and other polluting industrial facilities are disproportionately located in communities of color and low-income communities. But a new report … shows how tools to enact environmental justice can come from the toolbox of injustice. The report notes that, ‘examples of racial zoning are ubiquitous in planning history.’ These same local zoning codes and land-use policies are now being used to address both existing and future pollution sources concentrated in low-income communities and communities of color…. The report also notes that when it comes to decisions about where pollution and environmental hazards are located, it’s mostly up to local governments.” (CityLab, May 7, 2019).

HEALTH

https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2733972

“Improved air quality in the Los Angeles region is linked to roughly 20% fewer new asthma cases in children, according to a USC study that tracked Southern California children over a 20-year period…. The research expands on the landmark USC Children’s Health Study, which found that children’s lungs had grown stronger in the previous two decades and rates of bronchitic symptoms decreased as pollution declined throughout the region…. Researchers looked at rates of new-onset asthma alongside air pollution data collected from monitoring stations in each of those communities during three different
periods: 1993-2001, 1996-2004 and 2006-2014. Using statistical methods, they separately examined four air pollutants and found that two were associated with reductions in new-onset asthma. They estimated that the nitrogen dioxide reductions achieved between 1993 and 2006 led to a 20% lower rate of asthma, while fine particulate matter reductions led to a 19% lower rate. The findings add to the increasing scientific evidence supporting the role of air pollution in the development of new cases of asthma.” (USC News, May 21, 2019).

HUMAN SERVICES


“A household receiving, say, a $200 monthly SNAP [the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program] benefit can be expected to increase its monthly expenditure on groceries by a bit more than $100. This far exceeds what we would expect for a cash benefit of comparable size, which might increase food spending by only $20 or so. In ongoing work with Ryan Kessler, we find that these increases in spending do not necessarily translate into large changes in the composition of the household’s diet…. These findings suggest that SNAP is successful in increasing food expenditures but that this success does not translate into meaningful gains in the nutritional quality of purchased foods.” (Policies for Action, Nov. 19, 2018).

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY


Credit cards that utilize NFC (near-field communication) technology are poised to gain popularity in the United States in 2019. “This report discusses stakeholder perspectives on the reality of issuance, acceptance, and adoption of … dual-interface cards, as well as the impact of contactless cards on NFC mobile payments…. Payment industry stakeholders share different perspectives on when dual-interface cards will achieve mass adoption, but agree that the U.S. is on the way to supporting both card and mobile contactless payments.”

About the California Research Bureau

The California Research Bureau at the California State Library develops independent, nonpartisan research and analysis for the executive and legislative branches. We provide policy research, 50-state reviews, academic and media summaries, data analysis and much more. To learn more about us, or to obtain a copy of reports featured here, contact crb@library.ca.gov, or call (916) 319-2691.

To subscribe to *Studies in the News* and view past issues, visit our website at http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/newsletters.