

**CALIFORNIA RESEARCH BUREAU
CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY
Studies in the News**

California -- One Hundred Years Ago

January 1909. “Prof. George E. Hale, director of the Mount Wilson observatory, will deliver a free lecture before the Academy of Sciences in Symphony Hall on Monday evening, illustrated with remarkable stereopticon views.... The observatory on Mount Wilson was planned by him and is pronounced the most perfectly equipped of any on the globe. The largest Snow telescope produces the largest photograph ever made of the sun; the sixty-inch reflector penetrates farther into stellar space than any hitherto mounted, and the mechanical laboratory is the most extensive in existence. *Los Angeles Times* (January, 28, 1909) pg. II14.

1909. “Cambridge, England. The delegates to the centenary of the birth of Charles Robert Darwin, the observance of which began last night, today presented addresses to the chancellor of the university, Lord Rayleigh. Subsequently a number of degrees were conferred by Oxford University. Among the recipients were Oliver W. Holmes, associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; Earl Gray, Governor-General of Canada; and George Ellery Hale of California, who was given the degree of Doctor of Science.” *Los Angeles Times* (June 4, 1909) pg. II9.

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Introduction to Studies in the News

Studies in the News is a current compilation of items significant to the Legislature and Governor's Office. It is created weekly by the California State Library's [California Research Bureau](#) to supplement the public policy debate in California. To help share the latest information with state policymakers, these reading lists are now being made accessible through the California State Library's website. This week's list of current articles in various public policy areas is presented below. Prior

lists can be viewed from the California State Library's Web site at www.library.ca.gov/sitn

- When available, the URL for the full text of each item is provided.
- California State Employees may contact the State Information & Reference Center (916-654-0261); csinfo@library.ca.gov) with the SITN issue number and the item number [S#].
- All other interested individuals should contact their local library - the items may be available there, or may be borrowed by your local library on your behalf.

The following studies are currently on hand:

CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

AFRICAN AMERICANS

The Recent Surge in Homicides Involving Young Black Males and Guns: Time to Reinvest in Prevention and Crime Control. By James Alan Fox and Marc L. Swatt, Northeastern University. (The University, Boston, Massachusetts) December 2008. 25 p.

Full text at:

<http://www.jfox.neu.edu/Documents/Fox%20Swatt%20Homicide%20Report%20Dec%2029%202008.pdf>

["The murder rate among black teenagers has climbed since 2000 even as murders by young whites have scarcely grown or declined in some places.... And there are signs that the racial gap will grow without countermeasures like restoring police officers in the streets and creating social programs for poor youths. The number of young blacks who were victims of murder also rose in this period.... The report primarily blames cutbacks in federal support for community policing and juvenile crime prevention, reduced support for after-school and other social programs, and a weakening of gun laws.... Conservative criminologists place greater emphasis on the breakdown of black families." New York Times (December 29, 2008) 1.]
[Request #S09-1-3234]

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JUVENILE JUSTICE

Juvenile Justice at a Crossroads: The Future of Senate Bill 81 in California. By Noor Dawood, Prison Law Office. (The Office, San Quentin, California) January 2009. 53 p.

Full text at: <http://www.prisonlaw.com/pdfs/SB81report.pdf>

["The \$93 million effort to reform California's juvenile justice system by transferring many young offenders to county custody is deeply flawed, with inadequate guidelines for how the money should be spent and contains no system for tracking the effectiveness of local programs.... Counties were expected almost immediately to receive offenders transferred from state lockups. And counties had only a month to come up with plans once they received state guidelines.... Another major flaw described in the report: The reform law does not require counties to disclose how they spend future allotments of state money they get in return for taking a larger role in juvenile justice, and the law gives no state entity the authority to monitor the spending anyway." Stockton Record (January 6, 2009) 1.]
[Request #S09-1-3237]

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SENTENCING

Alternatives to Incarceration. By John F. Frana and Ryan D. Schroeder. IN: **Justice Policy Journal**, vol. 5, no. 2 (Fall 2008) pp. 1-32

Full text at: http://www.cjcj.org/files/alternatives_to.pdf

["While previous research has sought to evaluate prisoners' perceptions of various alternatives to imprisonment, most have centered on the prisoners perspective as to the perceived severity of the alternative punishment. This research is quite different, as the proposed alternative does not seek to punish but rather to rehabilitate. The proposed alternative argues that military enlistment be utilized as an alternative to incarceration. Researchers have identified a correlation between military service and desistance from crime among youths, many of whom have had delinquent pasts. This current project is intended to expand upon the life course perspective as the military can act as a 'rehabilitative agent' which will act as a hook for change, thereby facilitating desistance from criminal behavior."]
[Request #S09-1-3215]

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SEX OFFENDERS

Homelessness among Registered Sex Offenders in California: The Numbers, the Risks and the Response. By the California Sex Offenders Board. (The Board, Sacramento, California) December, 2008. 44 p.

Full text at:

<http://www.casomb.org/docs/Housing%202008%20Rev%201%205%20FINAL.pdf>

["The number of homeless sex offenders on parole in California has increased dramatically since the approval two years ago of Proposition 83, an initiative that imposed harsh restrictions on where they can live. The Board said the number of parolees monitored by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation... increased from 88 in November 2006 to 1,056 at the end of June 2008. 'Common sense leads to the conclusion that a community cannot be safer when sex offenders are homeless,' the report states, citing research concluding that unstable housing can lead to recidivism.... Potential solutions mentioned included housing multiple sex offenders in the same place and putting them in mobile trailers until they can find a permanent home." Los Angeles Times (December 19, 2008) 1.]
[Request #S09-1-3187]

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CULTURE AND SOCIETY

SAME-SEX MARRIAGES

Robin Tyler v. The State of California. California Supreme Court. S168066. Answer Brief in Response to Petition for Extraordinary Relief. December 19, 2008. 111 p.

Full text at: http://ag.ca.gov/cms_attachments/press/pdfs/n1642_prop_8_brief.pdf

["Brown's request that the court overturn the state's ban on same-sex marriage -- arguing that it undermines fundamental liberties -- has been widely hailed as a victory in the fight for gay rights.... Brown said attorneys challenging the measure had failed to prove their point that the measure offers such a major revision to the state Constitution that it cannot be enacted by a voter initiative alone.... Brown said that a ban on same-sex marriage conflicted with the Constitution's language protecting liberty. In a novel theory, Brown argued that fundamental rights could be amended only if the state had a compelling interest to do so. In banning same-sex marriage, he argued, the state did not have a compelling interest." San Francisco Chronicle (December 24, 2008) 1.]
[Request #S09-1-3223]

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TECHNOLOGY

The Future of the Internet III. By Janna Quitney Anderson, Elon University, and Lee Raine, Pew Internet and American Life Project. (The Project, Washington, DC) December 2008. 138 p.

Full text at: http://pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_FutureInternet3.pdf

["By 2020 mobile devices, which will have greater computing power and will be more affordable, will be the primary tool used to connect to the Internet. The study also predicts that voice recognition and touch-based user interfaces will be more prevalent. Many of the interview subjects dismissed the idea that Internet-based communication networks would help increase social tolerance. And respondents were split about whether society would benefit if organizations and individuals revealed more about themselves online." Chronicle of Higher Education (December 16, 2008) 1.]

[Request #S09-1-3193]

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ECONOMY

BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Small Business Survival Index 2008: Ranking the Policy Environment for Entrepreneurship across the Nation. By Raymond J. Keating, Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council. (The Council, Oakton, Virginia) December 2008. 45 p.

Full text at: <http://www.sbecouncil.org/uploads/sbsi%202008%5B1%5D.pdf>

["High taxes and burdensome regulations make California the second-toughest state in the nation for small businesses, with only New Jersey scoring worse in a report card issued by a national organization of entrepreneurs.... The group weighed 34 factors, including a variety of taxes and mandated programs such as paid family leave.... In some of the measures, California fared well. When the council computed the number of state and local employees as a percentage of the population, California came in seventh. California was the most business-friendly state in one area. The council found that employers here pay the lowest unemployment insurance tax of any of the 50 states." San Francisco Chronicle (December 14, 2008) 1.]

[Request #S09-1-3198]

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CALIFORNIA

The Realities of Recession in California: A Statewide Report. By Barbara Boxer, U.S. Senate. (The Senator, Washington, DC) December 2008.

["The report examines the recession's toll on California's 58 counties and 20 largest cities. Its purpose, Boxer said, is to ensure the Golden State gets its fair share of funding from President-elect Barack Obama's proposed economic stimulus package and other recovery programs. While global in its scale, the recession's impacts are most visible at the local level.... Inland Southern California's staggering unemployment and foreclosure rates are leading to county and city budget shortfalls, strains on local food banks and increased crime." Riverside Press-Enterprise (December 17, 2008) 1.]

[Request #S09-1-3154]

Report. 80 p.

http://boxer.senate.gov/features/Boxer_California_Recession_Report.pdf

Supplemental Quick Guide. 6 p.

<http://boxer.senate.gov/features/QuickGuide.pdf>

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

An Infrastructure and Economic Recovery Plan for the United States. By Petra Todorovich. IN: Land Lines, vol. 21, no. 1 (January 2009) p. 1-6

Full text at: http://www.lincolnst.edu/pubs/dl/1550_775_Article%201.pdf

["With regard to infrastructure and economic recovery, we have two key challenges to meet. First, we must rally support for making sufficiently bold investments to put people to work and make transformative investments in infrastructure. Second, we must ensure that the choices we make about infrastructure provide new models of decision making and accountability to obtain investments that will transition the nation to be a low-carbon economy with energy independence, and a sustainable, equitable future."]

[Request #S09-1-3210]

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

10 Reasons to Oppose a Stimulus Package for the States. By Chris Edwards, Cato Institute. (The Institute, Washington, DC) December 2008. 2 p.

Full text at: http://www.cato.org/pubs/tbb/tbb_1208-51.pdf

[“Policymakers want to help by applying some old-fashioned Keynesian medicine. They are considering a 'stimulus' bill of up to \$700 billion, with substantial spending going to state and local governments for infrastructure, Medicaid, and other activities. Such subsidies for the states would be ill-advised for at least 10 reasons. 1) The federal government is broke; 2) Spending is the problem; 3) State infrastructure is well funded; 4) A Keynesian stimulus ignores the long run; 5) Rising federal debt is fiscal child abuse; 6) A bailout would flout state fiscal traditions; 7) A bailout would delay state reforms; 8) State situations vary; 9) Bailouts beget more bailouts; and 10) Opportunity for restructuring.”]
[Request #S09-1-3195]

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Homes With Tails: What if You Could Own Your Internet Connection? By Tim Wu, New America Foundation, and Derek Slater, Google. (The Foundation, Washington, DC) November 2008. 17 p.

Full text at: http://www.newamerica.net/files/HomesWithTails_wu_slater.pdf

[“Most proposals have focused on deployment as a problem for firms and for government. For firms, the question is how a company can justify investments in a fiber infrastructure without a 'killer app' -- a new and proven revenue source that is different from what is available from existing copper wires. For governments, the questions consider how they might build and operate their own networks, convince or pay existing carriers to do so, or encourage market entrants to arrive and save the day. Our intuition is that an innovative model holds unrealized promise: household investments in fiber. Consumers may one day purchase and own fiber connections that run from their homes. Consumers would have the opportunity not only to get a fast broadband connection, but also benefit from greater competition and lower prices in the retail service market.”]
[Request #S09-1-3121]

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EDUCATION

ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT

Framework for a Comprehensive Education Data System in California: Unlocking the Power of Data to Continually Improve Public Education. By McKinsey & Company. (California Department of Education, Sacramento, California) December 2008. 118 p.

Full text at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/pc/documents/yr08mckinsey1218.pdf>

[" The report suggests that more data are the key to learning what's working -- and what's not -- in education. The report calls for the development of a comprehensive state education data system, one that would track individual public school students and teachers over time. The report recommends expanding and linking K-12 information to data about preschool, higher education, the work force and social services. The California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System -- which, simply put, follows student achievement over time -- would be part of the comprehensive data system. This database was used for the first time this year, with dramatic results. In July, the state reported that one in four high schoolers drops out, nearly double the rate reported the year before." Sacramento Bee (December 19, 2008) 1.]

[Request #S09-1-3166]

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COMMUNITY COLLEGES

High School to Community College: New Efforts to Build Shared Expectations. By Matthew Rosin and Kathy Wilson, EdSource. (EdSource, Mountain View, California) November 2008. 26 p.

Full text at: <http://www.edsource.org/1788.html>

["Two sets of public institutions share responsibility for the futures of a vast number of California's young people... the K-12 school system and the state's 110 community colleges. This report focuses on where California's K-12 and community college systems meet and opportunities for building better bridges between them. These include utilizing common approaches to assess student readiness and enabling K-12 and community college educators to jointly plan for the successful transition of students from high school to community college."]

[Request #S09-1-3136]

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LATINOS

The Condition of Latinos in Education: 2008 Factbook. By Deborah Santiago, **Excelencia in Education.** (Excelencia in Education, Washington, DC) December 2008. 50 p.

Full text at: http://www.edexcelencia.org/pdf/publications/2008_Factbook.pdf

["Hispanics have lower levels of education attainment than other groups -- 13 percent of Hispanics had earned a B.A. in 2007 compared with 32 percent of whites, and 19 percent of blacks. Four to 5 year old Hispanic children have lower average mathematics and language test scores than white, black or Asian children, and Latino students are most likely to be enrolled in highly segregated schools; in 2005-2006, 55 percent of Hispanic students attended schools where 75 percent or more of all students in attendance were minority students, compared to 3 percent of white students, 31 percent of API students and 50 percent of black students. And, while Hispanic students represent 20 percent of all public school students in the United States, only 5 percent of public school teachers are Hispanic."]

[Request #S09-1-3189]

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TEACHERS

California's Teaching Force 2008: Key Issues and Trends. By Roneeta Guha and others, **SRI International.** (The Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning, Santa Cruz, California) December 2008.

["This report updates data on the state's teacher workforce and raises serious questions about the current capacity of the teaching force to help students meet the academic goals the state has set for them. It finds that a grim budget outlook, complex challenges to the supply and assignment of public school teachers, and the lack of an effective teacher data system pose significant hurdles to California's ability to meet increasing demands for students' high academic performance."]

[Request #S09-1-3171]

Report. 130 p.

<http://www.cftl.org/documents/2008/TCF/TCFReport2008.pdf>

Summary. 20 p.

<http://www.cftl.org/documents/2008/TCF/TCFSummaryFact08.pdf>

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EMPLOYMENT

JOB CREATION

Do Enterprise Zones Create Jobs? Evidence from California's Enterprise Zone Program. By David Neumark and Jed Kolko, Public Policy Institute of California. (National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, Massachusetts) December 2008. 53 p.

Full text at: <http://www.nber.org/tmp/61270-w14530.pdf>

["We use new establishment-level data and geographic mapping methods to improve upon evaluations of the effectiveness of state enterprise zones, focusing on California's program.... The evidence indicates that enterprise zones do not increase employment. We also find no shift of employment toward the lower-wage workers or manufacturing sector targeted by enterprise zone incentives. We conclude that the program is ineffective in achieving its primary goals."]

[Request #S09-1-3129]

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Green Economy Workforce Study: Central Valley Region. By the Centers for Excellence. (The Centers, Modesto, California) December 2008. 39 p.

Full text at:

http://www.coeccc.net/Environmental_Scans/GreenEcon_Scan_CV_08.pdf

["Several occupations are likely to grow in the Central Region as the green economy develops. These occupations include renewable energy technician or installer, sales representative or cost estimator, assembler or manufacturing technician, and resource conservation manager or planner. These occupations have opportunities in several of the green impacted industries including utilities and renewable energy, green building and design services, and engineering and environmental services....The recession is expected to play particular havoc in the building industry and the region is already seeing much less investment in clean technology than other regions in California."]

[Request #S09-1-3183]

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OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH

Pedicures at What Price? The Nail -Salon Workforce Has Experienced Tremendous Growth, Prompting a Closer Look at the Health and Safety Issues Impacting its Employees. By Rona L. Sherriff, California Senate Office of Research. (The Office, Sacramento, California) December 2008. 8 p.

Full text at: <http://www.sor.govoffice3.com/vertical/Sites/%7B3BDD1595-792B-4D20-8D44-626EF05648C7%7D/uploads/%7B429BFBDC-BABD-4538-A4D4-84B37598B1D9%7D.PDF>

["Nail technicians provide services -- manicures, pedicures, nail polishing, artificial nails -- that expose them to an array of potentially toxic and hazardous chemicals that can lead to significant health problems. And the nail services industry has experienced phenomenal growth since the late 1980s: the number of nail technicians in California alone has more than doubled from 35,500 in 1987 to 96,000 today. Vietnamese workers comprised 10 percent of the nail-technician labor force in California in 1987, which increased to 59 percent in 2002. Nail salons contribute significantly to the Vietnamese community's economic base, primarily because this industry provides immigrants easy access to the work force."]

[Request #S09-1-3159]

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ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

BAY DELTA

Delta Vision Committee Implementation Report. By the Delta Vision Committee. January 2009. AND: Delta Vision Strategic Plan. By the Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force. October 2008. (Delta Vision, Sacramento, California)

["A panel of state leaders is calling for California to begin building a canal to divert water around the Delta by 2011, without approval from lawmakers or voters. The final report released by the Delta Vision Committee, made up of five state Cabinet secretaries, thrusts the controversial canal into the top tier of California political battles.... The report contains many other recommendations to improve habitat and water supply in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.... The committee's report finalizes earlier recommendations by the Delta Vision Task Force. The governor-appointed task force -- a larger body -- met for two years. The committee was charged with reviewing the task force findings and producing final recommendations for the governor and Legislature." Sacramento Bee (January 3, 2009) 1.]

[Request #S09-1-3238]

Implementation Report. 19 p.

http://www.deltavision.ca.gov/DV_Committee/Jan2009/08-1231_Delta_Vision_Committee_Implementation_Report.pdf

Strategic Plan. 205 p.

http://www.deltavision.ca.gov/StrategicPlanningProcess/StaffDraft/Delta_Vision_Strategic_Plan_standard_resolution.pdf

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CLIMATE CHANGE

A Statement on the Appropriate Role for Research and Development in Climate Policy. By Kenneth J. Arrow, Stanford University, and others. (AEI Center for Regulatory and Market Studies, Washington, DC) December 2008. 8 p.

Full text at: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1313827

["A group of economists and scientists met to discuss the role of research and development in developing effective policies for addressing the adverse potential consequences of climate change. We believe that climate change is a serious issue that governments need to address. We also believe that research and development needs to be a central part of governments' strategies for responding to this challenge. Solutions to manage long-term risks will require the development and global deployment of a range of technologies for energy supply and end-use, land-use, agriculture and adaptation that are not currently commercial. Research and development investment could dramatically reduce the cost of restricting greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging the development of more affordable, better performing technologies."]

[Request #S09-1-3203]

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LAND USE

Integrating Land Use and Transportation Policy in California: The Legislature's Response. By Dave Jones. IN: Ecology Law Currents, vol. 35, no. 71 (2008) pp. 90-99.

Full text at: http://boalt.org/elq/PDF/C35.02_04_JONES_2008_09_15.pdf

["Without major changes in land use and transportation policy, we will not succeed in our effort to reduce GHGs. For California to meet this challenge there will have to be cooperation and innovation from the main players who influence policy and law in the land use sector -- the building industry, local government, and environmental groups. There has been gridlock on the issue of growth management for several decades, with each interest group able to block significant legislation proposed by the other groups. Consequently, even while study after study points out the economic, social, and environmental costs of sprawl, the Legislature and Governor have been unable to come to agreement."]

[Request #S09-1-3227]

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GENERAL GOVERNMENT

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Free on Friday. By Zach Patton. IN: Governing. (December 2008) pp. 38-40.

Full text at: <http://www.governing.com/articles/0812week.htm>

["Last summer states and cities across the country began looking at whether compressed work weeks -- often referred to as '4/10s' -- might provide some relief. Governments could save money by closing buildings on Friday. Employees could save money on gas if they had to commute to the office only four days per week....The arguments for compressed work weeks seem pretty self-evident. But the governments that have moved to 4/10s are learning that adopting these schedules is complex. There are unanticipated challenges as well as some unforeseen benefits. More governments may make a wholesale shift toward compressed work weeks. Or it may turn out that states and localities simply can't run effectively when they have nobody working on Fridays."]

[Request #S09-1-3155]

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Legislating-for-Results: Municipal Action Guides. By Harry P. Hatry, Urban Institute, and others. (National League of Cities, Washington, DC) October 2008. Various pagings

Full text at: <http://www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=1001232&renderforprint=1>

["This series of 10 guides is for city and county elected officials, and their staffs, to help them obtain and use information about the results of their governments' services in helping their citizens. The Guides address such issues as: improving strategic planning; improving budgeting decisions; reviewing programs throughout the year; helping motivate their government's employees and contractors; and two-way communications with citizens on what citizens are getting for their money. Specific actions are suggested, and examples are provided."]

[Request #S09-1-3239]

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STATE FINANCES

Where are State Funds Spent? The Distribution of Spending Across California Regions. By Martha Jones. CRB-08-017. (California Research Bureau, Sacramento, California) December 2008.

["What does the geographic distribution of state spending look like? Are there regions of the state that receive more than their 'fair share' of state funds? How is a region's 'fair share' defined and calculated? This report examines the geographic distribution of state spending across nine regions: the San Francisco Bay Area, Central Coast, Far North, Inland Empire, San Joaquin Valley, Sacramento Metro, San Diego, Sierras and South Coast. State expenditures are presented for major program areas such as health, education, public assistance, social services, and transportation. The many detailed tables provide a new perspective on state expenditures, one that has not been previously analyzed."]

[Request #S09-1-3151]

Report. 165 p.

<http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/08/08-017.pdf>

Briefly Stated. 5 p.

<http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/08/08-017brief.pdf>

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STATE LEGISLATION

2008 State Animal Protection Laws Rankings: Comparing Overall Strength & Comprehensiveness. By the Animal Legal Defense Fund. (The Fund, Cotati, California) December 2008. 8p.

Full text at: <http://www.aldf.org/downloads/ALDF2008StateRankingsReport.pdf>

["This year's 'best five for animals' list remains unchanged from the 2007 list, with California, Illinois, Maine, Michigan and Oregon demonstrating through their laws the strongest commitment to combating animal cruelty; Illinois was the very best of the best for the strength of its laws protecting animals." AScribe (December 16, 2008) 1.]

[Request #S09-1-3224]

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HEALTH

HEALTH INSURANCE

California Employer Health Benefits Survey. By the National Opinion Research Center. (California HealthCare Foundation, Oakland, California) December 2008. 49 p.

Full text at:

<http://www.chcf.org/documents/insurance/EmployerBenefitsSurvey08.pdf>

["Employer-sponsored coverage is the leading source of health insurance coverage in the state and in the nation. Changes in offering rates among employers, increases in premiums for the various health plans offered, and employee cost sharing all have major implications for the availability and affordability of health insurance coverage in California. This annual survey shows how premiums and benefit design have changed over time. Premiums increased 8.3% in California in 2008 -- compared to a 3% increase in consumer prices generally. Since 2002, premiums more than doubled."]

[Request #S09-1-3220]

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Key Issues in Analyzing Major Health Insurance Proposals. By Philip Ellis and others, Congressional Budget Office. (The Office, Washington, DC) December 2008. 196 p.

Full text at: <http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/99xx/doc9924/12-18-KeyIssues.pdf>

["Concerns about the number of people who are uninsured and about the rising costs of health insurance and health care have given rise to proposals that would substantially modify the U.S. health insurance system. The complexities of the health insurance and health care systems pose a major challenge for the design of such proposals and inevitably raise questions about their likely impact. To assist the Congress in its upcoming deliberations, this report seeks to provide useful background information as well as insights into how the Congressional Budget Office would estimate the effects of such proposals on the federal budget, the number of people who have health insurance coverage, and spending for health care."]

[Request #S09-1-3213]

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Enabling Healthcare Reform Using Information Technology. By the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society. (The Society, Arlington, Virginia) December 2008. 45 p.

Full text at:

<http://www.himss.org/2009calltoaction/HIMSSCallToActionDec2008.pdf>

["It is essential that health IT be harnessed as a tool in transforming healthcare, improving quality by delivering information where and when it is most needed, reducing costs, empowering consumers in their healthcare decisions, and providing for the privacy and security of personal health information. HIMSS developed unified recommendations for the new Congress and Administration concerning the role of health IT in healthcare reform. The recommendations represent necessary measures to develop and sustain a robust IT infrastructure for healthcare. Policymakers should consider the recommendations components of the necessary foundation to strengthen and sustain the success of their healthcare reform legislation, proposals, and regulation policies."]
[Request #S09-1-3217]

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A Briefing on Health Technology Assessment. By Lucien Wulsin, Jr. and Adam Dougherty, Insure the Uninsured Project. CRB-08-019. (California Research Bureau, Sacramento, California) December, 2008. 31 p.

Full text at: <http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/08/08-019.pdf>

["The United States spends a much higher percentage of Gross Domestic Product on healthcare than any other country. Nearly 50 percent of the increase in healthcare costs is attributable to the introduction of new technologies in the practice of medicine. However the rapid introduction of new technologies has not been accompanied by an improvement in health outcomes, suggesting the need to review the effectiveness of these investments. This report describes the process of assessing health technology and identifies national and state agencies and organizations that currently engage in health technology assessment. Finally, the report discusses a proposal to create a centralized body dedicated to the formal scrutiny of innovative (and existing) healthcare technologies and services."]
[Request #S09-1-3196]

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HUMAN SERVICES

CHILDREN

State of America's Children: 2008. By the Children's Defense Fund. (The Fund, Washington, DC) December 2008.

["Children in America lag behind almost all industrialized nations on key child indicators. The United States has the unwanted distinction of being worst among industrialized nations in relative child poverty, in the gap between rich and poor, in teen birth rates, and in child gun violence, and first in the number of incarcerated persons.... The report compiles the most recent and reliable national and state-by-state data on poverty, health, child welfare, youth at risk, early childhood development, education, nutrition and housing."]
[Request #S09-1-3218]

Report. 80 p.

<http://www.childrendefense.org/site/DocServer/state-of-americas-children-2008-report.pdf?docID=9061>

Highlights. 2 p.

<http://www.childrendefense.org/site/DocServer/state-of-americas-children-2008-highlights.pdf?docID=9041>

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HOMELESS

Hunger and Homelessness Survey: A Status Report on Hunger and Homelessness in America's Cities. By the U.S. Conference of Mayors. (The Conference, Washington, DC) December 2008. 85 p.

Full text at:

http://www.usmayors.org/pressreleases/documents/hungerhomelessnessreport_121208.pdf

["Twenty cities (95 percent) reported an increase in the demand for emergency food assistance over the past year. All 21 cities with available data cited an increase in the number of persons requesting food assistance for the first-time. The increase was particularly notable among working families. Cities reported an 18 percent average increase in the demand for emergency food assistance and a 5 percent average increase in the quantity of food distributed. The increase in demand for food assistance exceeded the increase in the amount of food distributed in eighty percent of the cities surveyed. When asked to anticipate their biggest challenges for 2009, nearly every city cited an expected increase in demand resulting from the weak economy coupled with high prices for food and fuel."]
[Request #S09-1-3184]

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PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Proposed Budget Cuts Come at a Time of Growing Need. By the California Budget Project. (The Project, Sacramento, California) December 2008. 12 p.

Full text at: http://www.cbp.org/pdfs/2008/08_12_A_Time_of_Growing_Need.pdf

[As the state's economy continues to deteriorate, many low- and middle-income Californians are finding it increasingly difficult to make ends meet. Consequently, more Californians are turning to income support and related programs, such as Food Stamps, WIC, Healthy Families, Medi-Cal, and CalWORKs for assistance. Increased demand for public programs comes at a time when policymakers have proposed deep cuts to health and human services programs to close the state's budget gap. However, prominent economists argue that carefully chosen tax increases are preferable to spending cuts during a recession because 'steep budget cuts will exacerbate the economic downturn and harm vulnerable low- and moderate-income' families."]

[Request #S09-1-3185]

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Facing Deficits, Many States Are Imposing Cuts that Hurt Vulnerable Residents. By Nicholas Johnson, Center for Budget Priorities. (The Center, Washington, DC) November 2008 11 p.

Full text at: <http://www.cbpp.org/3-13-08sfp.pdf>

["At least 15 states have cut medical, rehabilitative, home care, or other services needed by low-income people who are elderly or have disabilities, or significantly increased the amounts that such people must pay for the services..... Cuts include reduced or frozen reimbursements to health care providers.... At least 20 states are eliminating or not filling various state jobs."]

[Request #S09-1-3170]

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TRANSPORTATION

RAILROADS

Presentation to the Southern California Regional Rail Authority Board. By the Metrolink Commuter Rail Safety Peer Review Panel. (The Board, Los Angeles, California) December 12, 2008. 32 p.

Full text at:

http://www.metrolinktrains.com/documents/Board_Agenda/SCRRA_Peer_Review_Panel_PPT_121108.pdf

[“Top-to-bottom improvements in the safety culture of the Metrolink rail system are needed to reduce the odds of future accidents like the September disaster in Chatsworth that killed 25 people and injured 135 others. A two-month review of the five-county commuter train operation found that a far greater focus on safety was needed, starting with oversight of the contract employees at the controls of locomotives and extending to involvement of agency board members in ensuring that safety policies are enforced.” Los Angeles Times (December 13, 2008) 1.]

[Request #S09-1-3199]

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TRANSIT

Uses of Fees or Alternatives to Fund Transit. By Jaye Pershing Johnson and James B. McDaniel, Transportation Research Board. (The Board, Washington, DC) December 2008. 37 p.

Full text at: http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_lrd_28.pdf

["The objectives of this report are to assess the use of impact fees for transit in the United States, discuss policy and legal considerations relating to the use of impact fees and developer exactions for transit, discuss various methodologies currently in use, and identify cases that exemplify strategies transit agencies may pursue when considering impact fees as an alternative funding source for transit. The report will be of interest to state and local transportation officials, planners, and policy makers, and professionals who may consider this potentially valuable alternative funding source."]

[Request #S09-1-3152]

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