

Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

***Completing Juvenile Justice Realignment.* Legislative Analyst's Office. Feb. 2012. 20 p.**

http://www.lao.ca.gov/analysis/2012/crim_justice/juvenile-justice-021512.pdf

“As part of his 2012-13 budget plan, the Governor proposes completing the realignment of juvenile justice by stopping new admissions of offenders to state Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities on January 1, 2013....We recommend that the Legislature adopt a comprehensive juvenile justice realignment plan that completes the shift of responsibility to counties....We recommend developing a funding approach that promotes innovation and efficiency, establishing a transition plan for DJJ, providing state oversight and technical assistance through the newly created Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC), taking measures to reduce the number of juveniles tried in adult court, and requiring counties to house minors tried in adult court until age 18.”

DEMOGRAPHY

The Earned Income Tax Credit and Expected Social Security Retirement Benefits Among Low-Income Women (Working Paper 2012-06). By Molly Dahl, et al. Congressional Budget Office. Mar. 2012. 42 p.

https://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/WorkingPaper2012-06-EITC_and_SS_Retirement_Benefits.pdf

“In this study, we examine whether expansions in the EITC [Earned Income Tax Credit] are likely to lead to increases in Social Security retirement benefits for less-educated women (those likely to be affected by the EITC) by increasing their employment and earnings when young....The results of this simulation suggest that the EITC leads to an increase in the share of less-educated women that will be eligible for Social Security retirement benefits and leads to an increase in their monthly benefit amount. Thus, the existence of the EITC contributes to the financial security of affected women as they age and retire.”

ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT

Long-term Hardship in the Labor Market. By John Schmitt, et al. Center for Economic and Policy Research. Mar. 2012. 15 p.

<http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/long-term-hardship-2012-03.pdf>

This report “breaks out workers considered long-term unemployed by the official BLS standard according to race and gender, education, and age and expands the conventional concept of long-term unemployment to capture further dimensions...including discouraged workers...and workers who are part-time for economic reasons....Under the standard measure of long-term unemployment, half of all unemployed black men have been jobless for six months or longer, followed closely by roughly 49% of unemployed Asian men, black women and Asian women. However, the alternative measure shows that black men are much more likely than other workers to experience long-term hardship. About 9% of all black men in the labor force, compared to 7% of black women, 5% of Latino women and 4% of Latino men had been unemployed for six months or longer in 2011.” (CEPR press release, March 6, 2012).

Estimated Impact of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act on Employment and Economic Output from October 2011 Through December 2011. Congressional Budget Office. Feb. 2012. 22 p.

<http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/02-22-ARRA.pdf>

“This report estimates that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) increased the number of people employed by between 300,000 and 2 million jobs in December. In other words, between 300,000 and 2 million people employed in December owed their jobs to the Recovery Act. ARRA has significantly boosted both the number of people employed and the number of hours worked. ARRA protected the economy during the worst of the recession, and nearly three years after its enactment, it is still saving and creating jobs. Without it, up to two million more workers in December would have been either unemployed or struggling to get by on less income.” (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Feb. 24, 2012).

EDUCATION

Do High-Stakes Placement Exams Predict College Success? By Judith Scott-Clayton. Community College Research Center. Feb. 2012. 44 p.

<http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/Publication.asp?UID=1026>

“[T]he vast majority of two-year institutions administer high-stakes exams to entering students that determine their placement into either college-level or remedial education. Despite the stakes involved, there has been relatively little research investigating whether such exams are valid for their intended

purpose....I find that placement exams are more predictive of success in math than in English, and more predictive of who is likely to do well in college-level coursework than of who is likely to fail.”

Teacher Supply in California, 2010-2011, A Report to the Legislature. Commission on Teacher Credentialing, Professional Services Committee. Mar. 2012. 18 p.

<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2012-03/2012-03-2A.pdf>

“In fiscal year 2010-11, California saw an 6.5% decrease in the number of newly credentialed teachers. This decrease is not across all three types of preliminary programs (i.e., Multiple Subject, Single Subject, and Education Specialist) in that the number of new teachers in special education has risen slightly. The number of fully-credentialed teachers increased to 98.7% of all California public school teachers in 2010-11.”

ENERGY

Interstate Compacts as a Policy Option to Enhance the Electric Transmission Line Siting Process. The Council of State Governments. Feb 2012. 4 p.

<http://knowledgecenter.csg.org/drupal/system/files/interstatecompactsasapolicyoptiontoenhanceelectrictransmissionlinesitingprocess.pdf>

“Siting electric transmission lines across state borders has long been a challenge for the states, the federal government and utility transmission companies....The compact option model provides a compromise that allows state policymakers and federal officials to work collaboratively to site lines in a timeframe that would be beneficial to all parties.” (CSG Knowledge Center Blog, Feb. 22, 2012).

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Actuarial Cost Analysis: Proposal for the Creation of a Hybrid Plan for New Hires. California Public Employees’ Retirement System. Feb. 2012. 43 p.

<http://www.calpers.ca.gov/eip-docs/about/press/pr-2012/feb/hybrid-cost-analysis.pdf>

This actuarial analysis “outlines the costs associated with creating a hybrid pension plan for all new hires consistent with one of the goals outlined in Governor Jerry Brown’s Twelve Point Pension Reform Plan, which he released in October 2011....Overall, the staff analysis found that the hybrid plan that was analyzed will lower retirement benefits for new employees and shift the risk from employers to employees. It also may not significantly reduce costs for the State, but will result in savings for school employees and local public agency employers.” (CalPERS press release, Feb. 14, 2012).

HEALTH

“Impact of an Active Video Game on Healthy Children’s Physical Activity.” By Tom Baranowski, et al. *Pediatrics*. Published online on Feb. 27, 2012. 7 p.

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2012/02/22/peds.2011-2050>

Ownership of active video games does not necessarily translate into increased activity. The results of this study show children receiving an active video game were no more active than children who received an inactive video game. This effect was consistent across demographic groups, body mass index, and perceived neighborhood safety.

HOUSING

FHFA's Supervision of Freddie Mac's Controls over Mortgage Servicing Contractors. Federal Housing Finance Agency, Office of Inspector General. Mar. 7, 2012. 44 p.

<http://www.fhfa.gov/Content/Files/AUD%202012-001.pdf>

Due to a federal interagency team's review of the difficulties of loan servicers ability to process mortgage foreclosures, the FHFA [Federal Housing Finance Agency] conducted an audit of supervisory control over its mortgage servicing contractors. Their findings: the FHFA's role in overseeing loan servicers needs to be better defined, and more comprehensive regulations need to be developed for better monitoring of servicer performance.

HUMAN SERVICES

State and Federal Policy Choices: How Human Services Programs and Their Clients Can Benefit from National Health Reform. By Stan Dorn. The Urban Institute. Feb. 2012. 34 p.

<http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/500265-State-and-Federal-Policy-Choices.pdf>

National health reform may benefit from "connecting health applicants to human services programs, helping Medicaid efficiently enroll newly eligible adults, modernizing information technology used to determine eligibility for human services programs, leveraging the Medicaid expansion to achieve core goals of human services programs, and retaining social services offices as a viable doorway to health coverage."

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Records Management within the Gas Transmission Division of Pacific Gas and Electric Company prior to the Natural Gas Transmission Pipeline Rupture and Fire, San Bruno, California September 9, 2010. By Paul Duller, et al. Consumer Products Safety Division, California Public Utilities Commission. March 5, 2012. 172 p.

http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/NR/rdonlyres/23513DF5-28CB-425B-BAE4-0151981F0779/0/CPSD_Recordkeeping_Oil_Report_Final.PDF

Prepared by two independent records management consultants, the report analyzes the state of records management within the Gas Transmission Division of Pacific Gas and Electric Company prior to the Natural Gas Transmission Pipeline Rupture and Fire, San Bruno, California September 9, 2010. Based on two professional standards, the consultants found that records management within PG&E's Gas Transmission Division prior to the San Bruno pipeline rupture and fire were "Sub-Standard," noting that "While some elements of PG&E's records management activities, such as the creation of records retention policies received a slightly higher 'In-Development' rating,...no elements were sufficiently developed to meet the 'Essential' minimum requirements...necessary to meet PG&E's legal and regulatory requirements."

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