

Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

“Exploring the Ecological Association Between Crime and Medical Marijuana Dispensaries.” By Nancy J. Kepple, et al. *Journal on Studies of Alcohol and Drugs*, vol. 4, no. 73 (July 2012). pp. 523-530.

http://www.jsad.com/jsad/downloadarticle/Exploring_the_Ecological_Association_Between_Crime_and_Medical_Marijuana_Di/5033.pdf

Using Sacramento as a case study, the authors found no connection between increased density of medical marijuana dispensaries and the number of incidents of property or violent crimes. Increases in one-person households, poverty rates, and commercial zoning all correlated with an increase in both property and violent crimes. However, there was no relationship between these factors and crime associated with medical marijuana dispensaries.

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

The Rise of Asian Americans. Pew Research Center. June 19, 2012. 225 p.
<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/06/19/the-rise-of-asian-americans>

“Today [Asian Americans] make up nearly 6% of the U.S. population. And in an economy that increasingly relies on highly skilled workers, they are the best-educated, highest-income, fastest-growing race group in the country. This report sets out to draw a comprehensive portrait of Asian Americans. It examines their demographic characteristics; their social, political and family values; their life goals; ... and the nature of their ties to their countries of origin.”

ECONOMY

Seven Growth Sectors Driving California’s Clean and Efficient Economy. By John Melville, et al. Collaborative Economics and the Environmental Defense Fund. May 2012. 13 p.
<http://www.edf.org/sites/default/files/EDFSevenSectors-5.24.2012pdf.pdf>

“California’s clean and efficient economy encompasses more of the state’s total economy every day.... With the help of these growth sectors, California’s long-standing economic drivers – from agriculture to manufacturing to health services – are transforming their own products and processes to cut costs, spur innovation, and maintain their competitiveness in a global economy.... This report finds that the seven growth sectors have grown rapidly since the 1990s ... [and] even in difficult economic times, the products and services of these companies in these growth sectors had sufficient market demand to maintain their employment levels.”

EDUCATION

At Risk: Adult Schools in California. By Susan Frey. EdSource. June 2012. 13 p.
<http://www.edsource.org/assets/files/publications/pub12-AdultSchoolFinal.pdf>

California’s adult schools serve the unemployed, the disabled, immigrants, ex-offenders, and others looking to better their lives. Under the recent budget strains, 23 of the state’s 30 largest school districts have made significant cuts to adult school programs. This report publishes the results of a survey of districts with adult schools in California. Overall, it finds these programs are facing major cuts in services to the neediest adult populations.

ENERGY

Fracking Our Future: Measuring Water and Community Impacts from Hydraulic Fracturing. Western Resource Advocates. June 2012. 28 p.
<http://www.westernresourceadvocates.org/frackwater/>

“A new report on hydraulic fracturing has taken stock of the controversial procedure's effect on water supplies in Colorado, echoing concerns of California lawmakers as they seek to regulate "fracking" here.... [O]il and gas companies in Colorado use as much as 39,500 acre-feet of water annually in fracking operations – enough to meet the yearly residential needs of up to 296,100 people, a population the size of Cincinnati or Orlando, Fla. The volume is troublesome for arid Western states, especially because the waste water cannot be treated and returned to drinking water supplies.” (*L.A. Times*, June 20, 2012).

ENVIRONMENT

Aquatic Ecosystem Stressors in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. By Jeffrey Mount, et al. Public Policy Institute of California. June 2012. 24 p.

http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_612JMR.pdf

“The native fishes of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta have been declining at an increasingly rapid rate for more than two decades.” This decline has significant consequences for water resource management in the Delta, impacting operations of the State Water Project and Central Valley Project. Five broad categories of stressors are identified: water quality; fisheries management; flow alteration; invasive species; and physical habitat loss and alteration. For each group of stressors, the authors “identify the affected native species, assign historical and on-going responsibility, and consider a range of actions that may reduce effects of the stressors on the viability of native species populations.”

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Studies Show Earned Income Tax Credit Encourages Work and Success in School and Reduces Poverty. By Jimmy Charite, et al. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. June 26, 2012. 13 p.

<http://www.cbpp.org/files/6-26-12tax.pdf>

About 27 million low- to moderate-income working adults, most of them raising young children, reduced their taxes and supplemented their income in 2009 by receiving the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Studies regarding the EITC have found that it “encourages work, reduces poverty, helps families meet basic needs, and improves children’s achievement in school and likely increases their earnings as adults.”

HEALTH

Medicaid: States’ Plans to Pursue New and Revised Options for Home- and Community-Based Services. Government Accountability Office. GAO 12-649. June 2012. 49 p.

<http://gao.gov/products/GAO-12-649>

The GAO was asked to assess the implementation status of four Medicaid options for home- and community-based services (HCBS) included in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA): Community First Choice, Balancing Incentive Program, Money Follows the Person, and 1915(i) state plan option. Under the 1999 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, states must serve individuals with disabilities in community-based settings under certain circumstances, but under Medicaid, HCBS programs are optional. These four programs are intended to increase the availability of such services for Medicaid beneficiaries by giving states added incentives and flexibility. As of April 2012, California was the only state to have applied for participation in the new Community First Choice program, although five others have requested technical assistance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services regarding the program.

HOUSING

Key Findings from National Survey of Voters: Homeownership and Mortgage Finance. Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars. May 2012. 8 p.

http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/keyfindingsfromsurvey_1.pdf

Despite the poor housing market, a survey of voters finds that an overwhelming majority of Americans still feel that homeownership is important to them. More than 40% of respondents also said the federal

government was too involved in developing policies that assist homeownership. However, only 29% of respondents favored the removal of the federal government from mortgage financing when they were informed that this would increase the cost of home loans and eliminate the availability of 30-year mortgages. Respondents also had unfavorable views of mortgage institutions Fannie Mae and Freddy Mac.

HUMAN SERVICES

California's Women Veterans: Responses to the 2011 Survey. By Rebecca E. Blanton, et al. California Research Bureau. July 2012. 87 p.
<http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/12/12-004.pdf>

In a recent survey conducted by the California Research Bureau, women veterans indicated they need more information about their benefits, physical and mental healthcare, and gender-specific services. Most women veterans reported not knowing about many services that are currently available for them. California could face a capacity issue if more women veterans learn about and use the services currently offered by the state.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Commercial Space Transportation: Industry Trends, Government Challenges, and International Competitiveness Issues. Government Accountability Office. GAO-12-836T. June 20, 2012. 30 p.
<http://gao.gov/products/GAO-12-836T>

"The commercial space launch industry is changing as NASA plans to begin procuring commercial cargo transportation services to the International Space Station later this year and companies are developing vehicles that could carry passengers for space tourism flights...." Launch companies are indemnified under the Commercial Space Launch Act against launch-related damages above a required level of insurance coverage. "Unless reauthorized, the indemnification provision expires this year. This testimony addresses (1) trends and forecasts in the commercial space launch industry and challenges FAA faces in overseeing and promoting the industry, (2) preliminary information on issues concerning federal indemnification for third party losses, and (3) challenges to global competitiveness for the U.S. commercial space launch industry."

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