



Studies in the News

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CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

Unauthorized Aliens Residing in the United States: Estimates Since 1986. By Ruth Ellen Wasem. Congressional Research Service. Dec 13, 2012. 19 p.

<https://www.fas.org/sqp/crs/misc/RL33874.pdf>

"How to address the estimated 11.5 million unauthorized aliens residing in the United States is perhaps the most controversial issue in the comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) debate. Reducing the population of unauthorized aliens living in the United States is a common goal, but disagreement about how to do so remains.... As has been the case for many years, California continued to be the top state of residence of the unauthorized population in 2011, with an estimated 2.8 million.... However, California's share of the total unauthorized population declined from 30% in 2000 to 25% in 2011, according to the OIS [Office of Immigration Statistics] demographers."

ECONOMY

The Depth and Length of Cuts in State-Local Government Employment is Unprecedented. By Lucy Dadayan, et al. The Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government, State Univ. of New York. Jan. 2013. 8 p.

http://www.rockinst.org/pdf/government_finance/2013-01-09-State-Local_Government_Employment.pdf

“The Great Recession led to deep cuts in state and local government jobs – much deeper than any other recession in the last five decades.... This report examines trends in state and local government employment in the wake of [the] Great Recession compared to previous recessions. It also compares changes in state and local government employment in education and noneducation functions. And it shows how these changes vary across states and regions.”

EDUCATION

Overview of Special Education in California. Legislative Analyst’s Office. Jan. 3, 2013. 28 p.

<http://www.lao.ca.gov/laoapp/PubDetails.aspx?id=2678>

“Special education is the catch-all term that encompasses the specialized services that schools provide for disabled students.... The primer conveys information about the almost 700,000 California students (about one in ten) who receive special education services.... The average costs of educating a disabled student are more than double those of a mainstream student - approximately \$22,300 compared to \$9,600. As such, special education is among the largest areas of K-12 education, totaling \$8.6 billion in 2010-11 from a combination of state, federal, and local sources. While disabled student performance on standardized tests has improved over the past several years, a majority still fail to meet state and federal performance expectations.” (LAO press release, Jan. 3, 2013).

EMPLOYMENT

Military Spouse Employment Programs: DoD Can Improve Guidance and Performance Monitoring. Government Accountability Office. GAO-13-60. Dec. 2012. 40 p.

<http://gao.gov/assets/660/650867.pdf>

“The Department of Defense (DoD) has recently created three new programs to help military spouses obtain employment ... [and] [t]he federal government [already] has two hiring mechanisms that can provide military spouses who meet the eligibility criteria with some advantages in the federal hiring process.... While DoD is at an early stage of implementing its new spouse employment programs, it has an opportunity to ensure that a well-coordinated structure is in place to deliver employment services to spouses, and that its system for monitoring performance is well-designed.”

ENERGY

The Hidden Costs of Wind Electricity. By George Taylor, et al. American Tradition Institute: Center for Energy Studies. Dec. 2012. 36 p.

<http://www.atinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Hidden-Cost.pdf>

“Most ‘cost of electricity’ comparisons have significantly understated the cost of wind electricity.... Using conservative estimates for these missing costs (and backing out two subsidies) reveals that the full cost of wind electricity is nearly twice what the Energy Information Administration (EIA) reported in its most

recent Annual Energy Outlook, three times the current cost of gas-fired electricity, and 40 to 50% higher than EIA's estimates for the cost of nuclear or coal electricity from new generation facilities.”

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Parks 2.0: Operating State Parks Through Public-Private Partnerships. By Leonard Gilroy, et al. Conservation Leadership Council and Reason Foundation. Jan. 8, 2013. 26 p.
<http://reason.org/studies/show/parks-20-operating-state-parks-thro>

“The ongoing fiscal challenges facing state governments are creating an existential crisis for state parks. With budgets stretched increasingly thin, state parks must compete for limited funds with other – often higher – policy priorities like education, health care, public pensions and public safety.... Yet state parks remain popular while their maintenance needs continue to worsen.... [O]ne way to keep state parks open without imposing additional burdens on the taxpayer is to utilize public-private partnerships (PPPs).”

HEALTH

State Estimates of Underage Alcohol Use and Self-Purchase of Alcohol: 2008-2010. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. Nov. 20, 2012.
<http://www.samhsa.gov/data/2k12/NSDUH111/SR111StateEstUnderageAlc2012.htm>

“Alcohol use constitutes one of the most serious public health issues for young people in the United States, creating negative health, social, and economic consequences for adolescents, their families, communities, and the Nation as a whole.... Despite the efforts to limit access, underage drinkers still are able to obtain alcohol, and many are able to purchase alcohol themselves. Information about underage alcohol use at the State level can provide States with vital data to inform enforcement, educational, and prevention efforts.”

HOUSING

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program at Year 25: An Expanded Look at Its Performance. Cohn Reznick LLP. Dec. 2012. 100 p.
<http://www.cohnreznick.com/sites/default/files/2012lihtc/cohnreznick-lihtc-2012-fullreport.pdf>

“The housing tax credit program has developed a strong track record for delivering quality housing to low-income families, meeting the expectations of institutional investors and maintaining a cumulative foreclosure rate that is less than 1%.... When operating expenses are higher than projected or when rents are marginally lower than expected, housing tax credit properties may produce just enough or slightly less cash flow than is needed to service their mortgage debt. In recent years, as much as 35% of all housing tax credit properties have operated below break-even, albeit often by fairly small amounts.... The apparent contradiction between these two data points – break-even or slightly below break-even net operating income in conjunction with an overall low foreclosure rate – is discussed in this report.”

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

U.S. Census Bureau's Easy Stats

<http://www.census.gov/easystats/>

“Easy Stats gives you quick and easy access to selected statistics collected by the U.S. Census Bureau through the American Community Survey. With the American Community Survey, every community, every year receives detailed statistics about their people and their homes. This interactive tool provides current demographic and economic statistics about your home town. Search by geography down to the local level (including counties, incorporated places like cities and towns and Census designated places). View detailed racial, age and gender breakdowns, and compare communities.”

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Connected Commuting: Research and Analysis from the New Cities Foundation Task Force in San Jose. New Cities Foundation. Dec. 2012. 42 p.

<http://www.newcitiesfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/New-Cities-Foundation-Connected-Commuting-Full-Report.pdf>

“San Jose ranks 22nd among large American cities in number of person-hours delayed (42 million annually), and 25th in congestion cost (\$842 million), suggesting that even modest improvement could have considerable positive impact city-wide.” This analysis of commuter sentiment was based on over 15,000 smartphone-application user commentaries in the San Jose area, supplemented with focus group interviews comparing the experience of “connected” and “unconnected” commuters. The study found that real-time information sharing during commutes can reduce transport-related stress, but did not address whether the apps could also reduce average commuting delays.

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