



Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

Issue 14-123

June 11, 2014

Contents this week:

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

City satisfaction survey gives high marks to San Luis Obispo

ECONOMY

CA Petroleum industry contributed over \$220 billion to state GDP in 2012

EDUCATION

CA superior court ruling overturns teacher tenure laws

How teacher tenure is changing across the states

EMPLOYMENT

Hiring formerly incarcerated people presents challenges

ENERGY

Efficiency and conservation are China's top energy priorities

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

U.S. tax transfer system among the least progressive in OECD

HEALTH

CA shows improvement in health system ranking

HUMAN SERVICES

Students in foster care and their educational outcomes

State implementation of the Fostering Connections Act

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Recommendations for improving public-private-partnerships

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

City Satisfaction Highest in Fort Collins-Loveland, Colo.: High Satisfaction Linked to More Optimism That Area Is Improving. By Rebecca Riffkin. Gallup. Apr. 2014. 8 p.

<http://www.gallup.com/poll/168485/city-satisfaction-highest-fort-collins-loveland-colo.aspx>

"Fort Collins-Loveland, Colo. (94.9%) and San Luis Obispo-Paso Robles, Calif. (94.1%) residents were the most likely to be satisfied with the city or area where they live in 2012-2013. Residents of Rockford, Ill. (72.8%) and Stockton, Calif. (73.3%) had the lowest satisfaction rates. On an absolute basis, satisfaction is high in every community, with only seven out of 189 communities Gallup surveyed in 2012-2013 having satisfaction scores below 75%."

ECONOMY

***Oil and Gas in California: The Industry and Its Economic Contribution in 2012.* By Christine Cooper, et al. Economic and Policy Analysis Group, Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation. Apr. 2014. 72 p.**

https://www.wspa.org/sites/default/files/uploads/O%26G_Contribution_20140418.pdf

The petroleum industry is a major employer and leading economic driver in California, responsible for an estimated 468,000 direct, indirect and induced jobs in 2012, or 2.3% of California's employment, and more than \$220 billion in direct economic activity, contributing 5.4% of California's state GDP. Additionally, the petroleum industry makes significant fiscal contributions to California's state and local governments with more than \$21.5 billion in state and local tax revenues and \$14.7 billion in sales and excise taxes. The report includes an overview of the oil and gas industry in California by sub-region, as well as the industry's employment and economic contributions at the national level.

EDUCATION

***Beatriz Vegara, et al. v. State of California, et al.* Superior Court of the State of California. No. BC484642. June 10, 2014. 16 p.**

<http://studentsmatter.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Tenative-Decision.pdf>

A Superior Court of California judge ruled "that teacher tenure laws deprive students of their constitutional right to an education, a decision that hands teachers' unions a major defeat in a landmark case that overturns several California laws that govern the way teachers are hired and fired.... Under state law here, teachers are eligible for tenure after 18 months, and layoffs must be determined by seniority—a process known as 'last in, first out.' Administrators seeking to dismiss a teacher they deem incompetent must follow a complicated procedure that typically drags on for months, if not years.... Observers on both sides expect the case to generate dozens more like it in cities and states around the country." (*The New York Times*, June 10, 2014).

***Teacher Performance Plays Growing Role in Employment Decisions.* By Jennifer Thomsen. Education Commission of the States. May 2014. 6 p.**

<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/12/42/11242.pdf>

50-state policy review: http://www.ecs.org/html/educationIssues/teachingQuality/teacherdb_intro.asp

"An increasing number of states are mandating teacher performance be considered in educator employment decisions, including awarding tenure and layoffs, according to a 50-state policy review of teacher tenure laws. Tenure laws have historically granted job protections based on years of employment.... Although many states have chosen to address issues around tenure and non-probationary status for teachers by making incremental changes to tenure law, a few have chosen to take more drastic action—repealing tenure outright, phasing out tenure and removing the due process provisions at the heart of tenure."

EMPLOYMENT

***The New Scarlet Letter? Negotiating the U.S. Labor Market with a Criminal Record.* Steven Raphael. Upjohn Institute. May 2014. 117 p.**

http://research.upjohn.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1244&context=up_press

"The connections between the rise of mass incarceration and the U.S. labor market are numerous and complex.... This book will analytically approach the labor market for former prison inmates by sequentially studying the factors that influence the market's supply and demand sides. [In the following chapters I] provide an overview of the forces that have led to the unusually high U.S. incarceration rate and, in turn, an increase in the supply of former prison inmates.... [This report offers] policy recommendations aimed at improving the employment prospects of former inmates and ultimately facilitating reintegration into conventional noninstitutionalized society."

ENERGY

China and the United States—A Comparison of Green Energy Programs and Policies. By Richard J. Campbell. Congressional Research Service. Apr. 30, 2014. 31 p.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R41748.pdf>

“China has set ambitious targets for developing its renewable energy resources.... Its installed wind power capacity surpassed the United States in 2010, with a total of 91 GW [gigawatts] in 2013. China aims to reduce energy intensity (energy consumption per unit of GDP) by 16% by 2015. Similarly, China has a solar PV [photovoltaic] capacity goal of 50 GW for 2020, and plans to double hydropower capacity from 200 to 380 GW planned for 2020.... Developing its domestic renewable energy industry and building its manufacturing capacity will help it meet energy demands at home and potentially win advantages in future export markets.”

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

What Do OECD Data Really Show About U.S. Taxes and Reducing Inequality? By Chye-Ching Huang, et al. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. May 12, 2014. 9 p.

<http://www.cbpp.org/cms/?fa=view&id=4142>

A frequently cited Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report states that the United States has the most progressive tax system among developed countries, and points to this system as a means for addressing income inequality. However, researchers find that “the United States’ combination of a relatively small (though progressive) income and employee payroll tax system and a relatively modest (and comparatively less progressive) cash transfer system reduces income inequality less than in all but a few other OECD countries.” U.S. taxes and cash transfers did less to reduce inequality than all countries for which data are available except Korea, Chile, and Switzerland.

HEALTH

Aiming Higher: Results from a Scorecard on State Health System Performance, 2014. By David C. Radley, et al. The Commonwealth Fund. May 2014. 60 p.

<http://www.commonwealthfund.org/Publications/Fund-Reports/2014/Apr/2014-State-Scorecard.aspx>

“The Commonwealth Fund’s *Scorecard on State Health System Performance, 2014*, assesses states on 42 indicators of health care access, quality, costs, and outcomes over the 2007-2012 period, which includes the Great Recession and precedes the major coverage expansions of the Affordable Care Act. Changes in health system performance were mixed overall, with states making progress on some indicators while losing ground on others.” California’s overall state ranking improved, from 29th in 2009 to 26th in 2014.

HUMAN SERVICES

The Invisible Achievement Gap: How the Foster Care Experiences of California Public School Students Are Associated with Their Education Outcomes. By Wendy Wiegmann, et al. Stuart Foundation. May 2014. 116 p.

<http://www.stuartfoundation.org/docs/default-document-library/IAGpart2.pdf?sfvrsn=4>

“[S]tudents in foster care are more likely to be classified with a disability than other students, but this is particularly true for students placed in group homes and those who have experienced three or more placements.... Students in foster care have the lowest participation rate in California’s statewide testing program, yet participation rates vary by placement type and placement instability. For students who participated in the STAR Program, educational disadvantage for students in foster care is increasingly

pronounced in the upper grade levels.... Finally, high school students in foster care have the highest dropout rate and lowest graduation rate, with large variations in these outcomes by placement type, time in care, and number of placements.”

Foster Care: HHS Needs to Improve Oversight of Fostering Connections Act Implementation. Government Accountability Office. GAO-14-347. May 2014. 55 p.

<http://www.gao.gov/assets/670/663655.pdf>

“The Fostering Connections Act made changes to address shortcomings in the foster care system, and states have reported implementing numerous practices aimed at achieving improved outcomes for children and their families. More than 5 years after its enactment, however, HHS [Department of Health and Human Services] has not yet monitored states’ implementation of the act in a systematic way. States reported facing major challenges with meeting requirements for sibling placement, educational stability, and several other provisions in the act. These challenges—some of them longstanding barriers—are complex, and failure to overcome them could hamper progress toward meeting the goals of the Fostering Connections Act.”

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Partnership Financing: Improving Transportation Infrastructure Through Public Private Partnerships. By Mary Jane Breinholt, et al. Eno Center for Transportation. Apr. 2014. 102 p.

<https://www.enotrans.org/wp-content/uploads/wpsc/downloadables/P3-paper-04-14.pdf>

“This study, a product of the Eno P3 Working Group, examines state and local experience with transportation projects that contained a private financing component in an effort to identify the most common and persistent barriers to making P3s [Public-Private-Partnerships] work in the U.S. context and to illustrate specific methods, actions, and/or approaches that have been effective in overcoming current barriers.... Drawing from the Working Group’s findings, this report outlines a series of observations and recommendations to help state and federal officials—including staff at transportation and other relevant government agencies, as well as elected officials and legislative staff—create policy environments that are conducive to making P3s work for the public good.”

About *Studies in the News*

Studies in the News (SITN) is a service provided by the California Research Bureau (CRB), a division of the California State Library. CRB provides independent, nonpartisan research and analysis for the Governor, Legislature and State Constitutional Officers.

SITN lists of current studies related to public policy issues are e-mailed weekly. Archived issues are available at <http://www.library.ca.gov/sitn/crb/>.

To add or remove your name from the SITN distribution list, or to update your e-mail address, please contact us at crb@library.ca.gov, or (916) 319-2691.

SITN is available as an RSS feed at <http://www.library.ca.gov/sitn/crb/>.