

Current Articles and Research Resources, February 15

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In this weekly post, we feature helpful research tools and recent articles of interest to the legislative community.

- Explore the status of [remote sales tax collection](#) in the states and in U.S. Supreme Court rulings. (National Conference of State Legislatures, January 25, 2018)
- Read about the [net worth](#) of every American president. (24/7 Wall St., February 12, 2018)
- Find statistics and history related to [women](#) in Congress. (Congressional Research Service, February 6, 2018)
- Trace a [history](#) of the last 100 years of the Dow Jones Industrial Average. (Microtrends, accessed February 14, 2018)
- Consider the pros and cons of motorcycle [lane-splitting](#). (Stateline, February 9, 2018)

Members of the Texas legislative community may request the articles below [here](#) or by calling 512-463-1252

- "Let us pray." By David L. Hudson. *ABA Journal: The Lawyer's Magazine*, February 2018, pp. 18-19.
- Reports the federal circuit split on the constitutionality of legislator-led prayer before public meetings may lead to United States Supreme Court review.
- "Crunch still on to find skilled workers in Texas." By Ryan Salchert. *Austin Business Journal*, February 9, 2018, p. 15.
- Reports that despite construction employment growth in 2017, skilled labor shortages will continue to be an issue for the industry because of the emphasis on college education over trade education. Includes comment by Representative Barbara Gervin-Hawkins.
- Related information at: <https://www.agc.org/news/2018/01/23/construction-jobs-increase-42-states-between-december-2016-and-december-2017-32>
- "Transparency concerns raised in bid here, other cities." By Daniel Salazar. *Austin Business Journal*, February 9, 2018, p. 12.
- Discusses transparency issues relating to Austin's bid for Amazon.com Inc.'s second headquarters. Notes a growing trend in cities blocking release of information that would give an advantage to a competitor.
- "High school renaissance." By Amadou Diallo. *Christian Science Monitor*, January 29, 2018, pp. 24-30.
- Focuses on three previously low-performing schools in rural Ohio, Chicago, and Tulsa demonstrating a variety of innovative programs that are successful in improving graduation rates and creating paths to higher education.
- "The need to shore up US infrastructure." By Laurent Belsie and Mark Trumbull. *Christian Science Monitor*, January 29, 2018, p. 17.
- Presents the need for infrastructure investment in the United States and defines the associated costs. States an investment of \$4.26 per day per household would reap a benefit of \$9.31 per household.
- "Could this cell save your life?" By Jeneen Interlandi. *Consumer Reports*, March 2018, pp. 37-41.
- Warns of risks associated with experimental stem cell treatments. Notes the United States Federal Drug Administration is working on a new framework for stem cell regulations to provide more oversight over cellular therapies.
- Related information at: <https://www.fda.gov/downloads/BiologicsBloodVaccines/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/Guidances/CellularandGeneTherapy/UCM585403.pdf>
- "Digital health: surgical intervention." *Economist*, February 3rd-9th, 2018, pp. 53-55.
- Describes how the world's biggest technology firms—including Apple, Alphabet (Google), and Amazon—are poised to move beyond wearable devices that track fitness to platforms that deliver real medical services to patients at lower costs.
- "The safety net: working for it." *Economist*, January 20th-26th, 2018, pp. 23-24.
- Highlights Kentucky's Medicaid eligibility reforms, which will require that recipients work, volunteer, or study in exchange for medical care.
- Related information at: <https://www.medicaid.gov/Medicaid-CHIP-Program-Information/By-Topics/Waivers/1115/downloads/ky/ky-health-pa2.pdf>
- "Ethanol: your engine's answer to wintertime woes." By Kristy Moore. *Ethanol Today*, January/February 2018, pp. 20-21.
- Explains the benefits of ethanol as a source of fuel during cold weather.
- "A storm to remember: Hurricane Harvey and the Texas economy." *Fiscal Notes*, February 2018, pp. 1-16.
- Presents the comptroller's original research and analysis on the economic impact of Hurricane Harvey, including hurricane history, direct and indirect damages, disaster relief funding sources, and future mitigation and flood control options. Estimates the net impact of the storm will be a loss of \$3.8 billion in gross state product [GSP] during the first year, followed by a cumulative gain of \$800 million over three years.
- "Texas charter school system suffers low graduation rates." By Maria Robledo Montecel. *IDRA Newsletter (Intercultural Development Research Association)*, January 2018, p. 6.
- Highlights studies that show charter schools have lower graduation rates than traditional public schools.
- "Physicians join frontline efforts to curb gun injuries, deaths." By Bridget M. Kuehn. *JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association)*, February 6, 2018, pp. 428-430.
- Describes increasing efforts by physicians to address gun violence by collaborating with state and national legislators and partnering with gun owners to promote gun safety.
- "Our infrastructure inefficiency." By Jonathan Coppage. *National Review*, February 19, 2018, pp. 14-15, 19.
- Explains infrastructure projects cost more in the United States than in other industrialized countries due to high labor costs and "buy American" procurement rules. Considers innovative projects using private money such as Texas Central, the proposed high-speed-rail system connecting Houston and Dallas.
- "Blockchain 101: 5 questions every banker should ask." By Lee Wetherington. *Texas Banking*, February 2018, pp. 8-11.
- Discusses digital currency from a banking perspective, including comparisons of bitcoin versus blockchain, and blockchain versus distributed ledger technology [DLT].
- "Law school power struggle amplifies woes." By Angela Morris. *Texas Lawyer*, February 2018, pp. 18-20.
- Reports on the problems within the leadership of the Texas Southern University Thurgood Marshall School of Law and its parent institution, as well as the censure issued against the school for multiple standards violations.
- "Well endowed." By Neena Satija. *Washington Monthly*, January/February/March 2018, pp. 27-31.
- Examines how the University of Texas System chooses to use money from the Permanent University Fund.

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