

Current Articles & Research Resources, April 12

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 Related Categories: Current Articles, Week in review, Research Resources

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

- Track [felony offenses](#) in Texas by code and category. (Texas Legislative Council, April 2018)
- Map [border checkpoints](#) within the U.S. along the U.S.-Mexico border. (Cato Institute, accessed April 12, 2018)
- Examine [discipline](#) disparities in K-12 education. (U.S. Government Accountability Office, March 2018)
- See which produce is more likely to contain [pesticide](#) residue. (Environmental Working Group, 2018)
- Explore [political opinions](#) of America's voting-age youth. (Harvard Institute of Politics, April 11, 2018)

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

- "Boundary lines." By Mark Walsh. *ABA Journal: The Lawyer's Magazine*, April 2018, pp. 54-59.
Examines whether new methods of analysis, specifically the use of mathematical principles, can help courts identify partisan gerrymandering that goes too far.
- "How states use funds under the TANF block grant (2018)." By Liz Schott, Ife Floyd, and Ashley Burnside. *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*, Updated April 2, 2018, pp. 1-19.
Examines the use of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families [TANF] funds by state governments in 2016. Finds states spend slightly more than half of their combined federal and state TANF dollars on the core welfare reform areas of basic assistance, child care for low-income families, and work supports. Includes several state tables on TANF spending and identifies Texas as a state in the "Race to the Bottom," spending only six percent of TANF funds on basic assistance in 2016.
- "New help for homeless college students." By Story Hinckley. *Christian Science Monitor*, April 2, 2018, pp. 17, 19-20.
Highlights California programs that provide housing and food assistance to help homeless students stay in community colleges and other higher education institutions.
- "Students want faster degrees. Colleges are responding." By Julian Wylie. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 6, 2018, pp. A8-A10, A12.
Highlights new college degree programs such as Purdue University's "Degree in 3" that allow students to graduate in three years. Explains these programs appeal to students who are cost-conscious or eager to start their careers.
- "Facebook and democracy: the antisocial network." *Economist*, March 24th-30th, 2018, pp. 21-22.
Considers whether the scandal over the use of Facebook's data by political consultant Cambridge Analytica will lead to stricter regulations concerning data protection and digital privacy.
- "Gun laws: what works." *Economist*, March 24th-30th, 2018, pp. 26-27.
Reports the absence of a federal response to mass shootings has spurred several states and cities to pass gun control laws that seem to be saving lives. Divides the laws into three categories: laws that increase scrutiny of gun buyers, "extreme-risk protection order" laws, and laws that tighten rules on gun storage.
- "Florida extends private-school vouchers to bullied students." By Arianna Prothero. *Education Week*, March 21, 2018, pp. 18-19.
Examines Florida's recently enacted law, which offers bullied students Hope Scholarships to attend private schools.
- "Appropriately framing child health care spending: a prerequisite for value improvement." By Kao-Ping Chua, et al. *JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association)*, March 20, 2018, pp. 1087-1090.
Argues that stakeholders, including policy makers, should reject language that frames child health care spending as small when compared with adult health care spending. Lists reasons why this is problematic.
- "Sharing connections." By Leonie Heyworth. *JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association)*, April 3, 2018, pp. 1323-1324.
Narrates a physician's experience providing telehealth services to a Vietnam veteran who evacuated his home during Hurricane Harvey. Advocates for a partnership between government entities and the private sector so telehealth can continue to be a tool for disaster relief and more.
- "The 'nice girl' who saved the Second Amendment." By John J. Miller. *National Review*, April 16, 2018, pp. 25-27.
Profiles historian Joyce Lee Malcolm and her research cited in the Supreme Court's Heller decision recognizing an individual right to possess a firearm. Related information at: <https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/07pdf/07-290.pdf>
- "A new health-care debate." By Yuval Levin and Ramesh Ponnuru. *National Review*, April 16, 2018, pp. 28-30.
Advocates for more market-friendly health care policy reforms through block grants for Medicaid and Obamacare funds, and more state control.
- "Dirty politics." By Margaret Talbot. *New Yorker*, April 2, 2018, pp. 38-51.
Profiles Scott Pruitt and his efforts at the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] to focus on "EPA originalism" by grounding EPA action specifically on federal statutes and not pursuing additional, new environmental threats.
- "Bordernomics: the US-Mexico border region." By M. Ray Perryman. *Perryman Report and Texas Letter*, Vol. 35, No. 2, pp. 1-3, 6.
Describes the economy of the US-Mexico border region to determine regional dynamics and identify actions which could increase the level of trade and economic activity between the two nations.
- "Infrastructure by the people, for the people." By John Godfrey. *Public Power*, March/April 2018, pp. 39.
Emphasizes the importance of infrastructure with regard to public utilities. Explains why the American Public Power Association will oppose any effort by the federal government to move toward privatization of electric utilities.
- "License overload?" By Albert Downs and Iris Hentze. *State Legislatures*, April 2018, pp. 18-19, 21-22.
Reports that over 25 percent of today's workforce hold jobs that require an occupational license. Notes several states are reviewing licensing requirements and considering policy changes.
- "TMA makes medicine's case post-Harvey." By Joey Berlin. *Texas Medicine*, March 2018, pp. 44-45.
Reviews the Texas Medical Association's work with legislators to address challenges from Hurricane Harvey.
- "ERCOT predicts record-breaking peak power demand this summer." *Texas Public Power*, March 2018, p. 1.
Summarizes the Electric Reliability Council of Texas' [ERCOT] Preliminary Seasonal Assessment of Resource Adequacy [SARA] for Summer 2018. Updates expectations for Spring 2018 based on the final SARA report. Reports at: <http://www.ercot.com/content/wcm/lists/143976/SARA-FinalSpring2018.pdf> and <http://www.ercot.com/content/wcm/lists/143976/SARA-PreliminarySummer2018.pdf>
- "Public power: a rich history, a bright future." By Delia Patterson. *Texas Public Power*, March 2018, pp. 3, 6-7.
Provides a brief history of the public power business model. Argues that, as an integral part of the nation's electric utility infrastructure, public power utilities continue to play an important role.
- "What can we do to stop it?" By Sean Gregory, et al. *Time*, April 2, 2018, pp. 32-35.
Presents six steps for reducing gun violence in the United States. Argues it is more effective to tackle the problem as a public health issue rather than a political one.

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