Current Articles and Research Resources, January 11

Posted At : January 11, 2018 3:15 PM | Posted By : TexasLRL
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In this weekly post, we feature helpful research tools and recent articles of interest to the legislative community.

- Consider factors contributing to higher tolls across the country. (*Stateline*, January 9, 2018)
- Track what members of Congress are doing. (*In Custodia Legis*, January 8, 2018)
- Read about this year's flu season. (National Public Radio, January 9, 2018)
- See what to look for in the night sky every month. (*National Geographic*, December 28, 2017)

Members of the Texas legislative community may request the articles below here or by calling 512-463-1252.

- "'The system must be transformed.'" By Bill Hethcock. *Austin Business Journal*, December 8, 2017, pp. 12-13.
  Features interview with Baylor Scott & White CEO Jim Hinton on the future of health care and the advantages of combining the finance and delivery of health care into a single system.
- "Building healthier communities for an aging population." By Debra Miller and Emily McCarthy. *Capitol Ideas*, November/December 2017, pp. 32-33.
  Highlights AARP's *Caregiver Advise, Record, Enable Act* [CARE Act] which aims to improve coordination and communications between seniors, their loved ones, and hospitals.
- "Shining a spotlight on women veterans." By Shawntaye Hopkins. *Capitol Ideas*, November/December 2017, pp. 34-35.
  Describes the contributions of women in the armed forces. Highlights recent efforts in Oregon, Georgia, and California to recognize and advocate for women veterans, including a traveling portrait exhibit of Oregon women veterans entitled, "I Am Not Invisible."
- "Can bipartisan buddies win over Texas?" By Henry Gass. *Christian Science Monitor*, December 11, 2017, pp. 18-20.
  Highlights the bipartisan friendship of United States Representatives Will Hurd and Beto O'Rourke. States that although bipartisanship is difficult in today's political world, views may be changing as many voters want political leaders to compromise to get things done.
- "Doing Houston wrong." By Joel Kotkin. *City Journal (Manhattan Institute)*, December 13, 2017, pp. 1-6.
  Suggests critics are wrong to blame Houston's approach to urban development for Hurricane Harvey's massive flooding damage. Advocates bolstering infrastructure resiliency through flood control systems rather than through additional zoning or abandonment of the city's current growth model.
  See: https://www.city-journal.org/html/doing-houston-wrong-15604.html
- "Public education: keeping the wheels turning." *Economist*, December 23rd, 2017-January 5th, 2018, pp. 39-40.
  Explains why America's school funding model — levies on property taxes — is not as regressive as some critics contest. Notes other countries do a better job of directing resources to children who need extra help.
  Related information at: https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/94961/making-sense-of-state-school-funding-policy_0.pdf
- "Safer nicotine: the tobacco paradox." *Economist*, December 23rd, 2017-January 5th, 2018, pp. 85-86.
  Discusses the changing landscape of the tobacco industry. Explains the Food and Drug Administration is working on a regulatory process to make it easier for companies to introduce safer products.
- "The uninsured do not use the emergency department more — they use other care less." By Ruohua Annetta Zhou, et al. *Health Affairs*, December 2017, pp. 2115-2122.
  Debunks the common misperception that the uninsured use the emergency department [ED] more. Explains insured and uninsured adults use the ED at very similar rates and in very similar circumstances, and the uninsured use other types of care much less than the insured.
- "Determining health effects of hazardous materials released during Hurricane Harvey." By M.J. Friedrich. *JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association)*, December 19, 2017, pp. 2283-2285.
  Discusses efforts to sample the air, water, and sediment, track hazardous chemical exposures, and identify ways we can improve risk management to protect communities from future disasters like Hurricane Harvey.
- "Ag tech poses difficult state tax questions." By Matthew C. Boch, Cal McCastlain, and T.J. Lawhon. *Journal of MultiState Taxation and Incentives*, January 2018, pp. 34-36.
  Describes recent digital technology and artificial intelligence developments in the agricultural sector, designed to increase crop yields and improve operational efficiency, and the ambiguous relationship to decades-old state tax provisions, agricultural exemptions, and conservation credits.
- "Collecting our thoughts on collecting states' use taxes." By Shirley Sicilian. *Journal of MultiState Taxation and Incentives*, January 2018, pp. 20-25, 48.
  Analyzes state approaches to minimizing the impact of the physical presence requirements in the *Quill* decision, and outlines use tax collection, notice, and reporting responsibility in certain states. Related information at: https://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/91-0194.ZO.html
- "The myth of the playground pusher." By C.J. Ciaramella and Lauren Krisai. *Reason*, January 2018, pp. 41-49.
  Reviews the use of drug-free school zones in the various states. Explains drug-free school zone laws are rarely used to prosecute sales of drugs to minors, but have become a vehicle to give prosecutors increased leverage in a variety of drug cases.
- "A matter of trust." By Matthew Huston. *Science*, December 15, 2017, pp. 1375-1377.
  Explores public attitudes toward autonomous vehicles.
- "Why free college tuition is spreading from cities to states." By Marsha Mercer. *Stateline (Pew Charitable Trusts)*, January 5, 2018, pp. 1-4.
  Reports 200 localities and twelve states are offering free tuition programs. Notes mixed results in meeting goals of producing more workers with marketable skills and helping local economies.
  See: http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2018/01/05/why-free-college-tuition-is-spreading-from-cities-to-states
- "Bad medicine." By Sean Price. *Texas Medicine*, December 2017, pp. 49-54.
  Calls for state legislative policy to help people safely dispose of unwanted medicines, noting this would reduce chances of poisonings or misuse and keep these chemicals out of the water system. See: https://www.texmed.org/Template.aspx?id=46159
- "Big Spring vs. big oil." By Christopher Collins. *Texas Observer*, December 2017, pp. 26-31.
  Explores the effects groundwater mining and Permian Basin fracking operations are having on rural Texas towns. Argues groundwater districts' lax rules on water pumping and water companies lack of transparency risks depletion of these communities only sources of drinking water.
- "ERCOT generation outlook released." *Texas Public Power*, November-December 2017, pp. 5, 7.
  Summarizes the following two reports from the Electric Reliability Council of Texas [ERCOT]: *Final Seasonal Assessment of Resource Adequacy for the ERCOT region (SARA): Winter 2017-18* and *Preliminary Seasonal Assessment of Resource Adequacy for the ERCOT region (SARA): Spring 2018*. Report at: http://www.ercot.com/content/wcm/lists/114797/SARA-FinalWinter2017-18.pdf
  Report at: http://www.ercot.com/content/wcm/lists/114797/SARA-PreliminarySpring2018.pdf

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