

Current Articles & Research Resources, January 24

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

- See where the United States ranks among other countries in [economic freedom](#). (The Heritage Foundation, ©2018)
- Examine [teacher pension plans](#) in six states, including Texas. (National Institute on Retirement Security, January 8, 2019)
- Consider how [apprenticeship](#) programs are a path to employment. (The Council of State Governments, January 23, 2019)
- Explore the Texas Attorney General's new [educational website](#) related to opioid misuse and abuse. (Attorney General of Texas, January 22, 2019)

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

- "OZ: Opportunity zones." By Paul Thompson. *Austin Business Journal*, January 18, 2019, pp. 4-7.
Provides a guide to opportunity zones, a new community investment tool created under the *2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act* to encourage long-term investments in distressed communities throughout the country.
- "[Many SNAP households will experience long gap between monthly benefits even if shutdown ends](#)." By Dorothy Rosenbaum. *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*, January 22, 2019, pp. 1-8.
Reports on the lengthy delay between the issuance of February and March benefits for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program [SNAP]. Includes a table of selected states, including Texas, showing SNAP households facing a 50-day or longer gap in benefits.
- "Refashioning Title IX: Here's what people are saying at regulations.gov." By Steven Johnson. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 11, 2019, p. A20.
Highlights the huge number of public comments being submitted on the proposed revision of Title IX, gender equity, and sexual assault investigation regulations for higher education institutions. Explains the new regulations will be open for public comment through January 28, 2019. Related information at: <https://www.regulations.gov/document?D=ED-2018-OCR-0064-0001>.
- "Health economics: Shopping for a Caesarean." *Economist*, January 12th-18th, 2019, pp. 22-23.
Reports the new price-transparency rule requiring hospitals to post standard charges for their services online is unlikely to reduce prices, but could instead trigger a price war that results in higher prices.
- "[Moving toward more equitable state tax systems: A 'who pays?' follow-up report on tax policy options for advancing equity and addressing income inequality](#)." By Dylan Grundman. *Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy*, January 2019, pp. 1-9.

Presents state tax policy recommendations to improve economic opportunities and address racial inequities. Discusses best practices in corporate income taxes and overuse of sales taxes as a significant source of state and local revenue. Report at: <https://itep.org/whopays/>.

- "**How states use Medicaid managed care to deliver long-term services and supports to children with special health care needs.**" By Kate Honsberger, et al. *Internet Resource*, November 2018, pp. 1-24.
Provides a 50-state review and analysis of state Medicaid managed care programs that provide long-term services and supports [LTSS] to children and youth with special health care needs. Notes that Texas is one of three states that have designed stand-alone LTSS programs to specifically serve Medicaid populations with complex health care needs.
- "Physicians are steering the conversation about gun violence." By Rita Rubin. *JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association)*, January 15, 2019, pp. 133-135.
Interviews Dr. Megan Ranney, one of the leading voices in the "This Is Our Lane" movement, on why firearm violence is a public health issue and how physicians can play an important role in advocating for policy solutions.
- "**Cost-of-living adjustments (2018).**" *National Association of State Retirement Administrators*, December 2018, pp. 1-16.
Discusses periodic cost-of-living adjustments [COLA] in state and local government pensions, common COLA types and features, COLA costs, and recent changes. Features an appendix of COLA provisions by state, including Texas County & District Retirement System, Employees Retirement System of Texas, Texas Municipal Retirement System, and Teacher Retirement System of Texas.
- "Deregulation meets markets: Econ 101 shows the way." By Charles Bayless. *Public Utilities Fortnightly*, January 2019, pp. 46-51.
Explores problems that arise when regulated prices interact with incorrect pricing signals in the free market. Provides examples of incorrect pricing and its effects.
- "Is CBD a miracle cure or a marketing scam? (Both)." By Mke Riggs. *Reason*, February 2019, pp. 26-34.
Examines the use of CBD [cannabidiol], a compound derived from marijuana and hemp plants. Explains the importance of separating use as a life-changing medicine for the chronically ill from the newly popular luxury self-care products. Suggests federal regulatory barriers need to be changed to allow for proper regulation of products and research into medical uses.
- "**Texas top-ranked state for firm relocations.**" By Anil Kumar and Alexander T. Abraham. *Southwest Economy (Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas)*, Fourth Quarter 2018, pp. 3-8.
Analyzes trends in recent corporate relocations to Texas, the net migration rate of employment, and the role of tax incentives.
- "**Rural hospitals in greater jeopardy in non-Medicaid expansion states.**" By Michael Ollive. *Stateline (Pew Charitable Trusts)*, January 22, 2019, pp. 1-6.
Examines whether Medicaid eligibility expansion could save rural hospitals that are at risk of closing in Texas and other non-expansion states.
- "**Leveraging LARCs.**" By Sean Price. *Texas Medicine*, January 2019, pp. 26-29.
Argues for LARCs [long-acting reversible contraceptives] to play an increasing role in Texas' solution for reducing maternal mortality. Explains the need for legislation to make LARCs more easily accessible and for continuing medical education to enhance both patient and physician awareness of LARCs.
- "The survivor." By Aryn Baker. *Time*, January 28, 2019, pp. 36-43.

Examines sex trafficking in the United States, focusing on oil and shale drilling communities in North Dakota and Texas. Profiles a survivor of sex trafficking, who now helps other trafficked victims and provides sex-trafficking awareness training for law enforcement, including officers in Odessa, Texas.

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