Current Articles & Research Resources, April 26

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

- Explore partnerships between public school districts and charter schools. (National Conference of State Legislatures Blog, April 23, 2018)
- Read about the alternative response option in child welfare cases. (Texas Public Policy Foundation, April 19, 2018)
- Consider a new study on per pupil spending. (Pew Research Center, April 19, 2018)
- Find a drop-off location to dispose of prescription medications safely. (Attorney General of Texas, accessed April 25, 2018)

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


- Presents a Q&A discussion of the implementation of the REAL ID Act passed in 2005. Provides a map showing which states are in compliance with the law—Texas is compliant. Related information at: https://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/real-id-act-test.pdf

- Examines the 60-year-old California master plan of education which set up a three-tier system to educate a large population while still providing for advanced research institutions.
- "Data privacy: Copy that; The GDPR: The joys of data hygiene." Economist, April 7th-13th, 2018, pp. 10-11, 53-54.

- Promotes the European Union’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as a model for America, noting businesses that serve European customers will have to comply with the GDPR.

- Explains how the Internet, changing norms, customer demand, and competition from new businesses are disrupting the funeral industry. Reports the industry’s revenue is expected to stagnate between 2016 and 2021, noting the long-term trend towards cremation: less than four percent in 1960 but expected to rise to 79 percent by 2035.

- Examines the effectiveness of Texas GO Centers, peer-run information centers that assist historically under-served students prepare and plan for college. Concludes the centers have led to a significant increase in college application rates and a limited increase in college enrollment rates, but no increase in college completion rates. Related information at: http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/reports/PDF/6575-PDF.pdf

- Considers ethanol’s role in the motor fuel industry’s current regulatory environment.
- "Solar power in Texas: The next big renewable." By Patrick Graves and Bruce Wright. Fiscal Notes, April 2018, pp. 1, 3-5.

- Assesses the energy capacity and economic impact of Texas solar industry. Highlights the role of local government in supplementing energy needs with solar power.

- Explores the development and proliferation of self-driving cars. Discusses potential legal and regulatory approaches to the use of self-driving cars and their integration into transportation infrastructure.
- "Robert Kerns, PhD: Researching nondrug approaches to pain management." By Jennifer Abbass. JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association), April 17, 2018, pp. 1535-1537.

- Interviews Kerns about his research and work with the VA [United States Department of Veterans Affairs] on pain management for veterans. Focuses on new efforts to study the effectiveness of nondrug approaches to pain management in light of the opioid epidemic, with treatments ranging from chiropractic care to cognitive behavioral therapy to tai chi.

- Presents a summary of Texas legislative activity affecting P-12 education in 2017. Highlights funding priorities, changes to funding formulas, school finance litigation, charter schools, and per pupil spending.


- Explores six different factors related to reliability at several smaller public power utilities.
- "There are too many kids on the sex offender registry." By Lenore Skomal. Reason, May 2018, p. 9.

- Argues sex offender registries are based on flawed theories and are in reality adding many children to the list who are not likely to offend.

- Analyzes domestic and international migration to Texas and the labor market outcomes, lower immigrant earnings, and other economic effects of migration.

- Examines a Fort Worth anesthesiology group’s “zero narcotics” approach to surgery pain control using nerve-blocking and nonopioid medications. Presents physicians’ arguments for and against the need for opioids in pain management.

- Shares the difficult hospital experience of Representative Donna Howard’s daughter after she suffered a miscarriage, to highlight the potential negative effects of the new Texas fetal remains law. Reports the law, which mandates the burial or cremation of fetal remains after miscarriages or abortions, has been blocked pending a trial set for the summer.

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