

Current Articles & Research Resources, April 16

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

- Read about ways to determine whether a person has **recovered** from COVID-19. (LLRX, April 12, 2020)
- Review **COVID-19 coverage** from the *Harvard Business Review*. (*Harvard Business Review*, accessed April 15, 2020)
- Find **response rates** to the 2020 Census by state, city, or Congressional district. (U.S. Census Bureau, accessed April 15, 2020)
- Consider potential **legal problems** that could arise as a result of expanding voting by mail. (Politico, April 7, 2020)

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

- 20.04.33 / "**Labor market conditions should determine duration, size of COVID-19 relief measures.**" By Chad Stone and Sharon Parrott. *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*, April 13, 2020, pp. 1-5.
Argues that fiscal relief to state and local governments and expanded unemployment benefits implemented in response to COVID-19 should not end on a certain calendar date, but rather when economic and employment conditions improve. Discusses federal stimulus provisions of the *Families First Coronavirus Response Act* and *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security [CARES] Act*.
- 20.04.34 / "**Comparing the National Outcome Measure of Healthy and Ready to Learn with other well-being and school readiness measures.**" By Katherine Paschall, et al. *Child Trends*, April 2020, pp. 1-19.
Discusses the importance of early childhood education in kindergarten readiness. Explores the current status of a pilot school readiness measure, the Healthy and Ready to Learn [HRTL] National Outcome Measure [NOM], developed by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau under the United States Department of Health and Human Services.
- 20.04.35 / "**Prayer services during a pandemic: Why some churches stay open.**" By Harry Bruinius. *Christian Science Monitor*, April 6, 2020, pp. 1-7.
Considers that Texas and a few other states have designated places of worship as essential services exempt from COVID-19 restrictions on public gatherings. Highlights the tension between First Amendment protections of the free exercise of religion and public health measures instituted because of COVID-19.
- 20.04.36 / "**'I was horrified': For millions of borrowers, the coronavirus stimulus law offers no relief.**" By Danielle McLean. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 2, 2020, pp. 1-5.
Explains that the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security [CARES] Act* suspends payments only on federally held student loans and not loans that are commercially held but federally guaranteed. Discusses the plight of students with

Federal Family Education Loans [FFEL] and federal Perkins loans, neither of which are covered by the CARES Act or by the two-month suspension of student loan interest and payments issued by the Trump administration.

- 20.04.37 / "Pressing pause on mortgage payments." By Arpit Gupta. *City Journal (Manhattan Institute)*, April 9, 2020, pp. 1-4.
Suggests that allowing homeowners to pause principal payments on their mortgages would be a rare win-win deal in public policy, a way to help homeowners, lenders, and investors during the forthcoming period of severe economic turmoil due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 20.04.38 / "Democracy on the ropes." By Mke Magner, Bridget Bowman, and Gopal Ratman. *CQ Weekly*, March 30, 2020, pp. 14-17.
Discusses how the COVID-19 pandemic is disrupting upcoming congressional and presidential elections in Texas and the United States. Addresses concerns with expanding access to voting by mail. Quotes Senator Royce West.
- 20.04.39 / "Unraveling a 'health crisis that led to an economic crisis'." By Rob Schneider. *Dallas Business Journal*, April 10, 2020, pp. 10-11.
Presents a Q&A with economist Ray Perryman on Texas' ability to weather the economic aftermath of COVID-19 and a recession.
- 20.04.40 / "Ghost constituents: The United States census has an inmate problem." *Economist*, April 11th-17th, 2020, pp. 1-2.
Discusses the unconstitutional effects of prison-based gerrymandering, the United States Census Bureau practice of registering inmates as residents of the counties where their prisons are located, rather than the last address before their arrest. Notes several states' efforts to end this practice. Related information at: <https://www.prisonersofthecensus.org/legislation.html>
- 20.04.41 / "State rainy day funds and the COVID-19 crisis." By Jared Walczak and Janelle Cammenga. *Fiscal Fact (Tax Foundation)*, April 2020, pp. 1-11.
Analyzes the current levels of state fiscal reserves, also known as "rainy day funds," as well as the funds as a percentage of state general fund expenditures, and states' abilities to use the funds as revenues decline during the COVID-19 crisis. Projects Texas' rainy day fund at \$7.830 billion at the start of fiscal year 2020, at 12.8 percent of state general fund expenditures.
- 20.04.42 / "Communities of color at higher risk for health and economic challenges due to COVID-19." By Samantha Artiga, Rachel Garfield, and Kendal Orgera. *Issue Brief (Kaiser Family Foundation)*, April 7, 2020, pp. 1-7.
Analyzes data on underlying health conditions, health coverage, health care access, and social and economic factors by race and ethnicity. Finds economic and social issues will cause communities of color to face increased financial and health risks associated with COVID-19.
- 20.04.43 / "How much is a life worth?" By Robert VerBruggen. *National Review*, April 20, 2020, pp. 22-23.
Presents concepts used in analyses of economic damages versus public health benefits in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Suggests the virus is too new for reliable data to exist, making it difficult to produce valid cost-benefit analyses.
- 20.04.44 / "What drugs can do." By Avik Roy. *National Review*, April 20, 2020, pp. 21-22.
Considers the two broad categories of drug development related to the COVID-19 pandemic: vaccines to provide immunity to the virus and drug treatments for those who already have the disease. Explains there are 104 different COVID-19 treatments currently in preclinical or clinical studies. Suggests if multiple successful drug therapies emerge, vigorous price competition may lead to more

reasonably priced drugs.

- 20.04. 45 / "[The cost of COVID-19: A rough estimate of the 2020 US GDP impact.](#)" By Christos A. Makridis and Jonathan S. Hartley. *Policy Brief (Mercatus Center, George Mason University)*, April 6, 2020, pp. 1-7.
Estimates the economic cost of the first two months spent fighting the COVID-19 pandemic will be \$2.14 trillion, with the gross domestic product [GDP] growth rate declining about five percent per month for each month of partial economic shutdown.
- 20.04. 46 / "[Critical care surge response strategies for the 2020 COVID-19 outbreak in the United States.](#)" By Mahshid Abir, et al. *Research Report (RAND Health Care)*, April 2020, pp. 1-49 (Note Length).
Identifies the components of critical care capacity and strategies for enhancing it in hospitals, including contingency capacity strategies and crisis capacity strategies. Includes policy recommendations for state, regional, and federal entities and a link to download a Microsoft Excel-based tool to estimate critical care capacity and rapidly explore strategies for increasing it.
- 20.04. 47 / "[States' unemployment compensation trust funds could run out in mere weeks.](#)" By Jared Walczak. *Tax Foundation*, April 9, 2020, pp. 1-4.
Describes how many weeks of unemployment benefits each state's unemployment compensation trust fund can currently cover during the COVID-19 pandemic. Finds that six states, which account for more than one-third of the United States population, can cover less than ten weeks of unemployment, including Texas, at six weeks.
- 20.04. 48 / "[Subsurface tension: The conflicting laws of Texas and New Mexico over shared groundwater and New Mexico's desire for regulation.](#)" By Kameron B. Smith. *Texas A&M Law Review*, February 2020, pp. 453-474.
Discusses conflicts between Texas and New Mexico related to differences in their regulation of groundwater, including the recent increase in groundwater importation to New Mexico for use in hydraulic fracturing. Considers regulations New Mexico could impose on groundwater usage and importation, but finds an interstate compact may be more effective at resolving the conflict.
- 20.04. 49 / "[Gene Wu on coronavirus and the rise in hate-fueled attacks against Asian Americans.](#)" By Michael Barajas. *Texas Observer*, April 7, 2020, pp. 1-8.
Interviews Representative Gene Wu on the impact the COVID-19 pandemic is having on Asian American communities in Texas.

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