

Current Articles & Research Resources, September 3

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

- Consider how a felony conviction can affect a person's [right to vote](#). (Stateline, August 31, 2020)
- Read about how American [restaurants](#) are doing during the pandemic, city by city. (Wolf Street, August 29, 2020)
- Explore how the [Main Street Lending Program](#) works. (Congressional Research Service, August 27, 2020)
- Get ready for fall hunting and fishing by [purchasing licenses online](#). (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, accessed September 3, 2020)

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

- 20.09.01 / "[How states can use early care and education provider surveys to develop COVID-19 response strategies](#)." By Mallory Warner-Richter. *Child Trends*, August 2020, pp. 1-12.
Details the important role states play in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic by providing access to child care for essential workers and issuing guidance for early care and education [ECE]. Presents strategies for state leaders to help child care systems stabilize, rebuild, and strengthen, while protecting racial and ethnic equity in child care.
- 20.09.02 / "How do you 'defund the police' in Texas? Very carefully." By Henry Gass. *Christian Science Monitor*, August 21, 2020, pp. 1-4.
Highlights the discussions in Texas cities about changes in police funding, including the redistribution of funds among the police, social and mental health services, and other city departments. Suggests potential savings could come from improved hiring and firing practices in police departments as a strategy to decrease expensive lawsuits.
- 20.09.03 / "Budget crunch: North Texas cities grapple with COVID-19's financial bite." By Bill Hethcock. *Dallas Business Journal*, August 28, 2020, pp. 8-11.
Explores the COVID-19 pandemic's financial impact on local governments and the cost-saving measures these local governments plan to take.
- 20.09.04 / "Back to school: Learning and COVID." *Economist*, August 29th-September 4th, 2020, pp. 1-3.
Reports continued school disruptions due to COVID-19 will widen educational inequality, disproportionately hurting poorer pupils.
- 20.09.05 / "Teachers with COVID-19 health risks: Who gets to stay home?" By Madeline Will. *Education Week*, August 18, 2020, pp. 1-4.
Considers the return of teachers to school campuses and the challenges some face when seeking health accommodations due to being at higher risk for COVID-19

complications. Addresses medical exemptions and the few options offered when the exemptions are denied.

- 20.09.06 / "[Who will pay for the roads?](#)" By Ulrik Boesen. *Fiscal Fact (Tax Foundation)*, August 2020, pp. 1-20.
Discusses the evolution of the motor fuel tax and the discrepancy in state and federal tax revenues compared with highway finance expenditures. Outlines the possible solution of taxing vehicle miles traveled [VMT], including GPS monitoring and privacy concerns.
- 20.09.07 / "[Texas' electricity resources: Where power comes from —and how it gets to you.](#)" By Lisa Mnton. *Fiscal Notes*, August 2020, pp. 1, 3-6.
Details the electricity resources of Texas, the only state in the 48 contiguous United States with its own stand-alone electricity grid, managed by the Electric Reliability Council of Texas [ERCOT]. Describes ERCOT's responsibilities in ensuring a competitive electricity market and sufficient generating capacity. Addresses Texas' "fuel mix" of natural gas, coal, and wind energy and the impact of COVID-19 on power demand.
- 20.09.08 / "Fewer youth in foster care, but family reunifications hit record low." By John Kelly. *Imprint*, August 24, 2020, pp. 1-2.
Presents recent federal child welfare data on foster care, family reunifications, and adoptions, according to the latest [annual report](#) of the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System [AFCARS], published by the Children's Bureau, an office of the Administration for Children and Families. Includes state-level statistics found within state data tables in the Children's Bureau's related [report and data visualization](#).
- 20.09.09 / "[Attacks on public health officials during COVID-19.](#)" By Mchelle M Mello, Jeremy A. Greene, and Joshua M Sharfstein. *JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association)*, August 25, 2020, pp. 471-472.
Highlights the increased harassment of public health officials during the COVID-19 pandemic, including discussion of how the decline in civility in political discourse has contributed. Argues elected leaders should provide public health officials protection from illegal harassment.
- 20.09.10 / "The 7,383-seat strategy is working." By Joan Walsh. *Nation*, September 7/14, 2020, pp. 12-17, 26.
Discusses recent trends in the political affiliation of state legislatures and speculates on the possibility Democrats will regain control of state legislatures in the 2020 election. Includes maps comparing the party control of state legislatures in 2009 and 2019.
- 20.09.11 / "[Fundraising & gender parity in state legislatures remains elusive.](#)" *National Institute on Money in Politics*, August 17, 2020, pp. 1-8.
Analyzes median campaign contributions to state legislators by gender from 2016 to 2019, including Texas.
- 20.09.12 / "In policing, race matters." By James R. Copland. *National Review*, September 7, 2020, pp. 27-29.
Explains that African-American men are the principal beneficiaries of good policing, but also disproportionately bear a cost of that same proactive policing due to their higher percentage of interactions with police. Considers police reform proposals represented by two bills before Congress: [Just and Unifying Solutions to Invigorate Communities Everywhere \[JUSTICE\] Act of 2020](#) and the [George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2020](#).
- 20.09.13 / "[Health care workforce reform: COVID-19 spotlights need for changes to clinician licensing.](#)" By Shirley V. Svorny and Michael F. Cannon.

Policy Brief (CATO Institute), August 4, 2020, pp. 1-24.

Suggests third-party certification as an alternative to direct government licensing of health care professionals.

- 20.09.14 / "Preparing for the post-pandemic: Repurposing tools." By David Boonin. *Public Utilities Fortnightly*, July 2020, pp. 1-5.
Considers how existing tools can be adapted to address post-pandemic circumstances applicable to electric utilities. Focuses on cash flow and system hardening and effectiveness.
- 20.09.15 / "Black history instruction gets new emphasis in many states." By Marsha Mercer. *Stateline (Pew Charitable Trusts)*, August 20, 2020, pp. 1-4.
Reports on efforts by states and school districts to incorporate the African American experience into the broader social studies curriculum.
- 20.09.16 / "Parental rights in Texas public schools: Does in loco parentis still have meaning?" By Miles T. Bradshaw. *Texas Bar Journal*, September 2020, pp. 542-543.
Explains the basic framework of parental rights available by law in a school setting, including part of the school reform movement that culminated in the passage of **SB1**, 74th Legislature.
- 20.09.17 / "The statues are coming down. Maybe that's a missed opportunity." By Stephen Harrigan. *Texas Monthly*, September 2020, pp. 1-10.
Examines recent efforts to remove public monuments to slaveholders, Confederate soldiers, and Texas Rangers. Discusses the author's involvement in erecting Texas-related monuments through the organization Capital Area Statues, Inc. [CAST]. Mentions monuments on the grounds of the Texas State Capitol.
- 20.09.18 / "It's a trap!: Responsible enforcement of Texas disaster evacuation orders." By William S. Gribble. *Texas Tech Law Review*, Summer 2020, pp. 725-742.
Examines the legal basis for mandatory evacuation orders related to a disaster, the civil and criminal enforcement mechanisms in Texas, and the need for a statutory exception.

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