

Current Articles & Research Resources, May 7

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

- Explore [tax help resources](#) related to COVID-19 pandemic relief. (Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, April 27, 2020)
- Track [business formation](#) statistics by state. (U. S. Census Bureau, April 15, 2020)
- Consider the role [telecommuting](#) will play even as the COVID-19 pandemic fades. (Brookings, April 6, 2020)
- Read about decisions from Apple and Google not to allow location tracking in [contact tracing](#) apps. (Reuters, May 4, 2020)

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

- 20.05.01 / "Will cars still be king? 'More people in less vehicles'." By Daniel Salazar. *Austin Business Journal*, May 1, 2020, pp. 4, 6.
Provides an in-depth look at what an Austin commute will look like in twenty years. Considers how COVID-19 could alter the timelines for the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan.
- 20.05.02 / "[Rightsizing federal ed: Principles for reform and practical steps to move in the right direction.](#)" By Mary Clare Amselem, et al. *CATO Policy Report*, May 4, 2020, pp. 1-12.
Describes federal involvement and recommends reforms in seven specific areas of education: elementary and secondary education funding, curricular standards and testing mandates, state and local planning mandates, school choice, higher education, early childhood education and care, and civil rights.
- 20.05.03 / "[Streamlining Medicaid enrollment during COVID-19 public health emergency.](#)" By Jennifer Wagner. *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*, April 7, 2020, pp. 1-8.
Discusses how states can streamline Medicaid enrollment processes during the COVID-19 pandemic, to expedite health coverage for eligible individuals, particularly children, pregnant women, parents, senior citizens, and people with disabilities, and reduce the administrative burden on eligibility staff.
- 20.05.04 / "[How coronavirus will change the US, from where we live to the way we connect.](#)" By Peter Grier. *Christian Science Monitor*, April 28, 2020, pp. 1-6.
Considers the changes the COVID-19 pandemic may bring to the United States. Discusses the increased role of online activities, a potential dispersion from urban areas, and the concept of patriotism expanding to honor all who serve our communities, such as health care workers and teachers.
- 20.05.05 / "[The post-pandemic university.](#)" By Allison Schragger. *City Journal (Manhattan Institute)*, May 3, 2020, pp. 1-4.
Reports that the COVID-19 pandemic will accelerate progress toward a more

customizable and affordable system of higher education, one that includes a hybrid system of online and in-person instruction, expands consumer choice, and preserves the core functions of the university.

- 20.05.06 / "COVID-19: Tests of reason." *Economist*, April 25th-May 1st, 2020, pp. 70-72.
Explains that countries will have to build and deploy testing systems at an unprecedented scale to end their pandemic-related lockdowns safely. Notes that this scale of testing infrastructure will cost far less than the estimated \$400 billion per month cost of the pandemic to the United States.
- 20.05.07 / "The crisis in carmaking: From 60 to zero." *Economist*, April 25th-May 1st, 2020, pp. 60-61.
Recommends ways to save a precarious car industry: adaptation to new health protocols for redesigning and operating assembly lines, investments in green technologies, and consolidation to pool scarce resources.
- 20.05.08 / "[A blueprint for back to school.](#)" By John Bailey and Frederick Hess. *Education Next*, May 4, 2020, pp. 1-15.
Details a number of considerations that education leaders and public officials should consider while developing plans for reopening schools when the coronavirus pandemic subsides.
- 20.05.09 / "Schools struggle to meet rising demand for food." By Corey Mitchell. *Education Week*, April 29, 2020, pp. 1-5.
Examines how school meal distribution programs implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic are faring in Texas and other states. Discusses school districts in Dallas and San Antonio.
- 20.05.10 / "[A basic demographic profile of workers in frontline industries.](#)" By Hye Jin Rho, Hayley Brown, and Shawn Fremstad. *Issue Brief (Center for Economic and Policy Research)*, April 2020, pp. 1-10.
Documents the number of workers in six groups of frontline industries and the characteristics of the workforce in each of these industry groups. Points out these essential workers remain unprotected and undercompensated under the COVID-19 legislation passed to date.
- 20.05.11 / "The current plague considered as a deregulatory opportunity." By Casey B. Mulligan. *National Review*, May 4, 2020, pp. 21-22.
Argues the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the weaknesses of centralized planning and regulations. Explains the [Right to Try Act](#), which grants patients access to experimental drugs and may allow for quicker development of COVID-19 treatments.
- 20.05.12 / "What is the value of public education?" By Frederick M Hess. *National Review*, May 4, 2020, pp. 28-30.
Suggests the COVID-19 pandemic has served as a reminder of the roles schools play in providing socialization and social services, purposes not captured by test scores. Argues many schools have not met the challenge of providing appropriate distance learning to fulfill public education's mission.
- 20.05.13 / "[How health costs might change with COVID-19.](#)" By Cynthia Cox, et al. *Peterson-KFF Health System Tracker*, April 15, 2020, pp. 1-7.
Discusses the higher health care costs that private health insurers and government health programs could face as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Includes factors that could increase and decrease health costs as well as special considerations for Medicare and Medicaid programs and enrollees.
- 20.05.14 / "[Six things states can do to support learning during coronavirus.](#)" *State Policy Network*, April 27, 2020, pp. 1-4.

Provides policy recommendations related to public education that address the new challenges school districts, teachers, and families are facing due to school closures. Includes links to proposals by state think tanks.

- 20.05.15 / "[Blocked in the digital age: Constitutional dimensions of elected officials silencing critics on social media.](#)" By John G. Browning and Reginald A. Hirsch. *Texas Bar Journal*, May 2020, pp. 324-326.
Addresses the issue of elected officials blocking or censoring critics on social media platforms. Mentions the federal lawsuit brought against Speaker of the House Dennis Bonnen by Lone Star Gun Rights activists, relating to [HB357](#), 86th Legislature.
- 20.05.16 / "[School district tax rate compression and tax ratification elections.](#)" *Texas Taxpayers and Research Association*, April 2020, pp. 1-2.
Describes school finance provisions in [HB3](#), 86th Legislature, relating to maintenance and operations [M&O] tax rates and new requirements for voter approval of higher rates through tax ratification elections.

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