Current Articles and Research Resources, January 18

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

- Explore Americans' perceptions of the news media. (Gallup, January 17, 2018)
- Read about the legislative process in Congress. (Congressional Research Service, January 10, 2018)
- Consider which drugs are causing lethal overdoses. (FiveThirtyEight, January 17, 2018)
- Examine the costs of severe weather events. (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2018)

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

- "Marital discord." By Jonathan Black. *ABA Journal: The Lawyer's Magazine*, January 2018, pp. 16-18.
  Highlights several states' efforts to change minimum-age marriage laws and to prohibit forced marriages.
- "The Texas GED problem is getting worse." By Chandra Villanueva. *Center for Public Policy Priorities*, January 2018, pp. 1-14.
  Reports on the decline in the number of individuals taking and passing the General Equivalency Diploma [GED] exam. Addresses the need for the state to follow students who receive a high school equivalency and track their career and educational outcomes.
  See: https://forabettertexas.org/images/2018_EO_GEDproblem_FullReport.pdf
- "'Always think deeply.'" *Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 5, 2017, pp. A6-A7.
  Interviews Ruth J. Simmons, former president of Brown University and current president of Prairie View A&M University, about her career and coming out of retirement to guide Prairie View.
- "A dying town." By Sarah Brown and Karin Fischer. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 5, 2017, pp. A14-A23.
  Discusses current research correlating low education levels in areas of economic malaise with poorer health outcomes.
- "High-tax states: tax replanning." *Economist*, January 6th-12th, 2018, pp. 17-18.
  Examines how states might try to circumvent the new federal tax law.
- "Mortality quadrupled among opioid-driven hospitalizations, notably within lower-income and disabled white populations." By Zirui Song. *Health Affairs*, December 2017, pp. 2054-2061.
  Examines opioid-driven hospitalizations in the United States. Finds that while the total volume has remained stable, it has shifted from diagnoses involving opioid dependence toward those centered on opioid or heroin poisoning, with patients more likely to be white, ages 50-64, Medicare beneficiaries with disabilities, and residents of low-income areas.
- "Only one in twenty justice-referred adults in specialty treatment for opioid use receive methadone or buprenorphine." By Noa Krawczyk, et al. *Health Affairs*, December 2017, pp. 2046-2053.
  Investigates whether the criminal justice system refers people to the highest standard of treatment for opioid use disorder, methadone or buprenorphine. Reports that only 4.6 percent of justice-referred clients received such treatment, compared to 40.9 percent of those referred by other sources.
- "Five ethical values to guide health systems reform." By Lawrence O. Gostin. *JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association)*, December 12, 2017, pp. 2171-2172.
  Outlines five critical values for health care reform – universal access, equitable access, affordable access (cost), quality, and choice. Explains the trade-offs and why certain values should take priority.
- "State fiscal effort and juvenile incarceration rates: are we misdirecting our investment in human capital?" By Jessica McGrath Ellison, William Owlings, and Leslie S. Kaplan. *Journal of Education Finance*, Summer 2017, pp. 45-63.
  Examines whether an increase in state fiscal effort for education is associated with decreased juvenile incarceration rates over the last 25 years in all 50 states.
- "The waning impact of school finance litigation on inequality in per student revenue during the adequacy era." By Dennis J. Condron. *Journal of Education Finance*, Summer 2017, pp. 1-20.
  Examines how adequacy lawsuits affected inequality in school funding within states from 1990 to 2011. Finds adequacy litigation helped reduce inequality during the 1990-2000 period, but in contrast, from 2001-2011 in which there were fewer lawsuits, revenue inequality increased.
- "Building a blue Texas." By John Nichols. *Nation*, December 18/25, 2017, pp. 12-15.
  Speculates on the future of the Democratic Party in Texas and examines the revival of progressive-populist politics in the state.
- "The glut economy." By Lawrence Wright. *New Yorker*, January 1, 2018, pp. 42-50, 52-53.
  Examines the history of boom and bust in the Texas energy industry and the role the industry currently plays in the Texas economy. Discusses the industrialization of communities and environmental concerns in areas of intensive drilling.
  See: https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/01/01/the-dark-bounty-of-texas-oil
- "Industry insights: innovations put sustainable water systems in reach." By Frank Zammataro. *Opflow*, December 2017, pp. 6-7.
  Explores how renewable energy, conservation, and efficiency can provide a new vision for United States water operations.
- "Industry and government partner to secure the grid." By Nidhi Chaudhry. *Public Power*, November/December 2017, pp. 12-17.
  Argues that, with the increasing complexity of the electric grid, it has become more critical for coordinated efforts across the industry and with federal agencies to appropriately respond to growing threats. Mentions disaster preparedness in Houston prior to Hurricane Harvey.
  See: https://www.publicpower.org/periodical/article/industry-and-government-partner-secure-grid
- "New, higher tolls for 2018." By Elaine S. Povich. *Stateline (Pew Charitable Trusts)*, January 9, 2018, pp. 1-6.
  Reports the lack of funding from gas taxes and the growing popularity of fuel-efficient cars means more states are likely to impose tolls on "free" roads or build more toll-only lanes in 2018.
  See: http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2018/01/09/new-higher-tolls-for-2018
- "Big changes coming for Texas Family Code in 2018." By Kris Balekian Hayes. *Texas Lawyer*, January 2018, pp. 34-36.
  Points out upcoming changes to Texas child support laws, enacted by SB550, 84th Legislature, R.S.
- "Same-sex common law marriage." By Jeff Anderson. *Texas Lawyer*, January 2018, pp. 26, 28-29.
  Addresses whether the United States Supreme Court decision that legalized same-sex marriage can be applied retroactively to same-sex couples married informally through common-law before the date of enactment, June 26, 2015.
- "New report finds — surprise — indigent defense attorneys shouldn't be under the control of the state prison system." By Michael Barajas. *Texas Observer*, January 11, 2018, pp. 1-3.
  Highlights a recent report by the State Bar of Texas which suggests that the State Counsel for Offenders suffers from a conflict of interest between its mission and its position as an office within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.
  Report at: http://www.voiceforthedefenseonline.com/story/review-operations-state-counsel-offenders
  See: https://www.texasobserver.org/new-report-finds-surprise-indigent-defense-attorneys-shouldnt-be-under-the-control-of-the-state-prison-system/

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