

Current Articles & Research Resources, April 23

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

- Examine [incarceration rates](#) of the illegal immigrant population. (Cato Institute, April 21, 2020)
- Read about legal actions relating to [state power](#) to restrict people's activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. (American Bar Association, April 22, 2020)
- Explore Americans' attitudes about whether [location tracking](#) via cellphones would help limit the spread of COVID-19. (Pew Research Center, April 16, 2020)
- Consider ways to improve your [mental health](#). (Medline Plus, April 16, 2020)

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

- 20.04.50 / "PPP postmortem: What worked, what needs to change according to Austin bankers." By Paul Thompson. *Austin Business Journal*, April 17, 2020, pp. 1-3.
Discusses problems associated with the rollout of the United States Small Business Administration's Paycheck Protection Program [PPP], designed to help small businesses hurt by COVID-19. Points out changes Austin community bankers want to see from the PPP in the future.
- 20.04.51 / "[Foster parent standing and intervention in CPS \[Child Protective Services\] litigation: The history and the impact of Texas's 2017 amendment.](#)" By Stephen Carl. *Baylor Law Review*, Fall 2019, pp. 673-701 (Note length).
Provides a history of the ability of foster parents to be involved in court proceedings related to their foster children, including the creation and subsequent revisions of the Texas Family Code related to suits affecting the parent-child relationship [SAPCR]. Argues [HB1410](#), 85th Legislature was originally intended to give foster parents more influence to intervene in CPS litigation, but amendments to the bill actually put greater restrictions on foster parent involvement and hinder the court in determining the best interests of the child.
- 20.04.52 / "[States need significantly more fiscal relief to slow the emerging deep recession.](#)" By Elizabeth McNichol, Michael Leachman, and Joshua Marshall. *Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*, April 14, 2020, pp. 1-22.
Estimates state governments may face more than \$500 billion in budget shortfalls due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Argues Congress should provide additional Medicaid funding and flexible fiscal relief to states, which face increasing pressure from public health costs, unemployment insurance claims, and plummeting tax revenues.
- 20.04.53 / "[COVID-19 models vary widely. What that means for leaders under pressure.](#)" By Christa Case Bryant. *Christian Science Monitor*, April 9, 2020, pp. 1-8.
Explains divergent models of the COVID-19 pandemic are due to uncertainty

around key questions about this virus's behavior and the wide-ranging variations seen in mitigation measures. Suggests the scientific community and government officials can work together on developing useful models.

- 20.04.54 / "Fairness in the age of Betsy DeVos." By Eric Kelderman. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 3, 2020, pp. 1-4.
Highlights a [lawsuit](#) filed by Rob Armour against the United States Department of Education for refusing his application for student loan forgiveness.
- 20.04.55 / "[Families in limbo: Coronavirus hobbles reunifications from foster care.](#)" By Jeremy Loudonback and John Kelly. *Chronicle of Social Change*, April 16, 2020, pp. 1-11.
Explores the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on family reunification and child welfare agencies. Discusses the emergency orders of the Supreme Court of Texas suspending foster care reunification and quotes dependency court judge Darlene Byrne.
- 20.04.56 / "[Saving small businesses?](#)" By Allison Schrager. *City Journal (Manhattan Institute)*, April 17, 2020, pp. 1-3.
Suggests unprecedented government subsidies could keep many small businesses afloat, but since many small businesses were struggling before the COVID-19 pandemic, the outlook for their recovery is uncertain.
- 20.04.57 / "The uncertain path ahead." By Evan Hoopfer. *Dallas Business Journal*, April 17, 2020, pp. 13-27.
Discusses Texas Central's proposed high-speed rail route between Dallas and Houston, opposition from rural landowners, and how the coronavirus affects project financing. Points out key players and the economic impact for Ellis County.
- 20.04.58 / "Ructions in the oil market: Upside down." *Economist*, April 11th-17th, 2020, pp. 53-54.
Reports that an unprecedented plunge in demand could upend the oil industry and bring about a structural change in the consumption of crude oil.
- 20.04.59 / "[COVID-19 models: Can they tell us what we want to know?](#)" By Josh Mchaud, Jennifer Kates, and Larry Levitt. *Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation*, April 16, 2020, pp. 1-4.
Discusses the usefulness and the limitations of models for describing and forecasting COVID-19 and for understanding the effects of policy responses. Describes and provides links to forecast and projection models currently in use in the United States.
- 20.04.60 / "[State options to shore up revenues and improve tax codes amid pandemic.](#)" By Dylan Grundman and Meg Wiehe. *Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy*, April 2020, pp. 1-11.
Describes possible state tax policy responses to the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of corporate income taxes, sales and consumption taxes, and local revenue options. Discusses the pandemic's disproportionate impact on people of color and low-income workers, exposing longstanding structural problems in state and local tax systems.
- 20.04.61 / "[COVID and education finance: Acting during the impending fiscal downturn.](#)" By Nathan Barret. *National Alliance for Public Charter Schools*, April 2020, pp. 1-6.
Examines how charter schools may be fiscally affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Offers steps that states and charter schools can take to prepare for an economic downturn that could impact school budgets for years.
- 20.04.62 / "[State and local government contributions to statewide pension](#)

plans: FY 18." *National Association of State Retirement Administrators*, April 2020, pp. 1-13.

Describes how employer contributions for state and local government pension benefits are determined and charts trends in employer contributions for fiscal years 2001 through 2018. Includes data for the Teacher Retirement System of Texas, Employees Retirement System of Texas, Texas County and District Retirement System, and Texas Municipal Retirement System.

- 20.04.63 / "Blockbuster Railroad Commission oil hearing offers more questions than answers." By Jessica Corso. *San Antonio Business Journal*, April 15, 2020, pp. 1-2.

Discusses a recent Railroad Commission of Texas meeting, wherein commissioners debated whether to cut Texas oil production in order to boost prices.

- 20.04.64 / "Antibody tests for the coronavirus may not change everything." By Smriti Mallapaty. *Scientific American*, April 20, 2020, pp. 1-7.

Explores whether antibody testing during the COVID-19 pandemic could be a key component of lifting stay-at-home orders and allowing businesses to reopen.

Cautions that the presence of antibodies does not necessarily indicate immunity to the coronavirus.

- 20.04.65 / "Is climate change denial thawing in Texas?" By Christopher Hooks. *Texas Monthly*, April 2020, pp. 1-7.

Discusses recent statements by oil industry leaders and Texas Congressman Dan Crenshaw related to climate change and renewable energy. Reports how environmental issues have become a concern for many young Republicans.

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