

Current Articles & Research Resources, October 3

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

- Track [traffic safety laws](#) state by state. (National Conference of State Legislatures, September 18, 2019)
- Compare [prescription drug prices](#) in the U.S. to prescription drug prices in other countries. (U.S. House Ways & Means Committee, September 2019)
- Read about federal [funding](#) designated for reimbursing Texas health care providers for charity care. (Texas Health and Human Services Commission, October 1, 2019)
- Explore free access to [case law](#). (Harvard Law School, ©2019)

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

- "New federal loan-forgiveness program still rejects 99% of applicants." By Michael Vasquez. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 20, 2019, p. A21. Highlights problems with the United States Department of Education's [college loan forgiveness program](#) for individuals going into public service.
- "Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac: Home truths." *Economist*, September 14th-20th, 2019, pp. 67-68. Discusses United States Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin's plan to [reform the federal housing finance system](#).
- "[Fiscal highlights from the 86th Legislature: Legislative session tackled public education, property taxes](#)." By Ramona Reeves. *Fiscal Notes*, September 2019, pp. 1, 3-5. Provides an overview of the 2020-2021 state budget and details legislation passed by the 86th Legislature on school finance ([HB3](#)), local property taxes ([SB2](#)), teacher retirement ([SB500](#) and [SB12](#)), online sales taxes ([HB1525](#) and [HB2153](#)), and investment of the Rainy Day Fund into the Legacy Fund ([SB69](#)).
- "The 'green rush,' CBD businesses flourishing under new law." By Neetish Basnet. *Fort Worth Business Press*, September 16-22, 2019, pp. 26-27. Discusses the new industrial hemp law and its impact on businesses in Texas. Quotes Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller.
- "[Serving rural America: Health insurance providers at work](#)." *Internet Resource*, September 2019, pp. 1-6. Presents five case studies featuring health insurance providers' various approaches to delivering quality health care in rural America, while addressing the problem of rural hospital closings and mergers.
- "[Toolkit: State strategies to support older adults aging in place in rural areas](#)." By Neva Kaye and Kristina Long. *Internet Resource*, September 2019, pp. 1-23. Provides examples of strategies states are using to support aging in place for

older adults in rural areas. Highlights [SB670](#), 86th Legislature, and [SB1107](#), 85th Legislature, R.S., as examples of legislation removing the barriers to the use of telehealth and telemedicine.

- "Federalism as an antidote to polarization over health care policy." By Stuart M Butler. *JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association)*, September 24, 2019, pp. 1131-1132.
 Recounts how federalism historically has helped to resolve policy impasses by allowing states to opt in —or out —with regard to disputed programs such as welfare, Medicaid, and the *Affordable Care Act*.
- "Understanding *Wayfair*: A user-friendly guide to the biggest state tax case in 30 years." By Rick Najjar and Ted Kontopoulos. *Journal of MultiState Taxation and Incentives*, October 2019, pp. 6-17.
 Discusses the fundamental concepts and state tax ramifications of [South Dakota v. Wayfair](#), in which the United States Supreme Court held that physical presence is no longer required for sales tax collection on remote or online sellers. Addresses textualism versus intentionalism in enactment of state tax statutes, substantial nexus, and the greater importance of due process.
- "The new trustbusters are coming for big tech." By Thomas Hazlett. *Reason*, October 2019, pp. 20-27.
 Considers the economic school of thought known as "new structuralism," or "hipster antitrust," which advocates for regulation and antitrust action. Argues "nondiscrimination" regulations aimed at providing equal access favor legacy technologies at the expense of startups and innovation and do not protect consumers as intended.
- "[The potential pitfalls of combating surprise billing](#); [Comment](#)." By Ike Brannon, David A. Hyman, Benedic Ippolito, and David Kemp. *Regulation (CATO Institute)*, Fall 2019, pp. 40-47.
 Discusses three plans Congress is considering to address surprise medical billing: benchmarking payments, mandated in-network guarantee, and independent dispute resolution [IDR]. Suggests IDR is the best mechanism to limit surprise bills, while commentators believe a contract-based approach would outperform IDR.
- "[Texas K-12 education spending set to rise, but who will pay?](#)" By Jason Saving. *Southwest Economy (Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas)*, Third Quarter 2019, pp. 17-21.
 Comments on the education reform package passed by the 86th Legislature ([HB3](#), [SB2](#)). Examines why the latest school finance fix may not fully provide a long-term solution to meeting local school districts' needs.
- "School finance: Moving mountains." By Daniel Thatcher. *State Legislatures*, September/October 2019, pp. 17-19.
 Draws lessons from the experiences of states that successfully updated or replaced their school funding formulas.
- "[Bridge to nowhere](#)." By Gus Bova. *Texas Observer*, September-October 2019, pp. 26-31.
 Investigates three companies' plans to build liquefied natural gas [LNG] facilities in South Texas and the local communities' opposition to them. Argues the proposed construction site for the Rio Grande Valley LNG plants will result in the destruction of fragile ecosystems and will pose health and safety risks for nearby residents. Mentions Senator Eddie Lucio and Representative Alex Dominguez.
- "Inside the dangerous rise of JUUL." By Jamie Ducharme. *Time*, September 30, 2019, pp. 40-47.

Profiles e-cigarette maker Juul, a mostly unregulated company that has been linked to the sharp rise in teenage and young adult vaping and nicotine addiction.

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