

Current Articles & Research Resources, March 15

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

- Explore how **women** contribute to the Texas economy. (Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, March 8, 2018)
- Consider the implications of relying on inexpensive or disposable **consumer goods**. (The Week, March 7, 2018)
- See what **apps** might come in handy for your next outdoor adventure. (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, accessed March 14, 2018)
- Read about the costs of **elevating a home** to meet floodplain regulations. (Texas Tribune, March 14, 2018)

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

- "Number crunchers call the shots." By Mke Cronin. *Austin Business Journal*, February 16, 2018, pp. 4-5.
Discusses the nationwide shortage of qualified accountants, compliance officers, and other professionals. Comments on how Austin salaries compare to national salaries.
- "A higher gas tax won't fix U.S. roads." By Mark Niquette. *Bloomberg Businessweek*, March 5, 2018, pp. 48-49.
Examines the proposed White House infrastructure plan and its costs. Questions whether a gas tax increase would provide enough funding as the number of electric and hybrid cars on the roads increases.
- "Living on the edges." By Henry Gass. *Christian Science Monitor*, February 26, 2018, pp. 26-32.
Reviews the history of colonias in Texas and explains this type of housing is providing home ownership opportunities to the poor who might normally be locked out of the housing market. Examines regulations and laws related to colonias.
Related information
at: <https://texasattorneygeneral.gov/cpd/historical-laws-colonias>
- "Era of deregulation." By Eric Kelderman. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 9, 2018, pp. B20, B22.
Discusses United States Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos's undoing of regulations and guidelines issued under President Obama. Discusses the potential reauthorization of the *Higher Education Act*, currently before Congress, as a major vehicle for changing higher education policy.
- "American business and the NRA: outgunned?" *Economist*, March 3rd-9th, 2018, pp. 57-58.
Considers whether companies can influence gun control policies, as the latest school shooting in Florida has activists and angry customers pressuring companies

to take a stand against the National Rifle Association [NRA].

- "Autonomous vehicles: reinventing wheels." *Economist*, March 3, 2018, pp. 1, 3-12.
Presents a special report on autonomous vehicles [AVS]. Considers the implications of AVS for personal mobility, for the car industry, for society, and for policymakers.
- "Science fiction or science fact?" By Paul K. Harral. *Fort Worth Business Press*, Feb. 26-March 4, 2018, pp. 14, 16.
Explores business and scientific aspects of the "Texas T-bone" hyperloop proposition to improve transportation and environmental concerns involved with travel and shipping in Texas.
- "Legal challenges to state drug pricing laws." By Theodore T. Lee, Aaron S. Kesselheim, and Amy Kapczynski. *JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association)*, March 6, 2018, pp. 865-866.
Examines Maryland's and Nevada's laws intended to help manage and make more transparent pharmaceutical prices, and the ensuing legal challenges by the pharmaceutical industry. Notes that federal courts have rejected the industry's challenges and encourages other states to take similar action to restrain drug pricing and encourage transparency.
- "Earning it: why work requirements don't work." By Ed Dolan. *Milken Institute Review*, First Quarter 2018, pp. 38-45.
Analyzes the use of work requirements in safety net programs like Temporary Assistance to Needy Families [TANF], the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program [SNAP], and potentially Medicaid. Discusses research evidence showing a "feeble effect" on employment and household income, from a set of controlled experiments done in conjunction with the welfare reforms of the 1990s.
- "The empire of everything." By Stacy Mitchell. *Nation*, March 12, 2018, pp. 22-27, 33.
Describes Amazon's expansion from online retailer to developer of an entirely new commercial infrastructure, and the resulting "corporate concentration" of wealth and power, the economic shift in "left-behind" local areas, and antitrust considerations.
- "The travel ban's road to the SCOTUS." By Marcia Coyle and Cogan Schneier. *National Law Journal*, March 2018, pp. 11-14.
Reviews the Trump administration's efforts to suspend the entry of foreign nationals from seven predominantly Muslim nations. Provides a quick look at the travel ban's path to the Supreme Court of the United States [SCOTUS]. Notes the Court is scheduled to hear oral arguments on the third version of the ban in April.
- "Shutting down scams 2017: consumers protected." By Sheri Givens. *Public Utilities Fortnightly*, February 2018, pp. 71-72.
Discusses the United Utilities Against Scams' [UUAS] efforts during the past year aimed at informing and protecting consumers from scams.
- "America's war on pain pills is killing addicts and leaving patients in agony." By Jacob Sullum. *Reason*, April 2018, pp. 18-29.
Argues the crackdown on prescription opioids adversely affects legitimate patients and forces non-medical users into the black market.
- "Ready or not." By Nina Williams-Mbengue. *State Legislatures*, March 2018, pp. 10-13.
Discusses how some state legislators are preparing youth to be on their own as they transition out of foster care.
- "Report to the citizens of Texas, fiscal 2017, Sept. 1, 2016 - Aug. 31,

2017." *Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, March 6, 2018*, pp. 1-4.

Highlights State of Texas financial information for fiscal year 2017 in a concise format, including business and job growth, state performance measures, employment and economic outlook, challenges posed by Hurricane Harvey, and a profile of the Austin, San Marcos, and San Antonio metro areas.

- "Why is the GOP touting new gun restrictions after Parkland? Follow the money." By Philip Elliott and W.J. Hennigan. *Time*, March 12, 2018, pp. 15-17. Suggests there is monetary incentive for Republicans' willingness to discuss modest new gun restrictions. Notes that firearms sales have fallen during the Trump administration, and argues the gun industry may benefit from a discussion of gun control measures.

The Legislative Reference Library compiles this weekly annotated list of Current Articles of interest to the legislative community. Professional librarians review and select articles from more than 300 periodicals, including public policy journals, specialized industry periodicals, news magazines, and state agency publications. Members of the Texas legislative community may request articles [using our online form](#).