

## Current Articles & Research Resources, February 6

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

- Explore [state roles](#) in protecting the electric grids. (National Conference of State Legislatures, January 24, 2020)
- Review a list of local fire departments that offer [smoke alarm](#) programs. (State Fire Marshal, updated January 27, 2020)
- Consider the mortality consequences of the [opioid epidemic](#). (Cato Institute, January 15, 2020)
- Find a lot of [fact sheets](#) about utilities in Texas. (Public Utility Commission of Texas, accessed February 5, 2020)

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

- 20.02.01 / "Online governance: A court of public opinions." *Economist*, February 1st-7th, 2020, p. 57.  
Discusses Facebook's draft of the [bylaws](#) that will govern the company's oversight board, with details on the board's structure and decision-making authority.
- 20.02.02 / "The politics of gender: Changing states." *Economist*, February 1st-7th, 2020, pp. 21-22.  
Explains why blanket bans on medical interventions for transgender children are likely to be counterproductive and suggests a better approach. Mentions Senator Ted Cruz and the James Younger custody case in Dallas County.
- 20.02.03 / "[2019 county election website review](#)." By League of Women Voters of Texas. *Internet Resource*, November 2019, pp. 1-26 (Note Length).  
Evaluates Texas county websites for accessibility and security of voting and election information in light of new Texas election laws, [HB933](#) and [HB1241](#), 86th Legislature. Provides best practices for providing accurate election information online.
- 20.02.04 / "Malpractice liability and quality of care." By William M Sage and Kristen Underhill. *JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association)*, January 28, 2020, pp. 315-317.  
Suggests that greater tort liability was not associated with improved quality of patient care, based on a systematic review of studies published between 1990 and 2019.
- 20.02.05 / "[Who's paying now? The explicit and implicit costs of the current early care and education system](#)." By Elise Gould and Hunter Blair. *Policy Report (Economic Policy Institute)*, January 15, 2020, pp. 1-12.  
Examines the chronic underfunding and hidden costs of the current early care and education [ECE] system, including forgone parental income and the underpayment of ECE teachers.
- 20.02.06 / "Electrify everything? Heat and light in deep decarbonization

policies." By Hal Nelson. *Public Utilities Fortnightly*, January 2020, pp. 62-66. Considers two essential questions about decarbonization policies that share the common element of electrification of transport and buildings. Provides various examples.

- 20.02.07 / "Grid modernization: State policies." By Kristy Hartman, et al. *Public Utilities Fortnightly*, January 2020, pp. 68-71. Discusses the National Conference of State Legislatures' [NCSL] work and resources relating to utilities. Refers to NCSL's recent report, [Modernizing the Electric Grid: State Role and Policy Options](#).
- 20.02.08 / "Sex offender laws are broken. These women are working to fix them." By Hallie Lieberman. *Reason*, February 2020, pp. 42-48. Reviews the history of laws relating to sex offenders and sex offender registries. Highlights the work of various reform groups seeking changes to these laws.
- 20.02.09 / "Changes & opportunities in agriculture." By David M Kohl. *Texas Banking*, February 2020, pp. 8-11. Looks at economic cycles in the agricultural industry, including "green shoots," or positive industry developments, such as value-added agricultural services and the emergence of younger farmers and ranchers.
- 20.02.10 / "[Employee monitoring: An overview of technologies, treatment, and best practices](#)." By Andrew Mlam Jones. *Texas Bar Journal*, February 2020, pp. 98-100. Considers technological and legal developments regarding employee monitoring. Points out circumstances that support the monitoring of employees.
- 20.02.11 / "The engineer will see you now." By Jason Heid. *Texas Monthly*, February 2020, pp. 66-72. Profiles the development and inaugural class of [EnMed](#), a collaboration between Houston Methodist and Texas A&M University in which future graduates will earn an M.D. and a master's degree in engineering. Discusses the potential benefits of a multi-discipline medical education.
- 20.02.12 / "Feeding a changing world." By Alana Semuels. *Time*, February 3, 2020, pp. 66-71. Explores the future of food tech and the startup companies that are creating new methods of food production to counter the negative impact the current agricultural system is having on the environment. Addresses the benefits of planet-friendly foods and farming, as well as the obstacles to these alternatives.

*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](#).*