

Greetings:

Below is the Policy News Update for the month of May 2015. We hope you find the articles informative and help support your work going forward. Please continue to share your thoughts on how we can improve this policy scan to make it more useful for your office.

Key Article Highlights:

The Real Reason Disparities Exist in Education Funding | Governing | By Mary Ellen McIntire | May 6, 2015

What's the right amount to spend on schools to get the best outcomes? The average spending per student in school districts around the country decreased in 2011 -- the latest year that data is available -- and began years of declining expenditures, according to an April report on K-12 funding by State Policy Reports.

<http://www.governing.com/topics/education/gov-education-funding-lawsuits-kansas.html>

Expanding Opportunity through Infrastructure Jobs | Brookings Institute | By Joseph Kane & Robert Puentes | May 7, 2015

The need to invest in U.S. infrastructure has never been clearer, making it all the more critical to take a fresh look at infrastructure's importance to the labor market, both to drive long-lasting growth and to expand economic opportunity across the entire workforce—two elements often missing from the current narrative on infrastructure and jobs.

<http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports2/2015/05/07-opportunity-infrastructure-jobs-kane-puentes>

How to Fix a Broken Police Department | The Atlantic | By Alana Semuels | May 28, 2015

There's inequality throughout the country still, and there's still police brutality and a growing problem with incarceration. But in Cincinnati, a diverse group of people, including police officers and citizens, are trying to understand one another. That's led to fewer arrests, fewer people in jail, less crime, and more dialogue between police and the community that pays them to do their job. For a great many other cities, Cincinnati's imperfect present provides a glimpse of a much better future.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/05/cincinnati-police-reform/393797/>

Bounce Forward: Urban Resilience in the Era of Climate Change | Island Press and the Kresge Foundation

A new report by the Island Press Urban Resilience Project offers a framework for thinking about how U.S. cities can thrive in turbulent times brought on by the impacts of climate change. While climate change is a global problem, its effects are – and increasingly will be – felt locally in communities across

the United States and around the globe. State and federal actions are essential, but cities have a critical role to play in mitigating climate change and helping society prepare for the impacts that are now too late to prevent.

<http://kresge.org/sites/default/files/Bounce-Forward-Urban-Resilience-in-Era-of-Climate-Change-2015.pdf>

Taking Care of Our Own | New Republic | By Lauren Sandler | May 2015

While the United States is the only advanced country that does not offer paid family leave, the political climate is changing. The public, businesses, and government officials are coming out in favor of it, supported by state experiments with paid family leave that show it has beneficial effects. President Obama has made it a priority, and Hillary Clinton seems to support it as well.

http://www.newrepublic.com/article/121822/paid-leave-goes-progressive-pipe-dream-political-reality?utm_content=buffer605b8&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer

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Will You ‘Please Touch the Art’ in Brooklyn Bridge Park? | Harvard Government Innovators Network | May 19, 2015

Danish artist Jeppe Hein unveiled his 1.3-mile-long installation in Brooklyn Bridge Park on Sunday, and man, did people take his invitation to "Please Touch the Art" to heart. Curated by the Public Art Fund, the 18 pieces in Hein's work are scattered over almost the entire length of the park, from the lawn in Empire-Fulton in shadow of the Brooklyn Bridge all the way to Swing Valley at Pier 6.

<http://www.innovations.harvard.edu/will-you-please-touch-art-brooklyn-bridge-park>

Libraries Introduce 3D Printers to Great Acclaim | National Association of Counties | By Sarah A. Foote | May 18, 2015

In the past few years, county- county-funded public libraries across the U.S. have begun offering three-dimensional printing as a public service and yet another resource for library users. 3D printers can be used to create solid objects — anything from action figures to functional weaponry, but the libraries have guidelines for what can be printed.

<http://www.naco.org/newsroom/countynews/Current%20Issue/5-18-2015/Pages/3D.aspx>

NHA “Student Docents” Will Guide Tour of Public Art | The Hour | By Francis Carr Jr. | May 24, 2015

Students in the Norwalk Housing Authority After School Program are designing a guided tour of public art sites in South Norwalk. On May 30, the students will lead members of the public on a walk to public sculptures, murals and installations in South Norwalk, providing information about the art that may not be known to the average passerby.

http://www.thehour.com/arts_life/nha-student-docents-will-guide-tour-of-public-art/article_75f0e8d4-ce3d-5277-b7e7-4e967ca828ab.html

Economic Development and Job Creation

Millennials Want a Work-life Balance. Their Bosses Just Don't Get Why. | Washington Post | By Brigid Schulte | May 5, 2015

Workers around the globe have been finding it harder to juggle the demands of work and the rest of life in the past five years. Professional workers in companies that shed employees in the Great Recession are still doing the work of two or more people and working longer hours. Salaries have stagnated, and costs continue to rise, according to a new survey of nearly 10,000 workers in eight countries by Ernst & Young's Global Generations Research.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/millennials-want-a-work-life-balance-their-bosses-just-dont-get-why/2015/05/05/1859369e-f376-11e4-84a6-6d7c67c50db0_story.html

Good News: U.S. Economy Adds 223,000 Jobs | CNN Money | By Patrick Gillespie | May 8, 2015

The U.S. added 223,000 jobs in April, a healthy pick up after a disappointing March and about in line with what economists surveyed by CNNMoney projected. April's strong job gains reflect a trend the country saw last year: job growth cooling in the winter months, then gaining momentum into the spring.

<http://money.cnn.com/2015/05/08/news/economy/april-jobs-report-economy-pick-up/index.html?iid=Lead>

Los Angeles Lifts Its Minimum Wage to \$15 Per Hour | The New York Times | By Jennifer Medina and Noam Scheiber | May 19, 2015

The nation's second -largest city voted Tuesday to increase its minimum wage from \$9 an hour to \$15 an hour by 2020, in what perhaps the most significant victory so far for labor groups and their allies who are engaged in a national push to raise the minimum wage.

http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/20/us/los-angeles-expected-to-raise-minimum-wage-to-15-an-hour.html?smid=tw-nytimes&_r=1

L.A. Firms See Peril in Tying Minimum Wage Increases to Inflation | Los Angeles Times | By Tiffany Hsu and Andrew Khouri | May 21, 2015

A little-debated provision of the Los Angeles minimum wage hike — future increases tied to inflation — may produce its most profound and controversial consequences over the long term. The requirement aims to ensure that wages keep pace with cost-of-living increases, but business advocates say it could cripple entrepreneurs' ability to adjust wages to unpredictable economic conditions — effectively enshrining automatic annual layoffs when times get tough.

<http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-minimum-wage-inflation-20150521-story.html>

America's Aging Population Is Bad for Women's Careers | The Atlantic | By Gillian B. White | May 21, 2015

While parental leave policies have begun to get a lot of attention, there's a growing need for policies that help family caregivers in a broad spectrum of circumstances. And as the population ages, flexible benefits that allow workers to take time away to care for their aging parents and relatives will become more and more important. By 2030, about 20 percent of the population will be senior citizens. And age-related infirmities can often come up suddenly—for instance a fall or a stroke—leaving families scrambling both financially and logistically.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/05/americas-aging-population-is-bad-news-for-womens-careers/393779/>

4 Takeaways from New Census Population Data on Cities | Governing | By Mike Maciag | May 21, 2015

The Census Bureau released new population estimates Thursday, showing where cities stand in attracting and retaining residents.

<http://www.governing.com/topics/urban/gov-2014-city-population-census-estimates-released.html>

When Family-Friendly Policies Backfire | The New York Times | By Claire Cain Miller | May 26, 2015

Family-friendly policies can help parents balance jobs and responsibilities at home, and go a long way toward making it possible for women with children to remain in the work force. But these policies often have unintended consequences.

http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/26/upshot/when-family-friendly-policies-backfire.html?_r=0&abt=0002&abg=1

The Key to Economic Growth Is Building a Care Grid | New America | May 1, 2015

Care is no “soft” issue, argued panelists at New America's annual conference. All of us, at some point in our lives, will either provide or require care. It's the infrastructure that powers our entire economy by allowing all working professionals to do their jobs secure in the knowledge that their children or aging parents are with caregivers whose work has equal value to theirs.

<http://www.newamerica.org/new-america/the-key-to-economic-growth-is-building-a-care-grid/>

One Million Missing Entrepreneurs | Center for American Progress | By Adam Hersh and Jennifer Erickson | May 21, 2015

New research shows that from 2002 to 2008, the percentage of business-owner households dropped so considerably that the U.S. economy had 1 million fewer entrepreneurs than it would have had if it had kept pace from the 1990s. In the 2000s—as the middle class faced increased pressures and the nation experienced rising inequality—fewer people took the leap to become entrepreneurs, and more entrepreneurs closed down shop for other forms of employment.

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/report/2015/05/21/111890/1-million-missing-entrepreneurs/>

Education

Altschool Raises \$100M From Founders Fund, Zuckerberg To Scale a Massive Network of Schools Around Personalized Learning | TechCrunch | By Kim-Mai Cutler | May 4, 2015

The move will mark the company's shift from proving out its ideas around personalized education through building its own schools to sharing or licensing its individualized learning model with other educators that want to adopt its approach. It's an ambitious and major test as to whether Altschool's model can be done affordably and accessibly at scale in other parts of the country.

<http://techcrunch.com/2015/05/04/altschool-raises-100m-from-founders-fund-zuckerberg-to-scale-a-massive-network-of-schools-around-personalized-learning/>

Why Civil Rights Groups Say Parents Who Opt Out of Tests Are Hurting Kids | Washington Post | By Emma Brown | May 5, 2015

A dozen civil rights groups issued a statement Tuesday criticizing the growing movement of parents who refuse to allow their children to take standardized tests. By removing an increasing number of students from the testing pool, the so-called opt-out movement skews test score data, the groups argued, making it impossible to gauge whether persistent achievement gaps are narrowing.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/why-civil-rights-groups-say-parents-who-opt-out-of-tests-are-hurting-kids/2015/05/05/59884b9a-f32c-11e4-bcc4-e8141e5eb0c9_story.html

School Districts Embrace Business Model of Data Collection | NY Times | By Motoko Rich | May 11, 2015

Data has become a dirty word in some education circles, seen as a proxy for an obsessive focus on tracking standardized test scores. But some school districts, taking a cue from the business world, are fully embracing metrics, recording and analyzing every scrap of information related to school operations.

http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/12/us/school-districts-embrace-business-model-of-data-collection.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=first-column-region®ion=top-news&WT.nav=top-news&_r=0

America's Lacking Language Skills | The Atlantic | By Amelia Friedman | May 11, 2015

Each year as national budget priorities are determined, language education is losing out—cuts have been made to funding for such instruction, including Title VI grants and the Foreign Language Assistance Program. And the number of language enrollments in higher education in the U.S. declined by more than 111,000 spots between 2009 and 2013—the first drop since 1995.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/05/filling-americas-language-education-potholes/392876/>

U.S. Public Schools Report Fewer Violent Incidents | The Washington Post | By Emma Brown | May 21, 2015

The rate of violent incidents in the nation's public schools fell between the 2009-2010 and 2013-2014 school years, a period in which security measures such as surveillance cameras became more widespread, according to new federal data released Thursday.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/us-public-schools-report-fewer-violent-incidents-more-security/2015/05/20/283bb2ca-ff2f-11e4-8b6c-0dcce21e223d_story.html

Beyond College Rankings | Brookings Institute | By Jonathan Rothwell and Siddharth Kukarni | April 29, 2015

Drawing on a variety of government and private data sources, this report presents a provisional analysis of college value-added with respect to the economic success of the college's graduates. This is not an attempt to measure how much alumni earnings increase compared to forgoing a postsecondary education. Rather, as defined here, a college's value-added measures the difference between actual alumni outcomes (like salaries) and predicted outcomes for institutions with similar characteristics and students.

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Research/Files/Reports/2015/04/29-college-value-add/BMPP_CollegeValueAdded.pdf?la=en

Environment and Sustainability

Strategies Funded to Help Boston Airport Guard Against Effects of Climate Change | NY Times | By Jess Bidgood | May 4, 2015

Officials at Boston Logan International Airport have announced a broad multimillion-dollar plan to make the airport, which is almost surrounded by water, more environmentally sustainable and resilient in the face of climate change. A growing number of airports have begun to address the risks associated with climate change.

http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/05/us/strategies-to-help-bostons-logan-airport-guard-against-climate-change-effects-are-funded.html?ref=us&_r=0

Winter Gardens Sprouting in New Boston Buildings | Boston Globe | By Jay Fitzgerald | May 5, 2015

Prodded by tenants, residents, and city officials to create more parks and open spaces, developers are resurrecting an old architectural idea to beautify new buildings: "winter gardens." If these spaces prove

to be genuinely attractive and inviting to the public, Cambridge officials said, the city might encourage developers to incorporate similar winter gardens in future buildings.

<http://www.bostonglobe.com/business/2015/05/04/winter-gardens-trees-plants-and-sun-becoming-feature-new-boston-buildings/etlIMGllwM9vCgkxVTZTPHI/story.html#>

Philly Shares Design Secrets of Eco-Friendly Schoolyards | Next City | By Jenn Stanley | May 5, 2015

Hoping to inspire school districts and communities around the U.S. to green up asphalt play spaces — and provide tips and tools for making such improvements — this week, the Philadelphia-based Community Design Collaborative and the Philadelphia Water Department released a 44-page illustrated guide, “Transforming Philadelphia’s Schoolyards.”

<http://nextcity.org/daily/entry/new-book-eco-friendly-infrastructure-design-guide-philadelphia-water>

One City’s Trash Can Be Turned into Iowa Farm Tools | Next City | By Jenn Stanley | May 11, 2015

Cities have a lot of waste — and municipal recycling programs are costly. While some U.S. cities are still scrambling to separate plastics, others around the world are relying on innovative repurposing approaches to procurement.

<http://nextcity.org/daily/entry/repurposed-materials-cities-salvaged-materials-procurement>

Cities Give Alleys New Life | Governing | By Elizabeth Daigneau | May 2015

Cities like Nashville, Chicago, Los Angeles and Seattle are pioneering green alley projects, such as rain gardens, to create green infrastructure and promote sustainability. They are also making them livable open spaces for pedestrian, cyclist, and social use.

<http://www.governing.com/topics/urban/gov-urban-living-alleyways.html>

51 U.S. Cities Ranked for Energy Efficiency | Next City | By Marielle Mondon | May 21, 2015

Boston is leading the country when it comes to saving energy and implementing environmentally and economically sound policy, according to the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy. The city was one of 51 in the U.S. ranked for “energy efficiency efforts across five policy areas: local government operations, community-wide initiatives, buildings, energy and water utilities, and transportation.”

<http://nextcity.org/daily/entry/cities-rank-energy-efficient-policy-energy-waste>

A New P3 Model for Building Green Infrastructure | Governing | By Daniel C. Vock | May 27, 2015

Using a public-private partnership to build green infrastructure on such a large scale is novel in itself. But Maryland's Prince George's County is especially excited about the potential economic boost and other societal benefits the deal could bring to the region. Its partnership with Corvias Solutions includes incentives for all of those goals.

<http://www.governing.com/topics/transportation-infrastructure/gov-tapping-private-sector-build-green-infrastructure.html>

How We're Learning to Measure Progress on Sustainability | Governing | By Bog Graves | May 27, 2015

Los Angeles is leading the way in setting sustainability goals and communicating its progress through its Sustainable City pLAN dashboard, which debuted last month.

<http://www.governing.com/blogs/view/gov-measuring-sustainability-dashboards-los-angeles.html>

Finance

Are There Better Ways to Diagnose an Unhealthy City? | Next City | By Alexis Stevens | May 4, 2015

As the authors of a new book from the University of Toronto's Institute on Municipal Finance and Governance explain, credit ratings aren't the end-all of whether a city's finances are in good condition. *Is Your City Healthy? Measuring Fiscal Health* looks to carve out a more holistic understanding of the conditions, processes and institutional structures that influence fiscal health.

<http://nextcity.org/daily/entry/unhealthy-cities-budgets-fiscal-health>

Supreme Court Ruling on Maryland's Double Income Tax Could Impact Other States and Localities | Governing | By Liz Farmer | May 19, 2015

The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that Maryland's local tax on out-of-state income is unconstitutional and amounts to double taxation, a ruling that could impact more than a dozen other states with similar local taxes.

<http://www.governing.com/topics/finance/gov-supreme-court-maryland-income-tax.html>

Are Predatory Business Loans the Next Credit Crisis? | Governing | By Liz Farmer | May 2015

Unlike mortgage and payday lenders, the growing number of institutions that offer quick cash to small businesses are still largely unregulated. Chicago is the first trying to change that in two areas where observers say public policy changes could make a difference: education and transparency.

<http://www.governing.com/topics/finance/gov-predatory-business-loans-crisis.html>

Tax Amnesties Send Message to Delinquents: 'We Want You Back' | Stateline | By Susan Milligan | May 4, 2015

Cash-strapped states are looking to tax amnesty programs that give scofflaws a bit of a break on penalties and interest if they own up and pay up. The programs bring needed revenues to states struggling to balance their budgets and encourage taxpayers to get back into the system as law-abiding tax filers.

<http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2015/5/04/tax-amnesties-send-message-to-delinquents-we-want-you-back>

Health, Housing, and Opportunity

From Millenials to the Aging, Connected Health Brings Answers | Politico | By Brent Shafer | May 4, 2015

Since the passage of the Affordable Care Act, healthcare has become less about providing sick care and more about enabling a path to healthy living. Also driving change is the pressure of two generations – a technologically engaged and health conscious youth and a growing aging population – which is causing a paradigm shift in the way we think about healthcare delivery.

<http://www.politico.com/sponsor-content/2015/05/the-future-of-connected-health/>

Can States Improve Children's Health by Preventing Abuse and Neglect? | Brookings Institute | By Ron Haskins, Lawrence M. Berger, and Janet Currie | May 5, 2015

The federal government gives states far more money to support children who have been removed from their homes and placed in foster care than it gives them for prevention and treatment programs that could keep kids out of foster care in the first place. Congress has the opportunity to change the funding formula under Title IV of the Social Security Act.

<http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2015/05/05-child-health-foster-care-haskins>

Place Matters in Creating Paths Out of Poverty | The Aspen Institute | By Bill Bynum | May 11, 2015

Groundbreaking work from Harvard economists who analyzed income data of families who moved found that "every year of exposure to a better environment improves a child's chances of success." This is the first time economists have conclusive evidence that high poverty, racially segregated neighborhoods with large income disparities play a harmful role in the lives of the people who grow up in them.

<http://www.aspeninstitute.org/about/blog/place-matters-creating-paths-out-poverty>

Good Fortune, Dire Poverty, and Inequality in Baltimore: An American Story | Brookings Institute | By Alan Berube and Brad McDearman | May 11, 2015

The unrest in Baltimore has fostered nationwide discussion about the root causes of the tensions in the city's poor neighborhoods that led to an outbreak of riots and mass protests. While criminal justice policy and police-community relationships are arguably at the core of the present debate, the economic and social context in which those actions took shape matters greatly too.

<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/the-avenue/posts/2015/05/11-poverty-inequality-baltimore-berube-mcdearman>

The "Cadillac" Tax Will Soon Hit Many Cities and States | Brookings Institute | By Robert C. Pozen | May 12, 2015

Like any for-profit employer, any local government with 50 or more full-time employees (100 or more in 2015) must offer an ACA-compliant healthcare plan, or pay significant penalties. Moreover, under current law, the healthcare plans of many local governments will become subject in 2018 to the "Cadillac" tax – an excise tax on healthcare costs above specified annual amounts.

<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/health360/posts/2015/05/12-cadillac-tax-to-hit-cities-states-pozen>

The Simple Way One Tennessee Program Turns Foster Kids into Higher-Earning Adults | The New York Times | By Danielle Paquette | May 12, 2015

Researchers following young adults aging out of the foster care system in Tennessee found that youth receiving an extra year of attention through a state program called YVLifeSet had better employment and life outcomes.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2015/05/12/the-simple-way-one-tennessee-program-turns-foster-kids-into-higher-earning-adults/>

NYC Respite Centers Help Keep Mentally Ill Out of Hospitals | Kaiser Health News | By Christine Vestsal | May 15, 2015

New York City's Parachute NYC offers community-based respite centers to help people with mental illness receive assistance and stay out of hospitals. Patients receive more personalized care, and reduce the burden on emergency rooms and psychiatric hospitals.

<http://kaiserhealthnews.org/news/nyc-respite-centers-help-keep-mentally-ill-out-of-hospitals/>

Rise in Suicide by Black Children Surprises Researchers | The New York Times | By Sabrina Tavernise | May 18, 2015

The suicide rate among black children has nearly doubled since the early 1990s, while the rate for white children has declined, a new study has found, an unusual pattern that seemed to suggest something troubling was happening among some of the nation's most vulnerable citizens.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/19/health/suicide-rate-for-black-children-surged-in-2-decades-study-says.html?ref=health>

Ignoring the Penalty for Not Buying Health Insurance | The New York Times | By Margot Sanger-Katz | May 20, 2015

Fewer people than expected are signed up for health insurance during a special sign-up period, raising questions about whether the penalty will increase insurance sign-ups in coming years. While the penalty is currently low, it is set to increase in the future; combined with learning from past experience, behavioral economists say sign-up behavior will change in coming years.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/21/upshot/penalty-for-not-buying-health-insurance-might-be-too-light.html?ref=health&abt=0002&abg=1>

San Francisco May Subsidize Middle-class Apartments for First Time | The Business Journal – San Francisco | By Cory Weinberg | May 12, 2015

If voters approve Mayor Lee's \$250 million housing bond in November, they will unlock a stream of cash that the city will use to subsidize rental housing units for middle-class residents for the first time. The city already helps residents for down payments on for-sale homes – and there, of course, rent control on older buildings. But this would be the first program using public money for new rental units.

http://www.bizjournals.com/sanfrancisco/morning_call/2015/05/san-francisco-housing-bond-middle-class-apartments.html

States Rethink Asset Tests for People on Food Stamps | Governing | May 12, 2015

In the last few years, most states have stopped taking assets like retirement and education savings into account when deciding whether people qualify for aid. Pennsylvania became the 36th state last month to do away with asset limits for households on food stamps

<http://www.governing.com/topics/health-human-services/gov-states-rethink-asset-test-people-food-stamps.html>

Immigration

Growing African Immigrant Population Is Highly Educated, Underemployed | Stateline | By Teresa Wiltz | May 14, 2015

America has a rapidly growing population of black immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa, many of whom are highly educated and underemployed. Although a handful of states are attempting to help expats climb the economic ladder, many African immigrants face obstacles, including obtaining licenses that states require to work in educational, medical and other professions.

<http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2015/5/14/growing-african-immigrant-population-is-highly-educated-underemployed>

The Economic Benefits and Electoral Implications of DAPA | Center for American Progress | By Lizet Ocampo | May 19, 2015

Approved by president Obama six months ago, Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents was scheduled to begin implementation today. However, its implantation has been blocked by a lawsuit brought by Texas and other states. This article looks at the fiscal and economic benefits of DAPA, as well as its electoral implications.

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2015/05/19/113481/the-economic-benefits-and-electoral-implications-of-dapa/>

Asian Immigrants in the United States Today | Center for American Progress | By Sanam Malik | May 21, 2015

Over the past decade, more immigrants have come to the United States from Asia than from any other region in the world, making Asians the fastest growing immigrant population in the United States. These immigrants bring their diverse cultures, language skills, and different economic and demographic traits from various Asian countries and the Indian subcontinent.

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2015/05/21/113690/asian-immigrants-in-the-unites-states-today/>

Public Safety and Prisons

States Struggle to Pay for Police Body Cameras | Government Technology | By Jake Grovum | May 1, 2015

As the nationwide push intensifies for police to wear body cameras, states and cities have encountered one consistent roadblock to adopting the technology: the cost. In a survey of 40 police departments by the Police Executive Research Forum conducted last fall and released this year, nearly 40 percent of departments without body cameras cited cost as the primary barrier to using them.

<http://www.govtech.com/public-safety/States-Struggle-to-Pay-for-Police-Body-Cameras.html>

More Police Departments Headed to the Cloud | American City & County | By Michael Keating | May 4, 2015

The IACP poll shows 10 percent of responding departments are currently using cloud applications for crime reporting/analysis, mapping, and records management. Almost half of responding departments are planning or considering using those kinds of cloud-based apps in the next 2 years.

<http://americancityandcounty.com/gov-cloud/more-police-departments-headed-cloud>

Can America Have Fewer Prisoners without More Crime? | The Atlantic | By David Frum | May 11, 2015

Between 1991 and 2015, rates of criminal victimization dropped by half, with the most violent offenses—murder and rape—declining the most precipitously. An American citizen is less likely to be a victim of crime today than at any time since good records began in the 1970s. New York City is almost certainly safer today than at any time in its history. And the weird thing is that nobody quite knows why it all happened.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/05/can-america-reduce-its-prison-population-without-increasing-crime/392912/>

White House Launches Police Data Initiative | TIME | Associated Press | May 18, 2015

Building on the efforts of the Task Force on 21st Century Policing, the white house has launched a new police data initiative aimed at improving policing and community relations with the police. The data initiative comes out of the recommendations of the task force which site the need for police to better use data and other technologies to build community trust.

<https://civsourceonline.com/2015/05/18/white-house-launches-police-data-intiative/>

Obama Bans Some Military-style Equipment Provided to Police | CivSource | May 18, 2015

In a surprise announcement coming nine months after police in riot gear dispelled racially charged protests, President Barack Obama is banning the federal government from providing some military-style equipment to local departments and putting stricter controls on other weapons and gear distributed to law enforcement.

<http://time.com/3882302/barack-obama-ferguson-police-military-equipment/>

New York Offers Tracking Device for Kids with Special Needs | Emergency Management | The Daily Star | May 8, 2015

New York State will provide 50 law enforcement agencies with nearly 600 Project Lifesaver tracking devices at no cost for use on children younger than 18 who may have autism, Down syndrome or other type of cognitive impairment that puts them at risk for wandering or becoming lost. The transmitters, which are worn on the wrist or ankle, emit a tracking signal that allows a child to be located quickly after going missing.

<http://www.emergencymgmt.com/safety/New-York-Tracking-Device-Kids-Special-Needs.html>

[Reforming Government/ Administrative Policy/ Ethics](#)

Detroit Revitalizes City with 311 App | Government Technology | By Jason Shueh | May 7, 2015

The city app, officially available since April, allows citizens to report problems using photos, location data and by request type. Notifications on progress follow and residents can even pay utility bills through the app. For departments, it's ingrained into work orders and workflows, while analytics provide data for planning, and filters permit a deep-dive analysis.

<http://www.govtech.com/Detroit-Revitalizes-City-with-311-App.html>

Can All City Services Fit on One App? | Governing | By Dave Nycepir | May 21, 2015

MyCivic Apps wants to become a one-stop shop for local government services, and at least 16 cities in California have received their own branded apps. Issue reporting, news feeds, calendars, bill paying and business directories offering customer rewards are all features municipalities can elect to include.

<http://www.routeifty.com/2015/05/my-civic-services-app/113488/>

Arkansas Cities Pass LGBT Protections that Defy State's New Discrimination Law | Governing | By Alan Greenblatt | May 11, 2015

State lawmakers in Arkansas wanted to block local governments from passing ordinances that ban discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. So far, it hasn't worked out that way. In February the legislature passed a bill, Act 137, to block cities from offering anti-discrimination protection to groups not covered under state law. Since then, however, several places have done just that.

<http://www.governing.com/topics/politics/gov-arkansas-discrimination-gay.html>

New York Launching "First-Of-Its-Kind" Transgender Health Program | BuzzFeed | By Chris Geidner | May 15, 2015

New York officials on Friday morning will be announcing a new public-private partnership aimed at improving health care services for transgender people in the state. The initiative — launched between the New York Attorney General's Office, Greater New York Hospital Association, Mt. Sinai Health Systems, and Lambda Legal — will provide information and training to hospitals about both legal requirements and best practices for addressing the health needs of transgender people.

<http://www.buzzfeed.com/chrisgeidner/new-york-launching-first-of-its-kind-transgender-health-care#.nrej6gyj8>

Chicago's Data-Powered Recipe for Food Safety | Governing | By Stephen Goldsmith | May 20, 2015

Chicago recently completed a pilot program using analytics to improve the process by which health inspectors identify "critical violations" in food establishments. After identifying predictors from the data,

they were able to forecast where violations would occur and allocate inspections in a way that prioritized likely violators.

<http://www.governing.com/blogs/bfc/gov-chicago-data-analytics-restaurant-inspections-food-safety.html>

New Mobile App Moves Legislative Process into 21st Century | Government Technology | By Heather Knight | May 21, 2015

A new mobile app called Countable makes its San Francisco debut Thursday, and it's just the latest effort in this tech-centric city to bring the sometimes opaque, confounding legislative process into the 21st century. The staff writes short, nonpartisan summaries of legislation currently under debate and arguments in favor or opposed. Users can vote "Yea" or "Nay," which can be viewed by the legislators who ultimately decide the bill's fate.

<http://www.govtech.com/applications/New-Mobile-App-Moves-Legislative-Process-into-21st-Century.html>

New Jersey Creates New Office Dedicated to Cybersecurity | Government Technology | May 21, 2015

On May 20, New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie announced the creation of a new office dedicated to helping the state defend against hackers and cyberattacks. The new office, deemed the New Jersey Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Cell, will be one of the first of its kind in the country, Christie said.

<http://www.govtech.com/security/New-Jersey-Creates-New-Office-Dedicated-to-Cybersecurity.html>

Sharing Data Key to Improving Foster Care Outcomes | Government Technology | By Justine Brown | May 21, 2015

States that share data among child welfare and education agencies have a better chance of lessening some of the barriers foster care students face and improving student success, according to a report by the Data Quality Campaign and the Legal Center for Foster Care and Education. The report details which states (currently 24, plus the District of Columbia) securely link K-12 data systems with foster care data systems to provide foster care students with crucial supports like assisting with timely enrollment.

<http://www.govtech.com/education/Sharing-Data-Key-to-Improving-Foster-Care-Outcomes.html>

California Launches Digital Democracy Project | CivSource | By Bailey McCann | May 7, 2015

Lt. Governor Gavin Newsom and former state Senator Sam Blakeslee in California have launched Digital Democracy, a new online and interactive platform aimed at improving transparency in state government. The platform was developed in conjunction with computer science students at Cal Poly, and will use new research in artificial intelligence as well as big data, text and video to provide a view into the state legislature.

<https://civsourceonline.com/2015/05/07/california-launches-digital-democracy-project/>

Local Governments Face Talent Management, Retirement Challenges | Route Fifty | By Michael Grass | May 19, 2015

The silver tsunami—it's a term that is a looming cause for concern within local governments. Retirements are an inevitability in any organization, including those in the local public sector. And recruitment and retention can be a challenge, too, especially since opportunities in the private sector often come with higher salaries.

<http://www.routefifty.com/2015/05/local-government-talent-management/113167/>

Transportation, Infrastructure, and Utilities

Massachusetts Cities Deploy Smart Streetlight Network-as-a-Service | Government Technology | By Colin Wood | May 6, 2015

City leaders looking to the Internet of Things are starting with the basics: Randolph and Fitchburg, Mass., are deploying a smart streetlighting network-as-a-service that will allow them to remotely control, monitor and manage their streetlights while simultaneously building infrastructure that could someday support connectivity for smart city components.

<http://www.govtech.com/fs/Massachusetts-Cities-Deploy-Smart-Streetlight-Network-as-a-Service.html>

Infrastructure's Death by a Thousand Cuts, Its Rebirth by Bonds, Ballots, and Partnerships | Brookings Institute | By Patrick Sabol and Robert Puentes | May 12, 2015

There is no single reason for America's failure to invest in its infrastructure. It's a story of death by a thousand cuts—declining federal dollars, political dysfunction, high levels of state and local debt, the age of our assets, a growing population, hangovers from the Great Recession, and a multitude of other smaller issues—that have left us bereft of sufficient support.

<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/the-avenue/posts/2015/05/12-infrastructure-bonds-ballots-partnerships-sabol-puentes>

Low U.S. Rail Spending Leads to Poor Safety, Experts Say | The New York Times | By Nicola Clark | May 20, 2015

By a global standard, the United States has not been paying much. For the size of its economy, it lags far behind many of the world's most developed countries in spending on rail networks. As a consequence, industry experts say, the United States has among the worst safety records despite having some of the least-extensive passenger rail networks in the developed world.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/21/world/europe/railroads-around-the-globe-find-no-cheap-route-to-safety.html?ref=us>

Seattle to Buildings: Give Tenants Transit Passes, Not Parking Spots | Citylab | By Eric Jaffe | May 11, 2015

The Seattle City Council is considering a proposal for developers to offer tenants transit passes, bike share memberships, or other transportation options, rather than parking.

<http://www.route fifty.com/2015/05/seattle-tenants-transit-passes/112378/?oref=rf-home-latest-bottom>

F.C.C. Chief Seeks Broadband Plan to Aid the Poor | The New York Times | By Rebecca R. Ruiz | May 28, 2015

For 30 years, the federal government has helped millions of low-income Americans pay their phone bills, saying that telephone service is critical to summoning medical help, seeking work and, ultimately, climbing out of poverty. Now, the nation's top communications regulator will propose offering those same people subsidized access to broadband Internet.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/28/business/fcc-chief-seeks-broadband-plan-to-aid-the-poor.html>

How Digital Equity Is a Driving Force for Some Gigabit Cities | Governing | By Michael Grass | May 14, 2015

Cities like Seattle and Chattanooga are looking at expanding digital access in an equitable way for all residents.

<http://www.route fifty.com/2015/05/digital-equity-driving-gigabit-cities/112801/?oref=rf-home-editors-picks>

Best Practices Website

Check out the City of Philadelphia's Best Practices Website that promotes research-informed policy developments.

<http://www.phila.gov/bestpractices/Pages/default.aspx>