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It covers (1) U.S. Federal government documents, especially those from executive branch departments and those from the Congressional branch - - Committees, the U.S. General Accounting Office, and the Congressional Budget Office; (2) policy briefs from major private think tanks, especially those in Washington; and (3) major reports from national professional associations. A few new high quality, high relevance think tank-sponsored books are also listed.

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Reports

Item#1

Building a 21st Century Immigration System. The White House. May 2011.

The President wants to have a civil and constructive debate on this issue so that the broken immigration system can be fixed. The Blueprint summarizes the progress we have made in securing our borders, enforcing our laws, and improving our legal immigration system; discusses the economic benefits of immigration reform; and outlines the President's vision of a 21st century immigration policy.

http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/immigration_blueprint.pdf [PDF format, 34 pages].

Item#2

The Federal Budget: Issues for FY 2011, FY 2012, and Beyond. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Mindy R. Levit. April 29, 2011.

Along with Congress, CBO, GAO, and the Administration agree that the current mix of federal fiscal policies is unsustainable in the long-term. The nation's aging population, combined with rising health care costs per beneficiary, seems likely to keep federal health costs rising faster than per capita GDP. Keeping future federal outlays at 20% of GDP, or approximately at its historical average, and leaving fiscal policies unchanged, according to CBO projections, would require drastic reductions in all spending other than that for Medicare, Social Security, and Medicaid, or reigning in the costs of these programs. As the economic recovery continues, Congress may focus more effort on balancing the budget and reining in the debt. This would require less spending, increases in revenue collections, faster-than-average economic growth, or a combination of these things.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41685.pdf> [PDF format, 24 pages].

Item#3

Five Steps to Make Our Aid More Effective and Save More Than \$2 Billion. Center for Global Development. John Norris and Connie Veillette. May 5, 2011.

Most Americans wildly overestimate foreign aid as a percentage of the federal budget, which makes it unsurprising that U.S. foreign aid programs once again find themselves at the center of the debate as the budget battles heat up in Washington. Policymakers are seemingly divided into two camps: those who want to deeply cut foreign aid and those who want to maintain spending levels and make programs work more effectively. The brief details how the new Congress could save more than \$500 million annually by eliminating unnecessary regulations currently in place that are incredibly wasteful, anticompetitive, and make it harder to carry out effective development programs abroad.

[*Note: contains copyrighted material*].

<http://www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail/1425052/> [HTML format with links].

Item#4

Missed Opportunity: Transit and Jobs in Metropolitan America. Brookings Institution. Adie Tomer et al. May 12, 2011.

Public transit is a critical part of the economic and social fabric of metropolitan areas. Nearly 30 million trips are made every day using public transit. Almost all of these trips occur in the nation's 100 largest metro areas, which account for over 95 percent of all transit passenger miles traveled. People take transit for any number of reasons, but one of the most common is to get to work.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/Programs/Metro/jobs_transit/0512_jobs_transit.pdf [PDF format, 64 pages].

Item#5

Muslim Reaction to Bin Laden's Death. Council on Foreign Relations. Toni Johnson. May 5, 2011.

Muslims around the world have had a mixed reaction to the killing of Osama Bin Laden by U.S. forces on May 1, from elation and anger to concerns over Pakistan. While overall response has been "surprisingly muted" across the Muslim world say Associated Press analysts, some Muslims--ranging from the United States to Somalia --have rejoiced, blaming Bin Laden for a host of troubles including the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the deterioration in Pakistan's security, and the war on terror. "For the Muslim world, it is like a lifting of a curse," says a Saudi-based Arab News editorial.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.cfr.org/religion-and-politics/muslim-reaction-bin-ladens-death/p24909> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#6

Osama bin Laden's Death: Implications and Considerations. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. John Rollins. May 5, 2011.

The May 1, 2011 killing of Osama bin Laden (OBL) by U.S. forces in Pakistan has led to a range of views about near- and long-term security and foreign policy implications for the United States. Experts have a range of views about the killing of OBL. Some consider his death to be a largely symbolic event, while others believe it marks a significant achievement in U.S. counterterrorism efforts.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/R41809.pdf> [PDF format, 26 pages].

Item#7

Saving Now and Saving Later: How High School Reform Can Reduce the Nation's Wasted Remediation Dollars. Alliance for Excellent Education. May 5, 2011.

For young people entering the twenty-first-century job market, high school graduation is no longer the finish line, but the starting line. While one-third of students will fail to graduate from high school, too many students who do graduate and make it to the postsecondary starting line find that they are underprepared for postsecondary work. A full 43 percent of those who begin postsecondary studies will fail to earn a degree after six years, and one of the major reasons is that far too many students receive inadequate preparation while in high school. The brief analyzes how improving America's high schools and better preparing students for the challenges of both college and the modern workplace can dramatically reduce the amount of wasted dollars spent on remediation in college.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.all4ed.org/files/SavingNowSavingLaterRemediation.pdf> [PDF format, 10 pages].

Item#8

The Trilateral Process: The United States, Ukraine, Russia and Nuclear Weapons. Brookings Institution. Steven Pifer. May 2011.

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Ukraine had the world's third largest nuclear arsenal on its territory. When Ukrainian-Russian negotiations on removing these weapons from Ukraine appeared to break down in September 1993, the U.S. government engaged in a trilateral process with Ukraine and Russia. The result was the Trilateral Statement, signed in January 1994, under which Ukraine agreed to transfer the nuclear warheads to Russia for elimination. In return, Ukraine received security assurances from the U.S., Russia and Britain; compensation for the economic value of the highly-enriched uranium in the warheads, which could be blended down and converted into fuel for nuclear reactors; and assistance from the U.S. in dismantling the missiles, missile silos, bombers and nuclear infrastructure on its territory. Steven Pifer recounts the history of this unique negotiation and describes the key lessons learned.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2011/05_trilateral_process_pifer/05_trilateral_process_pifer.pdf [PDF format, 48 pages].

Item#9

Understanding the Power of Social Media as a Communications Tool in the Aftermath of Disasters. U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. Testimony, W. Craig Fugate. May 4, 2011.

In his testimony, Fugate discusses why social media is important to the work FEMA does, what social media tools FEMA uses in order to fulfill the mission, and what the future might hold for the nexus between social media and emergency management.

http://hsgac.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.Hearing&Hearing_ID=e928effc-4bfd-4024-9017-130bb45b4ed4 [HTML format with links].

Item#10

Using Frozen Assets to Aid Libyans. Council on Foreign Relations. Stuart Levy. May 11, 2011.

The Obama administration's plan to seize frozen Libyan assets and use them for Libyan aid is a dramatic, and probably unilateral, exercise of U.S. power that is likely to yield a relatively modest sum of money, says Stuart Levy.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.cfr.org/libya/using-frozen-assets-aid-libyans/p24945> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#11

We Are What We Breathe: The Impacts of Air Pollution on Employment and Productivity. Brookings Institution. Michael Greenstone and Adam Looney. May 6, 2011.

Many factors affect America's long-term employment and productivity, some more obviously than others. According to the brief, an educated workforce, technological innovation, and well-functioning infrastructure are important drivers of job growth. But another factor that impacts health, and therefore productivity, is the environment, more specifically, the air we breathe on a day-to-day basis. The brief we examines the employment and productivity costs of air pollution, measuring its health effects on America's workforce.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/0506_jobs_greenstone_looney.aspx [HTML format, various paging].

Item#12

WTO Doha Round: Do or Die. YaleGlobal. Richard Baldwin and Simon Evenett. May 6, 2011.

The deadlocked Doha Round of trade negotiations, nearly a decade old, has been subjected to numerous delays. With the political calendar making it difficult for major players to make concessions, time is running out to complete negotiations, contend the authors. Economic hardship, elections and attempts to expand the agenda will only add complications. "If Doha is not concluded this year, WTO authority, its centrality in global trade governance will erode," the writers warn. In particular, they urge U.S. and Chinese leaders to promote agreement to citizens and businesses who benefit immensely from the open multilateral trade regime, the World Trade Organization's adjudication and enforcement role, along with transparent, predictable global trade policies. For more than half a century, the authors conclude, a multilateral-trade system has been a cost-effective way to secure peace. Weakening it would be a serious mistake.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/wto-doha-round-do-or-die> [HTML format, various paging].