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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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Reducing Costs While Improving Care in the US Health System: The Health Reform Pyramid. [Deloitte Center for Health Solutions]. January 2009.

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White House Releases State by State Numbers; American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to Save or Create 3.5 Million Jobs. [The White House]. February 17, 2009.

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Reports

Item#1

THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009. White House. Web posted February 16, 2009.

On Thursday, February 12, 2009, the Conference Committee for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 produced a Conference Report, reconciling the House and Senate versions of the bill.

[Note: contains copyrighted material]

Full Text:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/arra_public_review/#TB_inline?height=220&width=370&inlineId=tb_external [HTM format with links to U.S. GPO PDF files].

Item#2

CONSUMER PROTECTION IN THE STATES: A 50-STATE REPORT ON UNFAIR AND DECEPTIVE ACTS AND PRACTICES STATUTE. National Consumer Law Center, Inc. February 2009.

Serious gaps and weaknesses have compromised consumer protection laws in most of the 50 states, and recent court rulings have opened the door to predators and abuses in billions of everyday transactions. The report analyzes and summarizes the unfair and deceptive acts and practices (UDAP) laws that protect consumers in each state and the District of Columbia, and spotlights limitations in the substance and scope of the laws and in their enforcement.

[Note: contains copyrighted material]

Full Text:

http://www.nclc.org/issues/udap/content/UDAP_Report_Feb09.pdf [PDF format, 32 pages].

Item#3

HOW GREEN IS THY STIMULUS? Council on Foreign Relations. Toni Johnson. February 16, 2009.

The idea of creating green jobs drew great attention as the stimulus package made its way through Congress. Defining those jobs is difficult, however, and economists say many may simply displace existing jobs in the old carbon-based economy.

[Note: contains copyrighted material]

Full Text:

http://www.cfr.org/publication/18536/how_green_is_thy_stimulus_bill.html?breadcrumb=%2F [HTML format, various paging].

Item#4

INTRODUCTION TO "CHINA'S GROWING ROLE IN WORLD TRADE." Working Paper, National Bureau of Economic Research. Robert C. Feenstra and Shang-Jin Wei. February 2009.

Over the last three decades, the value of Chinese trade has approximately doubled every four years. The rapid growth has transformed the country from a negligible player in world trade to the world's second largest exporter, as well as a substantial importer of raw materials, intermediate inputs, and other goods. The paper provides an overview of the microstructure of Chinese trade, its macroeconomic implications, trade disputes with other WTO member countries, and the role of foreign firms.

[Note: contains copyrighted material]

Full Text:

http://www.nber.org/papers/w14716.pdf?new_window=1 [PDF format, 41 pages].

Item#5

IRAN AND THE FUTURE OF AFGHANISTAN. Backgrounder, Council on Foreign Relations. Greg Bruno and Lionel Beehner. February 6, 2009.

In crafting a new approach to the war in Afghanistan, U.S. military and political leaders say Iran could play a key role. Despite ongoing concerns over Iran's nuclear program and allegations of arming militants in the region, Gen. David H. Petraeus, commander of U.S. forces in the region, says Washington and Iran could coalesce around stabilizing Afghanistan. Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, echoed the sentiment. NATO partners, too, have sought to include Iran in Afghan strategy decisions. German lawmakers have called for the creation of a "contact group" of nations to chart a new regional course. "Such an initiative, that would include Iran, would benefit if it came to direct talks between Washington and Tehran," Andreas Schockenhoff, vice chairman of Germany's Christian Democratic Party, said in a statement reported by German media.

[Note: contains copyrighted material]

Full Text:

http://www.cfr.org/publication/13578/iran_and_the_future_of_afghanistan.html?breadcrumb=%2F [HTML format, various paging].

Item#6

JAPAN: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY. Wilton Park. Web posted February 13, 2009.

The current financial crisis has highlighted the interconnectivity of the global economy which many believe requires a shared international response, according to the conference report. There is a growing realization that the global financial crisis is increasingly impacting negatively on the Japanese economy. The rapid and concrete response by both the U.S .and European Union (EU) governments to the current credit (crunch) suggests they have already learned from Japan's 1990s credit crunch experience. Japan, with its huge cash reserves, is in a strong position to take advantage of global business opportunities resulting from the current global economic turmoil.

[Note: contains copyrighted material]

Full Text:

<http://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/documents/conferences/WP933/pdfs/WP933.pdf>
[PDF format, 12 pages].

Item#7

THE NEW WASHINGTON PRESS CORPS: AS MAINSTREAM MEDIA DECLINE, NICHE AND FOREIGN OUTLETS GROW. Project for Excellence in Journalism. Web posted February 11, 2009.

The corps of journalists covering Washington D.C. at the dawn of the Obama Administration is not so much smaller as it is dramatically transformed, says the report. As the mainstream media have shrunk, a new sector of niche media has grown in its place, offering more specialized and detailed information than the general media to smaller, elite audiences, often built around narrowly targeted financial, lobbying and political interests. In addition, the contingent of foreign reporters in Washington has grown to nearly ten times the size it was a generation ago.

[Note: contains copyrighted material]

Full Text:

<http://journalism.org/files/The%20New%20Washington%20Press%20Corps%20Report.pdf> [PDF format, 28 pages].

Item#8

OUTSOURCING POVERTY: FEDERAL CONTRACTING PUSHES DOWN WAGES AND BENEFITS. Economic Policy Institute. Kathryn Edwards and Kai Filion. February 11, 2009.

Federal agencies have been under pressure to reduce the size of their workforce and cut costs, creating the incentive to outsource government work through contracts with private businesses for goods and services. The brief examines the wage and benefit standards in government and contracted work. The outsourcing of government work through federal contracts is often done in the name of cost-saving. However, much of this saving does not come from greater efficiency in provision, but from the willingness and ability of private contractors to push down wages and benefits for employees.

[Note: contains copyrighted material]

Full Text:

http://epi.3cdn.net/10d36747ba0e683ef9_hwm6bxwn1.pdf [PDF format, 7 pages].

Item#9

A PLAN TO EXTEND SUPER-FAST BROADBAND CONNECTIONS TO ALL AMERICANS. Century Foundation. John Windhausen, Jr. Web posted January 29, 2009.

Few doubt that broadband communications are increasingly vital to our social and economic well-being. The universal availability of affordable high-speed access to the Internet has become essential not only for business, but also for public safety, research, education, health care, and protecting the environment. Broadband communications are the future, yet the U.S. government has no national broadband policy, and does not treat broadband as a form of infrastructure and does not regard broadband as an "essential" service. The U.S. currently lags behind other nations both in terms of connection speeds and the number of citizens who have access to broadband.

[Note: contains copyrighted material]

Full Text:

<http://www.tcf.org/Publications/mediapolitics/windhausen.pdf> [PDF format, 32 pages].

Item#10

PREVENTING AND ENDING HOMELESSNESS - NEXT STEPS. Urban Institute. Mary K. Cunningham. February 2009.

Across the country, communities are working to end homelessness by investing in Housing First approaches that help families and single adults get back into permanent housing. Until recently, many of these communities were reducing homelessness. Today, the housing crisis and economic recession threatens progress and puts millions of Americans at risk of homelessness. The brief examines the current state of homelessness, how community responses are changing, what is working, and, most important, what policymakers should be doing to move forward, not backward.

[Note: contains copyrighted material]

Full Text:

http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411837_ending_homelessness.pdf [PDF format, 12 pages].

Item#11

PROTECTING WORKERS ON THE JOB: SEVEN PRIORITIES FOR FEDERAL ACTION IN 2009. American Public Health Association. Robert Harrison and Celeste Monforton. Web posted February 1, 2009.

Advocates for worker health and safety provides recommendations for reversing the erosion of protections for the nation's workers. Citing lagging federal enforcement of existing standards and inaction on passing tougher new standards, the American Public Health Association's (APHA) Occupational Health and Safety Section and the National Council on Occupational Safety and Health called for immediate action to minimize work-related injuries and illnesses that can cause serious health problems.

[Note: contains copyrighted material]

Full Text:

<http://www.apha.org/NR/rdonlyres/FCA6DC31-545A-4561-BB58-FD924EA7A37D/0/ProtectingWorkersontheJobJan2009.pdf> [PDF format, 6

pages].

Item#12

REDUCING COSTS WHILE IMPROVING CARE IN THE US HEALTH SYSTEM: THE HEALTH REFORM PYRAMID. Deloitte Center for Health Solutions. January 2009.

According to the report, health care reform efforts have fallen short as a result of two forces: the economics of the status quo make change an uphill battle for reformers and end users have not demanded major changes. Whatever the reasons, momentum to maintain the status quo is generally stronger than the will to change. As a result, incremental changes are the norm.

[Note: contains copyrighted material]

Full Text:

http://www.deloitte.com/dtt/cda/doc/content/us_chs_healthcare_pyramidde ck_140109%281%29.pdf [PDF format, 17 pages].

Item#13

WHITE HOUSE RELEASES STATE BY STATE NUMBERS; AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT TO SAVE OR CREATE 3.5 MILLION JOBS. The White House. February 17, 2009.

The White House releases state-specific details on the local impact of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is a nationwide effort to create jobs, jumpstart growth and transform our economy to compete in the 21st century.

Full Text:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/White-House-Releases-State-by-State-Numbers-American-Recovery-and-Reinvestment-Act-to-Save-or-Create-35-Million-Jobs/ [HTML format with links to PDF files].