
E-ALERT is compiled based on an email service we receive from the Department of State's Office of International Information Programs. We are sending it to you to alert you of the latest issues and debates in the United States.

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.

Please contact the Information Resource Center if you have problem retrieving any of the documents listed. To cancel this service, please reply to the present message and type "unsubscribe" as the text of your message.

Title Index

2008 DonorCentrics Internet Giving Benchmarking Analysis. [Target Analytics]. March 2009.

Item#1

Climate Literacy: The Essential Principles of Climate Science. [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration]. March 2009.

Item#2

The Europe Syndrome and the Challenge to American Exceptionalism. [American Enterprise Institute]. March 16, 2009.

Item#3

Federal Financial Assistance: Preliminary Observations on Assistance Provided to AIG. [U.S. Government Accountability Office]. March 18, 2009.

Item#4

Informing Decisions in a Changing Climate. [National Research Council]. March 2009.

Item#5

Integrating U.S. Climate, Energy, and Transportation Policies: Proceedings of Three Workshops. [RAND Corporation]. March 2009.

Item#6

Media Portrayals of Suicide. [PLoS Medicine]. March 17, 2009

Item#7

The State of the News Media. [Pew Project for excellence in Journalism]. March 2009.

Item#8

Strange But True: Fee Loan From Social Security. [Center for Retirement Research at Boston College]. March 2009.

Item#9

Swimming Against the Tide: How Developing Countries are Coping with the Global Crisis. [World Bank]. March 8, 2009.

Item#10

Unlocking Credit for Small Businesses Fact Sheet. [U.S. Department of Treasury]. March 16, 2009.

Item#11

Reports

Item#1

2008 DONORCENTRICS INTERNET GIVING BENCHMARKING ANALYSIS. Target Analytics. Helen Flannery et al. March 2009.

The key findings from the Analysis indicate that over the past few years, online giving has become an increasingly significant source of new donor acquisition, and integrating online and offline fundraising channels is key to long term success.

[Note: contains copyright material].

Full Text:

<http://www.blackbaud.com/files/resources/downloads/cam/TargetInternetGivingSummary2008.pdf> [PDF format, 21 pages].

Item#2

CLIMATE LITERACY: THE ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES OF CLIMATE SCIENCE. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. March 2009.

The guide is to help individuals of all ages understand how climate influences them and how they influence climate. "As climate policy is being discussed, it is very important for the citizens of our nation to have an appreciation for some of the fundamental aspects of climate and climate change," said Tom Karl, director of NOAA's National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, N.C., and lead for NOAA's climate services. "This guide is a first step for people who want to know more about the essential principles of our climate system, how to better discern scientifically credible information about climate, and how to identify problems related to understanding climate and climate change."

Full Text:

<http://climate.noaa.gov/education/pdfs/ClimateLiteracyPoster-8.5x11-March09FinalLR.pdf> [PDF format, 17 pages].

Item#3

THE EUROPE SYNDROME AND THE CHALLENGE TO AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM. American Enterprise Institute. Charles Murray. March 16, 2009.

The author sees President Obama and his leading intellectuals as the American equivalent of Europe's social democrats. The report discusses pros and cons of the European way and argues that "America's elite must once again fall in love again with what makes America different."

[Note: contains copyright material].

Full Text:

<http://american.com/archive/2009/march-2009/the-europe-syndrome-and-the-challenge-to-american-exceptionalism> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#4

FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS ON ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO AIG. U.S. Government Accountability Office. Orice M. Williams. March 18, 2009.

The statement provides preliminary findings on (1) the goals and monitoring of federal assistance to American International Group (AIG) and challenges to AIG's repayment of the assistance; and (2) the potential effects of the federal assistance on the U.S. commercial property/casualty insurance market.

Full Text:

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09490t.pdf> [PDF format, 23 pages].

Item#5

INFORMING DECISIONS IN A CHANGING CLIMATE. National Research Council. March 2009.

Many state and local officials and private organizations are basing decisions, such as how to build bridges or manage water supplies, on the assumption that current climate conditions will continue, but that assumption is no longer valid, according to the report. The report recommends six principles that all agencies should follow in supporting decision makers who are facing the effects of climate change. For example, agencies' efforts should be driven by the needs of end users in the field, not by scientific research priorities. And agencies should create close ties between the scientists who produce climate change information and the practitioners who use it.

[Note: contains copyright material].

Full Text:

http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12626 [HTML format with links to PDF files].

Item#6

INTEGRATING U.S. CLIMATE, ENERGY, AND TRANSPORTATION POLICIES: PROCEEDINGS OF THREE WORKSHOPS. RAND Corporation. Liisa Ecola et al. March 2009.

The three workshops brought together representatives of government, industry, advocacy groups, and the research community who hold different perspectives on what the goals of climate change mitigation policy should be and which strategies should be implemented to achieve them. Addressing the interconnection of climate change mitigation policy with the key sectors of energy and transportation will be major challenges for the United States in the coming years. The report organizes the key themes of the workshops by topic, in particular, pointing out areas of agreement as well as disagreement.

[Note: contains copyright material].

Full Text:

http://www.rand.org/pubs/conf_proceedings/2009/RAND_CF256.pdf [PDF

format, 54 pages].

Item#7

MEDIA PORTRAYALS OF SUICIDE. PLoS Medicine. March 17, 2009

The available evidence suggests that media portrayals are more likely to be associated with suicidal behavior when they are prominent on the page, appear in multiple places, report celebrity deaths, and are based on real rather than fictional suicides. To reduce the risk of copycat suicides, several organizations, such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and the Samaritans, have issued guidelines to the media on safe reporting of suicides.

[Note: contains copyright material].

Full Text:

http://medicine.plosjournals.org/archive/1549-1676/6/3/pdf/10.1371_journal.pmed.1000051-S.pdf [PDF format, 2 pages].

Item#8

STATE OF THE NEWS MEDIA. Pew Project for excellence in Journalism. March 2009.

The study provides both aggregated and original research on the eight major sectors of media-newspapers, online, network; cable, local and network TV; magazines; radio and ethnic. It also includes special reports on the Year in the News, lessons from the 2008 election, an analysis of citizen media sites and more.

[Note: contains copyright material].

Full Text:

<http://www.stateofthenewsmedia.org/2009/index.htm> [HTML format with PDF links].

Item#9

STRANGE BUT TRUE: FREE LOAN FROM SOCIAL SECURITY. Center for Retirement Research at Boston College. Alicia H. Munnell et al. March 2009.

Early retirement benefits are lowered by an amount that offsets the longer period for which they will be received. The delayed retirement option offers higher benefits but for a shorter remaining lifetime. Thus, on average, workers will receive the same lifetime benefits regardless of when they claim between the ages of 62 and 70. Recently, several unconventional claiming strategies have come to light, which have the potential to pay higher lifetime benefits to some individuals and increase system costs. The brief focuses on one of these strategies. It outlines the procedure and incentives of employing this strategy and presents estimates of the cost to Social Security under three different scenarios and describes who would gain. It concludes that the estimated annual \$6 billion to \$11 billion cost of allowing free loans from Social Security is likely to increase substantially over time.

[Note: contains copyright material].

Full Text:

http://crr.bc.edu/images/stories/Briefs/ib_9-6.pdf [PDF format, 8 pages].

Item#10

SWIMMING AGAINST THE TIDE: HOW DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ARE COPING WITH THE GLOBAL CRISIS. World Bank. March 8, 2009.

Developing countries face a financing shortfall of \$270-700 billion this year, as private sector creditors shun emerging markets, and only one quarter of the most vulnerable countries have the resources to prevent a rise in poverty, the World Bank said.

The international financial institutions cannot by themselves currently cover the shortfall, which includes public and private debt and trade deficits, for these 129 countries, even at the lower end of the range. A solution will require governments, multilateral institutions, and the private sector.

[Note: contains copyright material].

Full Text:

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/NEWS/Resources/swimmingagainstthetid e-march2009.pdf> [PDF format, 21 pages].

Item#11

UNLOCKING CREDIT FOR SMALL BUSINESSES FACT SHEET. U.S. Department of Treasury. March 16, 2009.

The U.S. Department Treasury is taking immediate action to help ensure that credit , the lifeblood of America's small businesses and its economy, gets flowing again to entrepreneurs and business owners. As another part of the Consumer and Business Lending Initiative, the Treasury Department will, by the end of the month, begin making direct purchases of securities backed by SBA loans to get the credit market moving again, and it will stand ready to purchase new securities to ensure that community banks and credit unions feel confident in extending new loans to local businesses.

Full Text:

<http://www.treas.gov/press/releases/tg58.htm> [HTML format, various paging].