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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**

ACCELERATING SMART GRID INVESTMENTS. World Economic Forum. July 2009.

The report shows how smart grids can be the backbone infrastructure for tomorrow's energy solutions and green economy. The world's electricity systems are increasingly outdated and coming under pressure in the face of rising demand, climate change and the advent of transformative technologies. Smart grids have been hailed as a key to sustainably meeting emerging energy needs in a new age where clean energy is at a premium, networks require flexibility to incorporate renewable energy and customers' demands for greater transparency and control over their consumption are growing.

[Note: contains copyright material].

Full Text:

<http://www.weforum.org/pdf/SlimCity/SmartGrid2009.pdf> [PDF format, 39 pages].

**Item#2**

ASSESSMENT AND INNOVATION IN EDUCATION. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Janet Looney. July 16, 2009.

The study proposes three main ways of combining assessment and innovation: 1) developing a wide range of performance measurements for both students and schools; 2) rethinking the alignment of standards and assessment; 3) measuring the impact of assessments on teaching and learning.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

Full Text:

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/0/43/43338180.pdf> [PDF format, 61 pages].

### **Item#3**

BEYOND THE \$1.6 TRILLION STICKER SHOCK. Urban Institute. Linda J. Blumberg and John Holahan. July 21, 2009.

Recently, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimated that the Senate Finance Committee's health reform plan would cost \$1.6 trillion over 10 years. The estimate left many in Washington and around the country with sticker shock. Authors Linda Blumberg and John Holahan place the estimate in context by showing that the costs of health reform are less than 1 percent of estimated GDP and a small fraction of expected health care spending for that period as well. They also contend that the costs associated with inaction are at least as big as those of directly addressing the problems we currently face.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

Full Text:

[http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411923\\_beyond\\_sticker\\_shock.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411923_beyond_sticker_shock.pdf) [PDF format, 2 pages].

### **Item#4**

DRUG CONTROL: U.S. COUNTERNARCOTICS COOPERATION WITH VENEZUELA HAS DECLINED. U.S. Government Accountability Office. July 20, 2009.

Every year since 1996, the President has determined that Venezuela was one of the major drug transit countries in the Western Hemisphere. Venezuela's extensive border with Colombia, covering large swaths of jungle and mountainous terrain, enables the flow of cocaine from Colombia over land and river routes and by air. According to U.S. and Colombian officials, Venezuela has extended a lifeline to Colombian illegal armed groups by providing significant support and safe haven along the border. As a result, these groups, which traffic in illicit drugs, remain viable threats to Colombian security..

Full Text:

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09806.pdf> [PDF format, 39 pages].

### **Item#5**

ENSURING THE INTEGRITY, ACCESSIBILITY, AND STEWARDSHIP OF RESEARCH DATA IN THE DIGITAL AGE. National Academy of Sciences. July 22, 2009.

Though digital technologies and high-speed communications have significantly expanded the capabilities of scientists, allowing them to analyze and share vast amounts of data, these technologies are also raising difficult questions for researchers, institutions, and journals. Because digital data can be manipulated more easily than other forms, they are particularly susceptible to distortion. Questions about how to maintain the data generated, who should have access, and who pays to store them can be controversial, according to the study.

[Note: contains copyright material].

Full Text:

[http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record\\_id=12615#toc](http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12615#toc) [HTML format with links].

#### **Item#6**

HEALTH INSURANCE AND BANKRUPTCY RATES IN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES. Fraser Institute. July 2009.

The current debate about reforming health care policy has included suggestions that nearly two-thirds of personal bankruptcies in the U.S. result from uninsured medical expenses or loss of income due to illness. Advocates of socialized medicine argue that this would not occur if the U.S. adopted a government-run health system similar to Canada's. But as this report details, the evidence doesn't support the bankruptcy claim.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

Full Text:

[http://www.fraseramerica.org/commerce.web/product\\_files/HealthInsuranceandBankruptcyRates\\_US.pdf](http://www.fraseramerica.org/commerce.web/product_files/HealthInsuranceandBankruptcyRates_US.pdf) [PDF format, 5 pages].

#### **Item#7**

HIGH-TECH IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE UNITED STATES. Office of Advocacy, Small Business Administration. David M. Hart et al. July 16, 2009.

Sixteen percent of high-impact, high-tech firms have at least one immigrant founder, according to the study. Although these firms are concentrated in states with large immigrant populations, in most other respects they resemble high-impact, high-tech firms founded by native-born entrepreneurs.

Full Text:

<http://www.sba.gov/advo/research/rs349tot.pdf> [PDF format, 84 pages].

#### **Item#8**

THE ILL-PREPARED U.S. WORKFORCE. The Conference Board et al. Jill Casner-Lotto et al. July 14, 2009.

The report shows that U.S. employers continue to struggle with an ill-prepared workforce, finding new hires lack crucial basic and applied skills. For the most part, employer-sponsored readiness training is not successfully correcting these deficiencies. Almost half of respondents said they have to provide readiness training for new hires and the majority rates their programs as only “moderately” or “somewhat successful.”

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

Full Text:

[http://www.cvworkingfamilies.org/system/files/ill\\_preparedWorkforce\\_RR.pdf](http://www.cvworkingfamilies.org/system/files/ill_preparedWorkforce_RR.pdf) [PDF format, 24 pages].

#### **Item#9**

THE NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION ACT AT FIFTEEN. Project Vote. Frances Fox Piven. July 2009.

Signed into law by President Clinton in May of 1993, the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) was hailed by some as “the final achievement of the 1960’s voting rights revolution,” and proponents estimated that it would add 50 million Americans to the voting rolls. However, according to the report, the lack of enforcement, failures of state and federal leadership, and restrictive court decisions have left the full potential of the NVRA unrealized, and have left millions of disenfranchised Americans still awaiting the promise of a truly inclusive democracy.

[Note: contains copyright material].

Full Text:

<http://www.projectvote.org/images/publications/NVRA/THE%20NVRA%20at%20FIFTEEN--A%20Report%20to%20Congress.pdf> [PDF format, 41 pages].

#### **Item#10**

SHOULD YOU CARRY A MORTGAGE INTO RETIREMENT? Center for Retirement Research at Boston College. Anthony Webb. July 2009.

Although it remains the goal of many households to repay their mortgage by retirement, an increasing proportion now enters retirement with a mortgage. At the same time, households are increasingly likely to hold substantial amounts of financial assets, as a result of the growth of 401(k) and similar plans. Among households aged 60 to 69 in 2007, 41 percent had a mortgage. Of these, 51 percent had sufficient assets to repay their mortgage. These households could, if they wanted, be mortgage-free simply by selling some of their investments and mailing a check to the lender.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

Full Text:

[http://crr.bc.edu/images/stories/Briefs/ib\\_9-15.pdf](http://crr.bc.edu/images/stories/Briefs/ib_9-15.pdf) [PDF format, 6 pages].

**Item#11**

SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR THE ECONOMIC CRISIS: THE U.S. EXPERIENCE. Brookings Institution. Gary Burtless. July 15, 2009.

As unemployment continues to climb, questions have arisen as to whether the stimulus package is working, how well it was designed and when it will have an impact. The author examines its composition, finding that efforts at creating a social safety net and fiscal relief for the states were appropriately targeted and are working

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

Full Text:

[http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2009/0715\\_social\\_protection\\_burtless/0715\\_social\\_protection\\_burtless.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2009/0715_social_protection_burtless/0715_social_protection_burtless.pdf)

[PDF format, 46 pages].

**Item#12**

UNEQUAL UNEMPLOYMENT: RACIAL DISPARITIES IN UNEMPLOYMENT VARY WIDELY BY STATE. Economic Policy Institute. Algernon Austin. July 15, 2009.

The United States is suffering its most severe economic crisis in decades. This economic hardship is not shared equally, however, and unemployment rates in many states are far worse than the national figures would suggest, according to the study. Furthermore, the differences between states mask sometimes greater gaps within them, gaps defined by wide, sometimes growing disparities in unemployment rates by race and ethnicity.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

Full Text:

[http://epi.3cdn.net/63e4d3a687f38a0312\\_r8m6bxs86.pdf](http://epi.3cdn.net/63e4d3a687f38a0312_r8m6bxs86.pdf) [PDF format, 4 pages].