



New documents on political and social issues

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EDUCATION

THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF REDUCING THE DROPOUT RATE AMONG STUDENTS OF COLOR IN THE NATION'S LARGEST METROPOLITAN AREAS

Alliance for Excellent Education, July 7, 2010

http://www.all4ed.org/publication_material/EconMSAassoc

Few people realize the impact that high school dropouts have on a community's economic, social, and civic health. Business owners and residents, in particular, those without school-aged children, may not be aware that they have much at stake in the success of their local high schools. Indeed, everyone, from car dealers and realtors to bank managers and local business owners, benefits when more students graduate from high school.

SPURRING INNOVATION THROUGH EDUCATION: FOUR IDEAS

Brookings Institution, June 2010

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2010/0603_innovation_whitehurst/pb_174.pdf

A nation's education system is a pillar of its economic strength and international competitiveness. The National Bureau of Economic Research analyzed data from 146 countries, collected between 1950 and 2010, and found that each year of additional average schooling attained by a population translates into at least a two percent increase in economic output. A 2007 World Bank policy research working paper reported similar results. Based on these findings, if the United States increased the average years of schooling completed by its adult population from the current 12 years to 13 years—that is, added one year of postsecondary education—our gross domestic product would rise by more than \$280 billion.

STATUS AND TRENDS IN THE EDUCATION OF RACIAL AND ETHNIC GROUPS

National Center for Education Statistics, July 14, 2010

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2010/2010015.pdf>

This report profiles current conditions and recent trends in the education of students by racial and ethnic group. It presents a selection of indicators that illustrate the educational achievement and attainment of White, Black, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander students.

STUDENT VICTIMIZATION IN U.S. SCHOOLS

National Center for Education Statistics, July 15, 2010

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2010/2010319.pdf>

This report uses data from the 2007 SCS to examine student criminal victimization and the characteristics of crime victims and nonvictims. It also provides findings on student reports of the presence of gangs and weapons and the availability of drugs at school, student reports of bullying and cyberbullying, and fear and avoidance behaviors of crime victims and nonvictims at school.

ELECTIONS

VOTING INTENTIONS EVEN, TURNOUT INDICATORS FAVOR GOP

The Pew Research Center for People and the Press, July 1st, 2010

<http://people-press.org/reports/pdf/630.pdf>

With four months to go before Election Day, voting intentions for the House remain closely divided, and neither party has gained or lost much ground over the course of 2010. However, Republicans are much more engaged in the coming election and more inclined to say they are certain to vote than are Democrats. This could translate into a sizable turnout advantage for the GOP in November that could transform an even race among registered voters into a solid victory for the Republicans.

IMMIGRATION

BRICK BY BRICK: A HALF-DECADE OF IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT AND THE NEED FOR COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

Center for American Progress, June 28, 2010

http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/06/pdf/dhs_enforcement.pdf

The United States has undertaken a massive immigration enforcement initiative over the past five years. The report that follows, written by C. Stewart Verdery, assistant secretary for border and transportation security policy at the Department of Homeland Security from 2003-2005, catalogues the spectrum of measures and the breadth of enforcement resources that have been deployed during this period.

FOCUS REMAINS ON ARIZONA AS JUSTICE DEPARTMENT FILES LAWSUIT AGAINST SB 1070

Migration Policy Institute, July 15, 2010

<http://www.migrationinformation.org/USfocus/display.cfm?ID=789>

Just days after President Barack Obama gave his first major address on immigration since assuming office, the Justice Department brought a lawsuit against the state of Arizona, challenging the constitutionality of its new immigration law.

INDIAN IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

Migration Policy Institute, June 2010

<http://www.migrationinformation.org/USfocus/display.cfm?id=785>

The United States is home to about 1.6 million Indian immigrants, making them the third-largest immigrant group in the United States after Mexican and Filipino immigrants. Between 2007 and 2008, the number of Indian immigrants surpassed the number of Chinese and Hong Kong-born immigrants for the first time since at least 1960.

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT ON COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

The White House, July 1st, 2010

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-comprehensive-immigration-reform>

President Obama calls for both parties to come together to fix a broken immigration system and implement comprehensive reform that demands accountability from government, from businesses, and from individuals.

TAKING ACTION AGAINST ARIZONA: FEDERAL LAWSUIT AGAINST ARIZONA PROTECTS PEOPLE AND THE CONSTITUTION

Center for American Progress, July 8, 2010

http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/07/arizona_lawsuit.html

The U.S. Department of Justice was forced to take action because Arizona's immigration law violates the U.S. Constitution. Allowing Arizona S.B. 1070 to stand would only invite other states and cities to enact their own immigration enforcement laws and usurp the federal responsibility over an issue that must be handled at the national level.

TOUGH, FAIR, AND PRACTICAL: A HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORK FOR IMMIGRATION REFORM IN THE UNITED STATES

Human Rights Watch, July 8, 2010

<http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2010/07/09/tough-fair-and-practical>

Americans from all political perspectives agree that US immigration laws need to be fixed. While some emphasize the need to be tough in enforcing immigration law, others emphasize the importance of fairness. Human rights law offers a practical framework embracing both of these policy goals that is in the interests of citizens and non-citizens alike, contends the report.

LABOR

OPENING DOORS: HOW TO MAKE THE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT WORK FOR WOMEN

Center for American Progress, July 1st, 2010

<http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/07/pdf/wia.pdf>

The U.S. workforce development system is not meeting the needs of one half of our workforce—women. The Workforce Investment Act is a critical tool for employment and training for American workers. But WIA emphasizes quick job placement over building skills or attaining education, and the system is not set up to recognize and prevent unequal results of women or other participants.

WHY IS THE PUBLIC SUDDENLY DOWN ON UNIONS?

Center for American Progress, July 20, 2010

http://www.americanprogressaction.org/issues/2010/07/pdf/union_opinion.pdf

Americans have expressed generally positive attitudes toward unions for as long as pollsters have been asking, and for decades public approval of labor unions has hovered around 60 percent. But starting in 2009 public opinion toward labor unions dropped precipitously. Why?

MEDIA

NEW MEDIA, OLD MEDIA: HOW BLOGS AND SOCIAL MEDIA AGENDAS RELATE AND DIFFER FROM THE TRADITIONAL PRESS

Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, May 23, 2010

<http://www.journalism.org/node/20621>

News today is increasingly a shared, social experience. Half of Americans say they rely on the people around them to find out at least some of the news they need to know. Some 44% of online news users get news at least a few times a week through emails, automatic updates or posts from social networking sites. In 2009, Twitter's monthly audience increased by 200%.

While most original reporting still comes from traditional journalists, technology makes it increasingly possible for the actions of citizens to influence a story's total impact.

POVERTY

CHILDHOOD POVERTY PERSISTENCE: FACTS AND CONSEQUENCES

Urban Institute, June 30, 2010

<http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/412126-child-poverty-persistence.pdf>

The U.S. child poverty rate has fluctuated between 15 and 23 percent for the past four decades, but far more children—37 percent—live in poverty at some point during their childhoods. Being poor at birth strongly predicts future poverty status. This study finds that 49 percent of children who are poor at birth go on to spend at least half their childhoods living in poverty. In addition, children who are born into poverty and spend multiple years living in poor families have worse adult outcomes than their counterparts in higher-income families.

REDUCING POVERTY AND ECONOMIC DISTRESS AFTER ARRA: NEXT STEPS FOR SHORT-TERM RECOVERY AND LONG-TERM ECONOMIC SECURITY

Urban Institute, July 2010

<http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/412150-next-steps-ARRA.pdf>

As unemployment in this recession holds near 10 percent and a growing number of Americans becomes impoverished, much work remains to reduce and respond to poverty and economic distress. In part, this work can build on the provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), better known as the stimulus package, which has moderated the effects of the recession but will soon phase out.

RELIGION

AMERICAN CULTURE AND THE MUSLIM WORLD

Brookings Institution, June 30, 2010

http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2010/0630_muslim_world_skerry.aspx

When Barack Obama was elected president in 2008, expectations were raised for a new political era. At home, many Americans hoped for an end to political polarization and the so-called culture wars. Abroad, millions more looked forward to America's recommitment to engagement and consultation with the rest of the world. As the 2010 congressional elections approach and the midpoint of Obama's four-year term looms, it is a good time to reassess such expectations.

WIDESPREAD SUPPORT FOR BANNING FULL ISLAMIC VEIL IN WESTERN EUROPE: MOST AMERICANS DISAPPROVE

Pew Research Center, July 8, 2010

<http://pewglobal.org/files/pdf/pew-global-attitudes-report-on-veil-ban-july-8.pdf>

On July 13, the French parliament voted on a bill that makes it illegal for Muslim women to wear full veils. A survey by the Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project finds that the French public overwhelmingly endorses this measure; 82% approve of a ban on Muslim women wearing full veils in public, including schools, hospitals and government offices, while just 17% disapprove.

Majorities in Germany (71%), Britain (62%) and Spain (59%) would also support a similar ban in their own countries. In contrast, most Americans would oppose such a measure; 65% say they would disapprove of a ban on Muslim women wearing full veils in public places compared with 28% who say they would approve.

SOCIAL MEDIA

THE FUTURE OF SOCIAL RELATIONS

Pew Research Center, July 2nd, 2010

http://www.pewinternet.org/~media/Files/Reports/2010/PIP_Future_of_Internet_%202010_social_relations.pdf

The social benefits of internet use will far outweigh the negatives over the next decade, according to experts who responded to a survey about the future of the internet. They say this is because email, social networks, and other online tools offer 'low-friction' opportunities to create, enhance, and rediscover social ties that make a difference in people's lives. The internet lowers traditional communications constraints of cost, geography, and time; and it supports the type of open information sharing that brings people together.

URBAN ISSUES

FACING THE URBAN CHALLENGE: THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND AMERICA'S OLDER DISTRESSED CITIES

Urban Institute, June 9, 2010

<http://www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=1001392>

Many of the nation's older, industrial cities have experienced a sharp drop in jobs and population over the last several decades, and the recession has only aggravated this problem. The federal government's role in addressing urban decline has historically been uncoordinated and inconsistent, even as these cities are home to invaluable institutional and physical assets. If the government chooses to promote remediation and growth, a new unified approach will be required. This paper examines the causes and effects of widespread urban decline and proposes strategies for a renewed federal response that targets assets and facilitates new uses for vacant space.

All previous web alerts can be found at:
<http://france.usembassy.gov/web-alert.html>