



Economic and Financial Crisis



Visit to New Zealand by US Economic Expert

Just weeks before the G20 meetings in London, the U.S. Embassy hosted a visit to New Zealand by Dr Jerry Jordon, President of the Pacific Academy for Advanced Studies and a leading U.S. economist.

During his visit Dr Jordan examined the origins of the global financial crisis and the lessons to be learned through considering those origins. Dr Jordan also explored mechanisms available to address the financial crisis, and outlined the possible responses of U.S. and global leaders. From a U.S. perspective, he offered insight into the ongoing discussions of the crisis within the U.S. economic community, and the anticipated effects of the Obama administration's strategies to manage the crisis.

RELATED RESOURCES

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

In the face of an economic crisis, the magnitude of which we have not seen since the Great Depression, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act represents a strategic investment in America's future. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will be carried out with full transparency and accountability.

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It offers abstracts of current articles from U.S. publications and by U.S. authors, highlighting significant issues in international or U.S. domestic affairs. **Views expressed in the articles cited are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect U.S. government policies.**

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Economics/Finance/Trade

Causes of the Financial Crisis by Mark Jickling. *Congressional Research Service (CRS)*. February 11, 2009.

A First Look at the Foundation and Corporate Response to the Economic Crisis by Steven Lawrence
Foundation Center, January 2009.

The report is an examination of foundation and corporate support in response to the current economic crisis. It is part of a research series intended to shed light on the impact of the economic downturn on the nonprofit sector.
[Note: contains copyrighted material]

ARTICLE 113

2009 Threat Predictions. *McAfee*. January 2009.

According to the report, the exploitation of the financial crisis to scam users with fake financial transactions services, fake investment firms, and fake legal services continues. The report examines the accuracy of last year's predictions and provides new insight as to where computer security threats are headed this year.
[Note: contains copyrighted material]

ARTICLE114

Economic Stimulus: Issues and Policies. *CRS*, January 2009.

The need for additional fiscal stimulus depends on the state of the economy. Fiscal policy temporarily stimulates the economy through an increase in spending which also, if not offset by increases in revenue, increases the budget deficit... Economists generally agree that spending proposals are somewhat more stimulative than tax cuts since part of a tax cut may be saved by the recipients.

ARTICLE 115

The Global Financial Crisis: Getting Past the Blame Game by Eswar Prasad, *Brookings*, January 2009.

A worldwide crisis calls for a global villain. And there is indeed one at hand – global macroeconomic imbalances, characterised by large current account deficits in the US and a few other advanced industrial countries, with these deficits financed by excess savings in China and many other emerging market economies.

ARTICLE 116

The Global Government Debt Bubble Threatens the Economy by J.D. Foster. *The Heritage Foundation*, January 2009.

The United States appears headed toward a multi-trillion-dollar increase in publicly traded federal debt in just the next two years. This debt explosion is likely to raise interest rates significantly for government debt, thereby increasing interest costs for future generations. This policy will increase interest rates for all private debt such as home mortgages, consumer loans, and business loans. [ARTICLE 117](#)

Russia's Drive for Global Economic Power: A Challenge for the Obama Administration by Ariel Cohen. *The Heritage Foundation*, January 2009.

The U.S. should cooperate with its friends and allies on combating excessive dependency (beyond 25-30 percent) on Russian strategic raw materials and energy exports, such as oil, gas, coal, and electricity. What is needed is a global security system for tracking investment activities by Russia and other anti-Western governments in industries and sectors with defense and security implications. [ARTICLE 118](#)

US and China: Grappling Over Economic Rescue – Part I by Xu Sitao. *YaleGlobal*, January 2009.

China's coupon schemes, aimed at boosting domestic consumer spending, ignite heated debate. [ARTICLE 119](#)

Gloomy Portents for Global Trade by Lee Hudson Teslik. *Council on Foreign Relations*, January 2009.

Davos was different this year. Amidst the worst economic crisis in decades, the World Economic Forum's annual mega-summit in the Swiss Alps found itself at a crossroads. [ARTICLE 120](#)

NFTC Cautions Against Global Protectionism in Response to Financial Crisis by Jennifer Cummings. *National Foreign Trade Council*, January 2009.

In response to a report released late last week by the World Trade Organization (WTO), which revealed that key U.S. trading partners are imposing higher tariffs on exports, National Foreign Trade Council issues a response statement. [Note: contains copyrighted material] [ARTICLE 121](#)

Report to the TPRB from the Director-General on the Financial and Economic Crisis and Trade-Related Developments.

Meeting Multifamily Housing Finance Needs During and After the Credit Crisis: a policy brief. *Joint Center for Housing Studies*, Harvard University. January 2009.

The study contends that the policymakers must recognize the important differences between single-family and multifamily financing and take steps to ensure an adequate supply of capital to the multifamily sector during and after the economic crisis. The paper details the growing importance of rental apartments and points to a looming liquidity crisis that could seriously impair the sector, leading to a critical housing shortage. [ARTICLE 122](#)

Global Economic Slump Challenges Policies. World Economic Outlook Update. *IMF*, January 2009.

World growth is projected to fall to 1.2 percent in 2009, its lowest rate since World War II. A sustained economic recovery will not be possible until the financial sector's functionality is restored and credit markets are unclogged. To do so, the study claims that the international cooperation will be critical in designing and implementing these policies. [ARTICLE 123](#)

The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2009 to 2019. *Congressional Budget Office*. January 2009.

Budget of the United States Government: Fiscal Year 2010. *U.S. Office of Management and Budget*. Feb. 2009.

Strengthening Our Economy: the untapped US oil and gas resources by H. Vidas & B. Hugman. American Petroleum Institute. Web posted February 1, 2009.

The development of America's vast domestic oil and natural gas resources that had been kept off-limits by Congress for decades could generate more than \$1.7 trillion in government revenue, create thousands of new jobs and enhance the nation's energy security by significantly boosting domestic production, says the study. The study also estimates that the development of all U.S. oil and natural gas resources on federal lands could exceed \$4 trillion over the life of the resources. [ARTICLE 124](#)

US Metro Economies: the engines of economic recovery. *US Conf. of Mayors & Council for the New American City.* January 2009.

The key findings include: unemployment will rise in metro areas in 2009, shrinking GDP, growing unemployment nationwide, regional impacts, metro areas are essential to national economic recovery. **ARTICLE 125**

Reality Bites: economy fouls mood by Mark Jurkowitz. *Pew Research Center.* February 2009.

In a sign of how quickly the media narrative has shifted from pomp and circumstance to layoffs and bankruptcy, the grim U.S. economy was the overwhelmingly dominant story one week after Barack Obama's festive inauguration. The financial crisis filled 45% of the coverage studied from Jan 26-Feb. 1, as measured by the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism. **ARTICLE 126**

Corporate Welfare: now a \$182 billion addiction. *Fraser Institute.* Web posted January 23, 2009.

While politicians in Ottawa argue over how much additional money the government should give business in the name of economic stimulation, the report shows that Canadians already provided more than \$182 billion in corporate welfare to businesses between 1994 and 2006. That works out to \$13,639 per tax payer over that twelve-year period or \$1,291 per tax payer in 2006 alone. **ARTICLE 127**

Buy American Hurts America by Daniella Markheim. *The Heritage Foundation.* January 2009

Advocates of Buy American rules claim that limiting competition for U.S. government contracts to domestic firms will protect U.S. jobs and help prop up firms in troubled industries. **ARTICLE 128**

The Economic Crisis and the Financial Crisis: 2009 and beyond by A. Auerbach and W. Gale. *Urban Institute.* February 2009.

In 2009, the federal deficit will be larger as a share of the economy than at any time since the 1940s. After 2009, the Institute projects an average deficit of \$1 trillion per year for the next 10 years. The longer-run picture is even bleaker, with a fiscal gap of 7-9 percent of GDP, between \$1 trillion and \$1.3 trillion annually in current dollars. Recent trends in credit default swap markets suggest that although fiscal policy problems are usually described as medium- and long-term issues, these problems may be upon us much sooner than previously expected. **ARTICLE 129**

US Export Fact Sheet. *International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.* February 11, 2009.

The Small Business Economy: a report to the president. U.S. Small Business Administration. February 2009.

Joint Statement by Secretary of the Treasury Timothy F. Geithner, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System Ben S. Bernanke, Chairman of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Shelia Bair, Comptroller of the Currency John C. Dugan, and Director of the Office of Thrift Supervision John M. Reich. *Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.* February 12, 2009.

A comprehensive set of measures to restore confidence in the strength of U.S. financial institutions and to restart the critical flow of credit to households and businesses has been announced. The program will help lay the groundwork for restoring the flows of credit necessary to support recovery. **ARTICLE 130**

Obama Administration

Closing the Guantanamo Detention Center: legal issues. by Michael John Garcia et al. *CRS.* January 2009.

The report provides an overview of major legal issues likely to arise in the event of executive and/or legislative action to close the Guantanamo detention facility. It discusses issues related to the transfer or release of detainees, either to a foreign country or into the United States, the continued detention of such persons in the United States, and the possible removal of persons brought to the United States. **ARTICLE 131**

President Obama's Weekly Address. The White House Blog.

The President's State of the Union Address: tradition, function, and policy implications by Colleen J. Shogan and Thomas H. Neale. *CRS.* Web posted January 29, 2009.

The State of the Union (SOTU) address is a communication between the President and Congress in which the chief executive reports on the current conditions of the United States and provides policy proposals for the upcoming legislative year. In recent decades, the President has expanded his State of the Union audience,

addressing the speech to both the nation and Members of Congress. Over time, the State of the Union address has evolved considerably. The format and delivery of the speech has changed, and its length has fluctuated widely. Technology has also influenced the delivery of the address, with the advent of radio, television, and the Internet playing significant roles in the transformation. **ARTICLE 132**

Asia/ Pacific Region

North Korea After Kim by Jayshree Bajoria. *Council on Foreign Relations*. January 28, 2009.

Speculation over Kim Jong-Il's health has prompts discussion about the future of the isolated country and its nuclear weapons program. Most experts believe a post-Kim North Korea regime would remain a tough nuclear negotiator. [Note: contains copyrighted material] **ARTICLE 133**

Bainimarama Has No Plan For Elections in Fiji. Press Statement by Robert Wood. *US State Dept*. Jan. 2009.

China's Military Power by Jayshree Bajoria. Backgrounder, *Council on Foreign Relations*. February 2009.

Since the 1990s, China has dramatically improved its military capabilities on land and sea, in the air, and in space. Looking decades ahead, U.S. military planners clearly see the potential for China to develop as a "peer competitor." **ARTICLE 134**

Timor-Leste: no time for complacency. *International Crisis Group*. February 9, 2009.

A year after the near-fatal shooting of President José Ramos-Horta, security in Timor-Leste is strikingly improved, according to the report. Armed rebels are no longer at large. The atmosphere on the streets of Dili is far less tense. Nevertheless, the current period of calm is not cause for complacency. Security sector reform is lagging, the justice system is weak, the government shows signs of intolerance towards dissenting voices, and it has not got a grip on corruption. **ARTICLE 135**

New APEC Business Advisory Council Members Named. *US State Dept*. January 2009.

Introduction to "China's Growing Role in World Trade" by Robert C. Feenstra and Shang-Jin Wei. Working Paper, *National Bureau of Economic Research*. 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. **ARTICLE 136**

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. **ARTICLE 137**

Legal

Supreme Court Decisions. *U.S. Supreme Court*. Web posted January 27, 2009.

Nelson v. U.S.

Van de Kamp v. Goldstein

Arizona v. Johnson

United States v. Eurodif S.A.

Crawford v. Nashville and Davidson County, Tenn.

Middle East

Iraq's Political Landscape by Greg Bruno. *Council on Foreign Relations*. January 29, 2009.

Iraq has held multiple national and local elections since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion ousted Saddam Hussein, but ethnic and sectarian violence has impeded political progress. Although there have been scattered assassinations and reports of intimidation leading up to elections, most experts agree the emergence of hundreds of new parties and thousands of candidates illustrate the maturation of the Iraqi political system. [ARTICLE 138](#)

Israel and Hamas: conflict in Gaza (2008-2009) by Jim Zanotti et al. *CRS*. Web posted January 29, 2009.

On December 27, 2008, Israel launched a major military campaign dubbed Operation Cast Lead against the Palestinian Islamist militant group Hamas in the Gaza Strip in order to counter Palestinian rocket fire and, more broadly, to significantly weaken all aspects of Hamas rule in Gaza. On January 3, 2009, Israel began a ground offensive into Gaza intended to eliminate Hamas's willingness or capability to launch rockets at Israeli towns and cities. [ARTICLE 139](#)

How Soon is Safe?: Iraqi Force Development and Conditions-Based US Withdrawals by Anthony H. Cordesman and Adam Mausner. *Center for Strategic & International Studies*. February 19, 2009.

The U.S. and Iraq now face a transition period that may well be as challenging as defeating the insurgency, Al Qaeda in Iraq, and the threat from militias like the Mahdi Army. These challenges are described in the status report on the tensions that divide Iraq, and the continuing threats that Iraq faces internally and from its neighbors. [ARTICLE 140](#)

Islamic Peace Making Since 9/11 by David Smock and Qamar-ul Huda. *US Institute of Peace*. January 2009.

Violent extremists are on one edge of the Muslim community. They are counter-balanced by a growing movement of Muslim peacemakers. Equally as notable as Islamic militancy but less noted are Muslims' 1) widespread condemnation of terrorism and other violent acts; 2) promotion of interfaith dialogue; 3) education of Muslim youth and reeducation of extremist Muslims; and 4) promotion of peaceful conflict resolution. [ARTICLE 141](#)

Hard Lessons: the Iraq Reconstruction Experience. *Special Insp. Gen. for Iraq Reconstruction*. Feb. 2009.

The Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) reviews the Iraq reconstruction experience from mid-2002 through the fall of 2008. This report arises from the congressional mandate to provide "advice and recommendations on policies to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness" in programs created for Iraq's relief and reconstruction." [ARTICLE 142](#)

Iran and the Future of Afghanistan by Greg Bruno and Lionel Beehner. Backgrounder, *CFR*. Feb 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, says Washington and Iran could coalesce around stabilizing Afghanistan. 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. [ARTICLE 143](#)

The Serpent in our Garden: Al-Qa'ida and the Long War by Col. Brian M. Drinkwine. *Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College*. January 26, 2009.

The paper discusses al-Qa'ida and Salafi-Jihadists and recommends new approaches to fighting terrorism. The author explores al-Qa'ida's organization, leaders, doctrine, and their radical ideologies and includes recommendations to assist future planners in the development of a grand national strategy. [ARTICLE 144](#)

Securing, Stabilizing, and Developing Pakistan's Border Area with Afghanistan. *US Govt Accountability Office*. Web posted February 23, 2009.

Since 2002, destroying the terrorist threat and closing the terrorist safe haven along Pakistan's border with Afghanistan have been key national security goals. The United States has provided Pakistan, an important ally in the war on terror, with more than \$12.3 billion for a variety of activities, in part to address these goals. As the United States considers how it will go forward with efforts to assist Pakistan in securing, stabilizing, and developing its FATA and Western Frontier bordering Afghanistan, it is vital that efforts to develop a comprehensive plan using all elements of national power be completed and that continued oversight and accountability over funds used for these efforts are in place. [ARTICLE 145](#)

Iraq: U.S. Casualties. *Congressional Research Service.* Susan G. Chesser. Web posted February 2009.

Radical Islam in East Africa. *RAND Corporation.* February 2009.

Turning the Tide in Afghanistan: A Discussion with Senator Joseph Lieberman (video and text)

Country Analysis Brief: Iran. *Energy Information Administration.* February 2009.

Security & Defense

Factsheet: U.S. Conventional Weapons Destruction Program in Afghanistan *US State Dept.* Jan. 2009.

Combating Maritime Piracy by Stephanie Hanson. *Council on Foreign Relations.* January 27, 2009.

Maritime piracy has been on the rise for years, according to the study. But until 2008, when pirates operating off the coast of Somalia hijacked a ship full of Russian tanks and an oil supertanker, the crime drew limited international attention. By early 2009, more than a dozen countries had deployed their navies to the Gulf of Aden to counter piracy, and the United Nations passed four resolutions in 2008 on the issue. The complexities of international maritime law make it difficult to prosecute pirates once they are caught. **ARTICLE 146**

Domestics Trends in the US, China, and Iran: Implications for US Navy Strategic Planning by John Gordon IV et al. *RAND Corporation.* January 23, 2009.

How well the U.S. Navy prepares for a high-end future conflict against a powerful, well-armed opponent versus the so-called Long War against rogue nations and terrorist organizations depends on the evolution of U.S. relations with China and Iran. The report examines emerging nonmilitary trends in each of the three countries. The authors investigate current and projected domestic developments in the areas of demographics, economics, energy consumption, the environment, and education. **ARTICLE 147**

Revitalizing the Transatlantic Security Partnership: an agenda for action by F. Stephen Larrabee and Julian Lindley-French. *RAND Corporation.* Web posted February 5, 2009.

During the course of 2008, the RAND Corporation and the Bertelsmann Foundation's Venusberg Group sponsored a series of U.S.-European discussions examining future security challenges confronting the United States and Europe in the context of the election of a new American president. The report refers to those discussions and seeks to define the substance and parameters of a new security partnership between the United States and Europe as well as to outline an agenda for action for the new partnership. **ARTICLE 148**

Director Blair Highlights Global Threats to the Nation. *Office of the Dir. of National Intelligence.* Feb 2009.

The statement outlines the most significant global security threats facing the nation. Recognizing that global threats comprise a diverse set of issues and factors, Director Blair framed the analysis by identifying key areas of risk, concern and opportunity that could have direct effects on the quality of life and security for Americans. The hearing also marked the first occasion where the Director, the leader of the nation's Intelligence Community, was the sole witness providing comprehensive analysis from all 16 intelligence agencies. **ARTICLE 149**

Education

Proposed Funding for Education in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 by Rebecca R. Skinner et al. *CRS.* January 22, 2009.

The report provides a brief overview of the key provisions related to education programs that are or would be administered by ED that were included in the act under Title IX (Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education) and Title XII (State Fiscal Stabilization Fund). **ARTICLE 150**

The Cost of Quality Out-of-School-Time Programs by J.B. Grossman et al. *Wallace Foundation.* Jan. 2009.

Out-of-school time (OST) programs are increasingly expected to be of high enough quality to produce real benefits for children, but until now there has been little information on what such quality programming costs. The report provides a data-filled examination of the costs of 111 diverse, quality OST programs in six cities. The report finds that costs vary widely depending on a range of factors from program goals to times of operation and the ages of the children served. **ARTICLE 151**

Math: what's the problem? *National Science Foundation*. Web posted January 27, 2009.

International assessments show U.S. math students outperformed by those in many other countries. The research illuminates the role of teaching, curriculum and technology in math education, and demonstrates the importance of math education to all citizens. [ARTICLE 152](#)

Educational Attainment in the US: 2007. *U.S. Census Bureau*. January 2009.

A larger percentage of foreign-born than native-born residents had a master's degree or higher in 2007, according to the report. Nationally, 11 percent of foreign-born — people from another country now living in the United States, and 10 percent of U.S.-born residents had an advanced degree. [ARTICLE 153](#)

Course Credit Accrual and Dropping out of High School, by Student Characteristics. *National Center for Education Statistics*. February 2009.

The study examines the number of credits earned by high school students and the relationship between course credit accrual and dropping out. Findings indicate that high school dropouts earned fewer credits than did on-time graduates within each year of high school, and the cumulative course credit accrual gap increased with each subsequent year. The pattern of dropouts earning fewer credits than on-time graduates remained across all examined student and school characteristics, student sex, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, school location, and sophomore class size. [ARTICLE 154](#)

Squeeze Play 2009: the public's views on college costs today. *Public Agenda*. February 6, 2009.

Americans see higher education as increasingly unaffordable, at the same time that more Americans view college as essential for middle-class success. In addition, more than half say colleges and universities act more like businesses than educational institutions, according to a national survey of 1,009 adults. [ARTICLE 155](#)

Labor/Employment

Performance 2009: Productivity, Employment, and Growth in the World's Economies. *The Conference Board*. January 22, 2009.

Despite a slowdown in world productivity in 2008, output per hour worked in the United States increased slightly by 1.7 percent, up from 1.5 percent in 2007, according to the latest annual. The most recent productivity advances have been realized, however, through rapid layoffs, suggesting that the productivity of remaining workers and firms is actually strengthening. [ARTICLE 156](#)

Volunteering in the U.S., 2008. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *U.S. Department of Labor*. January 2009.

About 61.8 million people, or 26.4 percent of the population, volunteered through or for an organization at least once between September 2007 and September 2008. Both the level and rate of volunteering were essentially unchanged from the prior year. [ARTICLE 157](#)

Global Employment Trends. *International Labour Organization*. January 28, 2009.

The global economic crisis is expected to lead to a dramatic increase in the number of people joining the ranks of the unemployed, working poor and those in vulnerable employment, according to the report. Based on new developments in the labor market and depending on the timeliness and effectiveness of recovery efforts, the report says global unemployment in 2009 could increase over 2007 by a range of 18 million to 30 million workers, and more than 50 million if the situation continues to deteriorate. [ARTICLE 158](#)

Unemployed and Uninsured in America. FamiliesUSA. February 2009.

The study analyzes the health coverage status of unemployed workers with low and moderate incomes, including national and state-level data. [ARTICLE 159](#)

Obama's Job Creation Promise: a modest proposal to guarantee that he meets and exceeds expectations by Pavlina R. Tcherneva. *Levy Economics Institute of Bard College*. January 2009.

Job creation is once again at the forefront of policy action, and for advocates of pro-employment policies, President Obama's Keynesian bent is a most welcome change. However, there are concerns that Obama's plan simply does not go far enough, and that a large-scale public investment program may face shortages of skilled labor, put upward pressure on wages, and leave women and minorities behind. Both concerns can be addressed by a simple amendment to the Obama plan that will bring important additional benefits, suggest the report. [ARTICLE 160](#)

Working Hard for the Money: trends in women's employment 1970 to 2007 by Kristin Smith. *Carsey Institute*. Web posted January 30, 2009.

Rural married women, mothers and not, are clocking in at work more often today than even their urban counterparts, and since 2000, more married than single women are in the workforce in rural areas, a first. In 2006, 70 percent of married women with children under age 6 in rural areas worked for pay compared with 64 percent in urban areas. The report cites the reasons for this difference. [**ARTICLE 161**](#)

Unemployment Insurance: current situation and potential reforms by Wayne Vroman. *Urban Institute*. February 3, 2009.

The paper summarizes the current situation of state unemployment insurance (UI) programs in the United States. It describes benefit recipient, UI trust fund balances and administrative financing. Policies are recommended to increase solvency of the trust funds, raise recipient rates and to improve the adequacy of administrative funding. [**ARTICLE 162**](#)

Getting Covered: Finding Health Insurance When You Lose Your Job.

Energy & Climate Change

Wind Energy Grows by Record 8,300 MW in 2008. *American Wind Energy Association*. January 27, 2009.

The U.S. wind energy industry shattered all previous records in 2008 by installing 8,358 megawatts (MW) of new generating capacity, enough to serve over 2 million homes, reports the study. The massive growth in 2008 swelled the nation's total wind power generating capacity by 50% and channeled an investment of some \$17 billion into the economy, positioning wind power as one of the leading sources of new power generation in the country today along with natural gas. [**ARTICLE 163**](#)

Double Jeopardy: what the climate change crisis means for the poor by Vinca LaFleur et al. *Brookings Institution*. Web posted February 3, 2009.

More than fifty preeminent policymakers, practitioners, and thought leaders from around the world convened at the Aspen Institute to explore the links between global climate change and poverty alleviation. According to the report, the roundtable sought to shape a common agenda to tackle two of the greatest challenges, climate change and poverty, of our time. [**ARTICLE 164**](#)

Healthier Oceans, Healthier Economies. *Oceana*. January 2009.

The report shows how the World Trade Organization (WTO) is in a key position to help ensure the long-term viability of the world's fisheries. It establishes the need and urgency for the WTO to produce a successful agreement in its ongoing fisheries subsidies negotiations. [**ARTICLE 165**](#)

Oil Market Report. *International Energy Agency*. February 11, 2009.

Coinciding with the official suspension on January 1, 2009 of Indonesia's membership of OPEC, the International Energy Agency has made some changes to the way it categorizes and aggregates OPEC and non OPEC oil production data in the report. Henceforward, primary totals for OPEC oil production will comprise only the current 12 members: Algeria, Angola, Ecuador, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Venezuela. It will apply to all historical totals as well as to forecasts of gas liquids and non-conventional oil supplies. At the same time, non-OPEC totals and regional sub-totals will be adjusted to exclude all current OPEC members back through the historical time series as well as for the forecast. [**ARTICLE 166**](#)

Green Power Superhighways: building a path to America's clean energy future. *American Wind Energy Association and Solar Energy Industries Association*. February 2009.

The report details current inadequacies of the U.S. electric transmission infrastructure and offering policy solutions to address them. According to the report, inadequate transmission capacity is a significant barrier to renewable energy development in the U.S. The release of the paper comes at a critical time. President Obama and Congress have made strong commitments to renewable energy as a driver for jobs creation and economic growth, but the nation's renewable energy resources cannot reach their full potential without renewed investment in our transmission infrastructure. [**ARTICLE 167**](#)

Land Use Effects of US Corn-Based Ethanol by T. Darlington. *Air Improvements Resource, Inc.* Feb. 2009.

The study assesses land use changes and related greenhouse gas (GHG) emission impacts due to expansion of corn-based ethanol production in the United States. The land use change estimates discussed in the paper were developed for a scenario where U.S. corn-based ethanol production expands from approximately 2 billion gallons per year in 2000/2001 to 15 billion gallons per year (bgy) in 2015/16. The overall conclusion of the report is that 15 bgy of corn ethanol production in 2015/16 should not result in new forest or grassland conversion in the U.S. or abroad.

ARTICLE 168

Contribution of the Ethanol Industry to the Economy of the U.S.

The 2008 Oil Price Shock: competing explanations and policy implications by Timo Behr. Global Public Policy Institute. 2009.

Throughout 2008, world oil markets experienced volatility on an unprecedented scale. While crude oil prices shot up to the dizzying heights of almost \$150 per barrel by the middle of the year, they came plunging down to close to \$40 per barrel by December. The paper analyzes the debate on the causes behind oil price volatility by disentangling the competing arguments and reviewing the evidence that supports them.

ARTICLE 169

Thirsty Energy: water and energy in the 21st century. *World Economic Forum.* February 2009.

The report explores the risks and opportunities inherent in the ancient relationship between energy and water, which has taken on a new urgency as competition for finite freshwater resources rises. According to the report, water is critical to energy production, yet the water/energy nexus is often overlooked.

ARTICLE 170

Smart Choice for Biofuels by J. Earley and A. McKeown. *Sierra Club and Worldwatch Institute.* Feb. 2009.

The report highlights the need for policy reforms at this critical juncture in America's effort to increase the use of biofuels. It outlines the economic and environmental impacts of first-generation biofuels such as corn ethanol, proposes strategies to make the biofuels industry more sustainable, and offers specific policy recommendations.

ARTICLE 171

Seventh Report to Congress on Progress Made in Licensing and Constructing the Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. February 20, 2009.

Environment

Connecting the Dots: managing risk in an environment of unprecedented uncertainty by Bill Martin. *Commonfund.* Web posted January 28, 2009.

The level of uncertainty and unpredictability created by current events, according to the report, has undermined confidence in the risk management techniques built for normal market environments and for stress and scenario analyses that are related to historical experience.

ARTICLE 172

Coastal Security to Sea Level Rise: a focus on the mid-Atlantic regions. *US Geological Survey.* Jan. 2009.

The report discusses the impacts of sea level rise on the coast, coastal communities, and the habitats and species that depend on them. It examines multiple opportunities for governments and coastal communities to plan for and adapt to rising sea levels. Sea-level rise can affect coastal communities and habitats in a variety of different ways, including submerging low-lying lands, eroding beaches, converting wetlands to open water, intensifying coastal flooding, and increasing the salinity of estuaries and freshwater aquifers. It is caused by a number of natural and human-induced factors and can vary by region.

ARTICLE 173

Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs: do energy-savings outweigh mercury hazard? By Donna Heron. U.S. *Environmental Protection Agency.* January 29, 2009.

Many people are turning to compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs), which use 75 percent less energy and last up to 10 times longer than incandescent bulbs, to save energy. However, there is also a concern because CFLs contain a small amount of mercury. According to the U.S. EPA, "It would take 100 CFLs to equal the amount of mercury contained in older thermometers, which is about 500 milligrams."

ARTICLE 174

Mercury-Containing Light Bulb (Lamp) Recycling

Why Utilities are not Well-Suited to Deliver Relief to Low and Moderate-Income Consumers in a Climate Bill by Chad Stone and Robert Greenstein. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. February 19, 2009.

The most efficient way to protect low- and moderate-income consumers is through a "climate rebate," which would directly compensate families for their purchasing power losses, using revenues from a cap-and-trade system or carbon tax, according to the report. [**ARTICLE 175**](#)

Annual Ranking of Green Vehicles Shows Progress Despite Tough Times by Shruti Vaidyanathan and Therese Langer. American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy. February 3, 2009.

Despite the beating taken by the auto industry in 2008 and more tough times ahead, manufacturers are fine-tuning their engines and transmissions, improving materials, and adding emissions control technologies get a head start on meeting tightened federal fuel economy standards. Worries over the economy and future gas prices are driving interest in high fuel economy vehicles as well, says the author. This year's greenest title goes once again to Honda's natural gas-powered Civic GX. [**ARTICLE 176**](#)

Human Rights

UNICEF Humanitarian Action Report 2009. *UNICEF*, United Nations. January 2009.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) launches an annual humanitarian funding appeal for children and women affected by protracted emergencies. In 2009, the appeal covers 36 countries. The report includes regional and country chapters, outlines the funding requirements for 2009 in each of the countries and provides an overview of 2008 emergency funding. [**ARTICLE 177**](#)

Global Report in Trafficking in Persons. *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*. February 2009.

The report provides new information, based on data gathered from 155 countries. It offers the first global assessment of the scope of human trafficking and what is being done to fight it. The report includes an overview of trafficking patterns, legal steps taken in response, and country-specific information on reported cases. The most common form of human trafficking, 79%, is sexual exploitation. Surprisingly, in 30% of the countries which provided information on the gender of traffickers, women make up the largest proportion of traffickers. The second most common form of human trafficking is forced labor (18%). [**ARTICLE 178**](#)

Health / Social Issues

World Demographic Trends. *Economic and Social Council, United Nations*. Web posted February 10, 2009.

The report of the Secretary-General on the world demographic trends has been issued. According to the report summary, today's world population stands at 6.8 billion and is projected to reach 9 billion in 2045, if fertility continues to decline in developing countries. [**ARTICLE 179**](#)

Health and Safety Concerns Over US Imports of Chinese Products: an overview by Wayne M. Morrison. *CRS*. Web posted January 29, 2009.

China is a major source of United States imports of consumer products, such as toys, and an increasingly important supplier of various food products. Reports of unsafe seafood, pet food, toys, tires, and other products imported from China over the past year or so have raised concern in the U.S. over the health, safety, and quality of imported Chinese products. The report provides an overview of this issue and implications for U.S.-China trade relations and will be updated as events warrant. [**ARTICLE 180**](#)

The US Commitment to Global Health: recommendations for the new administration. *Institute of Medicine*. January 30, 2009.

The Institute suggests that the U.S. should intensify its commitment to global health in the next four years by increasing funding and placing greater importance on health when setting overall U.S. foreign policy. Improving health is the responsibility of the United States as a global leader, and should be recognized as a goal with significant long-term diplomatic, economic, and security benefits for the U.S. [**ARTICLE 181**](#)

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. [**ARTICLE 182**](#)

Who Adopts? Characteristics of Women and Men Who Have Adopted Children by Jo Jones. *National Center for Health Statistics*. Web posted January 28, 2009.

The report presents data from the National Survey of Family Growth concerning the characteristics of those who have adopted children in the United States.

ARTICLE 183

Report Card for America's Infrastructure. *American Society of Civil Engineers*. January 28, 2009.

The study is an assessment by professional engineers of the nation's status in 15 categories of infrastructure. In 2009, all signs point to an infrastructure that is poorly maintained, unable to meet current and future demands, and in some cases, unsafe. A healthy infrastructure is the backbone of a healthy economy. In these challenging times, infrastructure is essential to reviving the nation's fortunes, and in maintaining our high quality of life, concludes the study.

ARTICLE 184

Nanotechnology: the social and ethical issues by Ronald Sandler. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and Pew Charitable Trusts. Web posted January 27, 2009.

The report emphasizes ways in which developments in nanotechnology intersect with governmental functions and responsibilities, including science and technology policy, as well as research funding, regulation and work on public engagement.

ARTICLE 185

Media

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.

ARTICLE 186

A Plan to Extend Super-Fast Broadband Connections to All Americans by John Windhausen, Jr. *Century Foundation*. 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.

ARTICLE 187

Digital Music Report 2009 by John Kennedy. *International Federation of Phonographic Industries*. Jan. 2009.

The music industry has transformed its business models, offering consumers an increasing range of new services with leading technology partners. However, generating value in an environment where 95 per cent of music downloads are illegal and unpaid for is still the biggest challenge for music companies and their commercial partners. The digital music business internationally saw a sixth year of expansion in 2008, growing by an estimated 25 per cent to US\$3.7 billion in trade value.

Key Statistics

ARTICLE 188

Twitter and Status Update by Amanda Lenhart. Pew Internet and American Life Project. Feb. 2009.

The author notes that in the past three years, developments in social networking and internet applications have begun providing internet users with more opportunities for sharing short updates about themselves, their lives, and their whereabouts online.

ARTICLE 189

Agriculture & Food

World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates. *U.S. Department of Agriculture.* February 10, 2009.

The report provides USDA's comprehensive forecasts of supply and demand for major U.S. and global crops and U.S. livestock. The report gathers information from a number of statistical reports published by USDA and other government agencies, and provides a framework for additional USDA reports. [**ARTICLE 190**](#)

Forecasting Farm Income: documenting USDA's forecast model by Christopher McGath et al. *U.S. Department of Agriculture.* February 12, 2009.

The Economic Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) develops and publishes estimates and forecasts of three primary measures of income and returns for the U.S. farm economy: net value added, net farm income, and net cash income. The report describes the components and equations in the model, showing how components can be recombined to produce the three main measures of income. [**ARTICLE 191**](#)

The Impact of Food Insecurity and Hunger on Global Health: issues for congress by Tiaji Salaam-Blyther and Charles E. Hanrahn. *CRS.* Web posted January 29, 2009.

The study reports that world food prices spiked dramatically in the first half of 2008 and declined somewhat in the latter part of the year. The food spikes had negative social and economic impacts, especially in low income and least developed countries. Although food prices have stabilized somewhat, they remain higher than they have been over the past decade. The report analyzes the direct and indirect effects of food insecurity and hunger on global health, reviews elements of the U.S. government response to global hunger, and identifies policy areas that Congress might examine as it debates how best to address the health needs of the millions threatened by high food prices in the 111th Congress. [**ARTICLE 192**](#)

Women's History Month resources

[**President Obama signs Executive Order creating the White House Council on Women and Girls**](#)

[**International Women's Day statement by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton:**](#)

[**U.S. Celebrates Women's Contributions to the World Every March**](#)

[**Presidential Proclamation for International Women's Day**](#)

[**The Secretary of State's 2009 International Women of Courage Awards**](#)

[**Women of Influence**](#)

[**Official Website for International Women's Day**](#)

[**UN website for International Women's Day**](#)