

S/P/R

STATE POLICY REPORTS

VOLUME 36

ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

Updated Internet Sales Tax Estimates

A recent Government Accountability Office study found that state and local governments could collect billions in additional revenue from taxing internet sales.

State Coincident Index

The Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia produces a monthly index for each state, combining four indicators to summarize current economic conditions.

The Cost of the Opioid Crisis

The American Enterprise Institute released a preview of its state-by-state economic analysis of the opioid epidemic.

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

VOLUME 36

ISSUE 2

JANUARY 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

Population-Driven Federal Aid

State population estimates are a key variable in the distribution of billions of dollars in federal resources.

Congressional Problem-Solving: Infrastructure

With the president releasing details of a comprehensive infrastructure strategy, and heightened interest in the subject on Capitol Hill, a bipartisan group of lawmakers has issued its own set of recommendations.

State Minimum Wages

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, 18 states saw an increase in their minimum wages as of January 1, 2018.

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FEBRUARY 2018

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Five Not-So-Easy Pieces

After an initial foray that assessed fiscal management in three states, the Volcker Alliance has expanded its analysis. The 50-state report grades states on five budget practices.

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

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ISSUE 4

FEBRUARY 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

Food Insecurity

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has released estimates of the share of households that faced food insecurity in 2016. This comes against a backdrop of efforts to scale back the largest federal food assistance program.

Throwing Locals a Line

It can be a challenge to track the flow of federal funds to states, but that challenge pales in comparison to the one faced by those wanting to track federal fiscal flows to units of local government.

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

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ISSUE 5

MARCH 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

A Redistricting Tipping Point?

Judicial intervention may provide an incentive for state legislatures to get ahead of the redistricting issue, before the courts curtail their role in it.

Opioid Mortality Rate Spikes

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released 2016 state data on deaths attributable to drug overdoses.

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

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ISSUE 6

March 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

Index of State Economic Momentum

The Index of State Economic Momentum, developed by *Reports* founding editor Hal Hovey, ranks states based on their most recent performance in three key measures of economic vitality: personal income growth, employment growth, and population growth. *Reports* updates the index each quarter. In the first quarter of 2018, **Nevada** reclaimed the top spot, while the **District of Columbia** most closely approximated the national average economic performance.

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

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ISSUE 7

APRIL 2018

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Census, Census Everywhere

A recent analysis addresses the fiscal implications of a Census undercount by focusing on programs that rely on the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage.

CBO's Cruella De Vil Projections

The Congressional Budget Office has updated its economic and budget projections for fiscal years 2018-2028.

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

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ISSUE 8

APRIL 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

The 2018 Camelot Index

The Camelot Index was developed by *Reports* founding editor Hal Hovey, a longtime observer and analyst of state budgets and economies. It ranks states on six “quality of life” measures: economy, health, crime, education, society, and state government. This year, the top-ranked states are **Iowa** and **New Hampshire**.

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

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MAY 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

States and the FY 2018 Federal Budget

The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 raised the spending caps for non-defense discretionary programs, many of which are grant programs that flow to state and local governments. With these higher caps in place, appropriators were able to complete action on FY 2018 spending bills, which were wrapped into the omnibus spending bill that passed in late March. The result was robust increases for many grants and many states.

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MAY 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

On Population Trends and Housing Costs

The Census Bureau's recent release of population estimates for big cities led *Stateline* to proclaim, *Quest for Affordable Housing Drives People Away from the Coasts*. Has that happened in states, too?

States Are Helping First-Time Home Buyers

With homeownership reaching a 50-year low in 2016, and fewer first-time home buyers entering the market, legislation to help first-time home buyers save for down payments is gaining traction in several states.

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

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JUNE 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

Are Opioids the New Tobacco?

As the cost of the opioid epidemic continues to rise, states may have an incentive to follow the model of the Master Settlement Agreement with the tobacco industry.

Housing Unaffordability

A new report documents the gap between wages and the cost of rental housing.

State Exposure to Steel and Aluminum Tariffs

Which states will feel the most impact from tariffs on steel and aluminum?

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

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JUNE 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

Index of State Economic Momentum

The Index of State Economic Momentum, developed by *Reports* founding editor Hal Hovey, ranks states based on their most recent performance in three key measures of economic vitality: personal income growth, employment growth, and population growth. *Reports* updates the index each quarter. In the second quarter of 2018, **Washington** claimed the top spot, while **New York** most closely approximated the national average economic performance.

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IN THIS ISSUE

Count Your Children Well

The Annie E. Casey Foundation has released its annual assessment of how children fare in each state, known as KIDS COUNT. This year's report differs from earlier years, devoting several pages to the importance of an accurate 2020 census count.

Medicaid Expansion: An Offer States Can't Refuse?

About half the states adopted the Affordable Care Act's Medicaid expansion in January 2014. Nine more have come on board since, and that number is likely to rise.

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

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JULY 2018

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About the Sales Tax

Despite its shortcomings, the sales tax is the largest contributor to state-local own-source revenue. Because of its shortcomings, that is likely to change.

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

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JOINT ISSUE 15-16

AUGUST 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

The Potential of Regional Price Parities

The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) has new estimates of differences in the cost of living among the states.

Financial Illiteracy

A Champlain College report grades states on their efforts to improve the financial literacy of high school graduates.

Opioid Deaths by Occupation in Massachusetts

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health released a study analyzing opioid-related overdose deaths by occupation from 2011-2015.

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

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SEPTEMBER 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

Defense Spending by State

For some states, federal defense spending is an important source of economic activity.

SALT in the Wound

Among the losers in federal tax reform were states where many taxpayers make use of the federal itemized deduction for state and local taxes paid (SALT).

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

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SEPTEMBER 2018

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Index of State Economic Momentum

The Index of State Economic Momentum, developed by *Reports* founding editor Hal Hovey, ranks states based on their most recent performance in three key measures of economic vitality: personal income growth, employment growth, and population growth. *Reports* updates the index each quarter. In the third quarter of 2018, **Utah** claimed the top spot, while **South Carolina** equaled the national average economic performance.

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

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OCTOBER 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

State and Local Finances in FY 2016

The Census Bureau has released its state and local finance series for fiscal year 2016, which allows an apples-to-apples comparison of tax structures and burdens among the states. This issue highlights the new revenue data.

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

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OCTOBER 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

State Business Tax Climate

The Tax Foundation has updated its annual ranking of states based on their business tax climates. This is not the same as ranking states on their business climates. It's a narrower focus, which means it is of more limited use.

The Ease of Voting

A recent article assessed the cost of voting in each state in each presidential election from 1996 to 2016.

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

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ISSUE 21

NOVEMBER 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

The State-Federal Balance of Payments

An enduring question in state-federal fiscal relations is, “How much does each state get back for every dollar it sends to Washington?” A recent analysis from New York’s state comptroller provides an answer.

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

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ISSUE 22

NOVEMBER 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

Assessing State Tax Systems

Last month, the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy released the 6th edition of its analysis of the tax burdens faced by non-elderly voters in each state.

A Turnaround in Children's Health Coverage

A new report from Georgetown University's Health Policy Institute includes data on health insurance coverage for children.

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STATE POLICY REPORTS

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JOINT ISSUE 23-24

DECEMBER 2018

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Index of State Economic Momentum

The Index of State Economic Momentum ranks states based on their most recent performance in three key measures of economic vitality: personal income growth, employment growth, and population growth. *Reports* updates the index each quarter. In the final quarter of 2018, **Nevada** claimed the top spot, while **South Carolina** most closely approximated the national average economic performance.

The Continuum of State Fiscal Stress

Reports developed the Continuum of State Fiscal Stress to highlight four measures that can signal state fiscal stress. This edition of the continuum focuses on fiscal year 2018, a low-stress year for state budgets.

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