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A SELECTION OF DOCUMENTS RECENTLY PUBLISHED ON THE WEB

N° 39 – May 2016

<i>GENERAL INTEREST</i>	3
Is an Older Economy a Weaker Economy?	3
Nine Facts about the Great Recession and Tools for Fighting the Next Downturn	3
Stock Market Provides Imperfect View of Real U.S. Economy	3
What Does The Changing Sectoral Composition of The Economy Mean For Workers?	4
<i>INCOMES – INEQUALITY - IMMIGRATION</i>	4
Can the Working Family Work in America?.....	4
One Third of a Nation: Strategies for Helping Working Families	4
America’s Shrinking Middle Class: A Close Look at Changes Within Metropolitan Areas	4
The Glass Barrier to the Upper Middle Class Is Hardening.....	4
Taking Stock: Income Inequality and the Stock Market	5
Worlds of Inequality	5
Millionaire Migration and Taxation of the Elite: Evidence from Administrative Data	5
In Defense of Immigrants: Here's Why America Needs Them Now More Than Ever	5
<i>FISCAL AND TAX POLICIES</i>	6
International Tax Evasion: What Can Be Done?.....	6
U.S. Fiscal Policy: Reality and Outlook.....	6
The Budget Act at Forty: Time for Budget Process Reform	6
The Fiscal Policy Context for a Conservative Reform Agenda.....	6
Navigating Business Tax Reform.....	6
Perspectives on the Need for Tax Reform.....	7
Integrating the Corporate and Individual Tax Systems: The Dividends Paid Deduction Considered.....	7
<i>MONETARY POLICY</i>	7
The Wrong Tool For The Right Job	7
What Is Important — and Not Important — about Inflation.....	7
<i>FINANCE</i>	8
From Panama to London: Legal and illegal corruption require action at the UK anti-corruption summit	8
Steps to Strengthen Financial Transparency, and Combat Money Laundering, Corruption, and Tax Evasion	8
Ending "Too Big To Fail": What's the Right Approach?	8
Legislative Proposals to Enhance Capital Formation, Transparency, and Regulatory Accountability	8
How Did the Great Recession Affect Payday Loans?	8
Understanding Non-Prime Borrowers and the Need to Regulate Small Dollar and "Payday" Loans.....	9
<i>HOUSING</i>	9
The Future of Housing in America: A Comparison of the United Kingdom and United States Models for Affordable Housing	9
Housing’s Role in the Slow Recovery.....	9
Household Formation among Young Adults.....	9
<i>OTHER ECONOMIC POLICIES</i>	10
Should the US Eliminate Entry Barriers to the Practice of Law? Perspectives Shaped By Industry Deregulation	10

Intellectual Property Rights Violations: Federal Civil Remedies and Criminal Penalties Related to Copyrights, Trademarks, Patents, and Trade Secrets	10
On Negative Effects of Vouchers	10
The Implications of President Obama's National Ocean Policy	10
<i>THE NEW DIGITAL ECONOMY</i>	10
Shared, Collaborative and On Demand: The New Digital Economy	10
The Sharing Economy: A Taxing Experience for New Entrepreneurs	11
Strengthening the Basic Bargain for Workers in the Modern Economy	11
Uber's Antitrust Problem.....	11
Uber and Arbitration: A Lethal Combination.....	11
<i>ENTREPRENEURSHIP</i>	12
The Kauffman Index of Growth Entrepreneurship: National Trends.....	12
Women and Entrepreneurship: A Blog Anthology	12
Inspiring Entrepreneurs: Learning from the Experts	12
<i>PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS - LABOR</i>	12
Confronting the Parasite Economy	12
The Power of Parity: Advancing Women's Equality in the United States	13
An Examination of the Administration's Overtime Rule and the Rising Costs of Doing Business.....	13
Final Rule: Overtime	13
<i>MANUFACTURING - INNOVATION</i>	13
The New Faces of American Manufacturing.....	13
Leveraging the U.S. Science and Technology Enterprise	13
How Do Companies Come Up With New Ideas?	14
The \$83 Billion Patent Litigation Fallacy	14
The Vital Importance of High-Performance Computing to U.S. Competitiveness	14
The Pet Medication Industry: Issues and Perspectives.....	14
<i>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY - TELECOMMUNICATIONS</i>	15
A Policymaker's Guide to Digital Infrastructure.....	15
The FCC Noses under the Broadband Tent Again	15
Zero Rating: The Economics and Innovation Behind Free Data.....	15
Examining the Proposed FCC Privacy Rules	15
ITIF Urges FCC To Abandon Broadband Privacy Proposal	15
U.S.-EU Data Privacy: From Safe Harbor to Privacy Shield	16
The European Union's Digital Single Market Strategy: A conflict between government's desire for certainty and rapid marketplace innovation.....	16
<i>AGRICULTURE</i>	16
Agricultural Exports and 2014 Farm Bill Programs: Background and Current Issues.....	16
Focus on the Farm Economy: A View from the Barnyard.....	16
Focus on the Farm Economy: Impacts of Environmental Regulations and Voluntary Conservation Solutions	17
Farm Credit System.....	17
The Farm Credit System: Oversight and Outlook of the Current Economic Climate	17
Best Practices for Creating a Sustainable and Equitable Food System in the United States.....	17
Netting Billions: A Global Valuation of Tuna	18
<i>EMPLOYMENT - WAGES</i>	18
A Jobs Agenda for the Right	18
What Does Online Job Search Tell Us about the Labor Market?.....	18
The Role of Place, Race, and Education in Youth Unemployment.....	18
The Class of 2016: The Labor Market Is Still Far From Ideal For Young Graduates.....	19
Increasing Opportunity in Infrastructure Occupations	19
Beating the Brain Drain: States Focus on Retaining Older Workers	19
Why Is Wage Growth So Slow? Part I&2.....	19
Are People in Middle-Wage Jobs Getting Bigger Raises?.....	20
<i>INTERNATIONAL TRADE</i>	20
Beyond the American Manufacturing Competitiveness Act: Congress Should Get More Serious about Tariff Reform.....	20
The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP): Key Provisions and Issues for Congress	20

<i>CHINA</i>	20
Impact of Chinese Slowdown on U.S. No Longer Negligible.....	20
China As A Global Investor	21
Chinese Foreign Exchange Reserves and the U.S. Economy.....	21
The Turnaround in Private and Public Financial Outflows from China.....	21
<i>ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMIC ISSUES</i>	21
9 Things You Should Know About the Carbon Tax	21
How a Carbon Tax Could Help Coal Workers and Their Communities	22
Impact of EPA’s Clean Power Plan on States	22
Farmers Are the New Climate Warriors.....	22
<i>ENERGY</i>	22
The Outlook for U.S. Production of Shale Oil	22
Oil Battles Wind on the Great Plains.....	22
Status of Advanced Nuclear Technologies.....	23
Exploring 21st Century Mining Safety, Environmental Control, and Technological Innovation	23
Rooftop Solar: Net Metering Is a Net Benefit.....	23

GENERAL INTEREST

Is an Older Economy a Weaker Economy?

FRB Atlanta – Annual Report – May 2016

<https://www.frbatlanta.org/economy-matters/annual-report.aspx>

“Many forecasts call for slower economic growth in the coming decades, in some part because of the aging of the population. The Atlanta Fed’s 2015 annual report explores this issue.”

Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach, Ryan Nunn, Lauren Bauer, David Boddy and Greg Nantz

Nine Facts about the Great Recession and Tools for Fighting the Next Downturn

Brookings - Paper - May 23, 2016 – 24 pages

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2016/05/nine-facts-great-recession-tools-fighting-next-downturn/fiscal_facts.pdf

“Given the massive human cost of recessions, it is incumbent upon policy makers to assess the policy tools at their disposal and identify those that are most effective at hastening economic recovery during a downturn. In this document we describe how different groups of workers were affected by the Great Recession, what works in fiscal stimulus, what could be done differently in future recessions, and the fiscal preparedness of states for the next downturn.”

Julieta Yung

Stock Market Provides Imperfect View of Real U.S. Economy

FRB Dallas – Economic Letter – May 2016 – 4 pages

<http://dallasfed.org/assets/documents/research/ecllett/2016/el1604.pdf>

“Monitoring global economic and financial developments is important for assessing labor markets and inflation as well as risks to the economic outlook. The stock market—through measures such as the Standard & Poor’s 500—is often thought to be an economic bellwether. However, market volatility compromises the reliability of such indexes.”

Isaac Sorkin

What Does The Changing Sectoral Composition of The Economy Mean For Workers?

FRB Chicago – Fed Letter – May 2016 – 5 pages

<https://www.chicagofed.org/publications/chicago-fed-letter/2016/358>

“Over the past quarter of a century, the share of jobs in the U.S. economy in manufacturing has declined, while the share of jobs in services has risen. A common view is that because manufacturing jobs are relatively high-paying jobs, this shift has been negative for workers. However, jobs also differ in other ways, so looking only at pay gives an incomplete picture.”

INCOMES – INEQUALITY - IMMIGRATION

Stephanie Coontz

Can the Working Family Work in America?

American Prospect – Article - May 17, 2016

<http://prospect.org/article/can-working-family-work-america>

“America still hasn’t adjusted to family realities in the 21st century. Here’s what needs to be done and why we need to do it.”

Isabel Sawhill, Edward Rodrigue, and Nathan Joo

One Third of a Nation: Strategies for Helping Working Families

Brookings - Paper - May 2016 – 26 pages

<http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2016/05/31-one-third-of-a-nation-strategies-for-working-families-sawhill/one-third-of-a-nation.pdf>

“Employment among lower-income men has declined by 11 percent since 1980 and has remained flat among lower-income women. Men and women in the top and middle of the income distribution, on the other hand, have been working as much or more since 1980, creating a growing “work gap” in labor market income between haves and have-nots... This growing “work gap” is an increasingly important driver of low incomes for households in the bottom third of the distribution, calling for bold labor market interventions that go beyond increased wages and more education.”

America’s Shrinking Middle Class: A Close Look at Changes Within Metropolitan Areas

Pew Research Center - May 11, 2016 – 75 pages

<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/files/2016/05/Middle-Class-Metro-Areas-FINAL.pdf>

“The American middle class is losing ground in metropolitan areas across the country, affecting communities from Boston to Seattle and from Dallas to Milwaukee. From 2000 to 2014 the share of adults living in middle-income households fell in 203 of the 229 U.S. metropolitan areas examined in a new Pew Research Center analysis of government data. The decrease in the middle-class share was often substantial, measuring 6 percentage points or more in 53 metropolitan areas, compared with a 4-point drop nationally.”

Richard V. Reeves and Nathan Joo | 1:30pm

The Glass Barrier to the Upper Middle Class Is Hardening

Brookings – Blog - May 11, 2016

<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/social-mobility-memos/posts/2016/05/11-glass-barrier-to-upper-middle-class-hardening-reeves>

“Barriers to the upper middle class are hardening. Just as poor Americans can face several forms of disadvantage, well-off Americans often experience several forms of advantage—such as advanced degrees,

better jobs, and even marriage. Richard Reeves explains how this phenomenon is expanding the gap between rich and poor and pushing the American dream even further out of reach.”

Michael T. Owyang and Hannah Shell

Taking Stock: Income Inequality and the Stock Market

FRB Saint-Louis – Economic Synopsis – April 29, 2016

<https://research.stlouisfed.org/publications/economic-synopses/2016/04/29/taking-stock-income-inequality-and-the-stock-market/>

The increase in income inequality in the 1970s was accompanied, in part, by gains in the stock market. Comovement between stock prices and income inequality results from the fact that gains in the stock market tend to benefit those in the wealthiest portion of the income distribution, who have better access to and higher participation in these asset markets. This type of comovement does not translate through to all asset markets, as short-term interest rates appear uncorrelated with rising income inequality. Rates are countercyclical, lowered during downturns in the business cycle and during times of financial stress, making any effect on inequality short-term.

Miles Corak

Worlds of Inequality

American Prospect – Book Review – May 18, 2016

<http://prospect.org/article/worlds-inequality>

Global Inequality: A New Approach for the Age of Globalization - By Branko Milanovic

“The most striking fact that motivates his book is a graph that the Twittersphere has already termed “the elephant curve.” This is the one-sentence, or rather one-picture, answer to the first question: “The gains from globalization are not evenly distributed.”

Cristobal Young, Charles Varner, Ithai Z. Lurie, and Richard Prisinzano

Millionaire Migration and Taxation of the Elite: Evidence from Administrative Data

American Sociological Review – 2016 – 26 pages

<http://www.asanet.org/journals/ASR/Jun16ASRFeature.pdf>

“A growing number of U.S. states have adopted “millionaire taxes” on top income-earners. This increases the progressivity of state tax systems, but it raises concerns about tax flight: elites migrating from high-tax to low-tax states, draining state revenues, and undermining redistributive social policies. Are top income-earners “transitory millionaires” searching for lower-tax places to live? Or are they “embedded elites” who are reluctant to migrate away from places where they have been highly successful? This question is central to understanding the social consequences of progressive taxation. We draw on administrative tax returns for all million-dollar income-earners in the United States over 13 years, tracking the states from which millionaires file their taxes... We find that millionaire tax flight is occurring, but only at the margins of statistical and socioeconomic significance.”

Richard V. Reeves

In Defense of Immigrants: Here's Why America Needs Them Now More Than Ever

Brookings – Opinion - May 17, 2016

<http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2016/05/17-in-defense-of-immigrants-reeves>

At the very heart of the American idea is the notion that, unlike in other places, we can start from nothing and through hard work have everything. That nothing we can imagine is beyond our reach. That we will pull up stakes, go anywhere, do anything to make our dreams come true. But what if that's just a myth? What if the truth is something very different? What if we are...stuck?

FISCAL AND TAX POLICIES

Reuven Avi-Yonah

International Tax Evasion: What Can Be Done?

The American Prospect – Article – May 2016

<http://prospect.org/article/international-tax-evasion-what-can-be-done>

“If nothing is done about these two problems, the rich will continue to evade the progressive income tax, and multinationals will avoid the corporate tax. If that happens, ordinary middle-class Americans will be reluctant to pay their taxes. Our tax system is built around voluntary cooperation; if most Americans refused to cooperate, the IRS could not force them to do so. As the Greek experience has recently demonstrated, once a tax culture of non-payment is established, it is very hard to change. We need to do something about both evasion and avoidance before it is too late.”

Fernando M. Martin

U.S. Fiscal Policy: Reality and Outlook

FRB Saint- Louis – Economic Synopsis – May 20, 2016 – 2 pages

<https://research.stlouisfed.org/publications/economic-synopses/2016/05/20/u-s-fiscal-policy-reality-and-outlook>

“Federal deficits surged during the Great Recession and are projected to further increase the debt, which may reach 75.4% of GDP by 2017 and 85.6% by 2026. Tax revenue is also projected to increase as more people enter higher tax brackets, but the tax structure is something Congress can always revise.”

James C. Capretta

The Budget Act at Forty: Time for Budget Process Reform

Mercatus Center, George Mason University – Report – May 2016 – 25 pages

<http://mercatus.org/sites/default/files/Capretta-Budget-Act-40.pdf>

“The Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act was enacted 40 years ago. It was not designed to address the core fiscal challenge of today’s economy, which is the rapid rise in spending for federal entitlement programs. Moreover, the current budget process does not provide for the enactment of stable, multiyear budget plans that could then facilitate executive-legislative agreements on other budgetary adjustments. A budget process reform that allowed for joint budget resolutions to be passed by Congress and signed by the president could open up new possibilities for compromise and agreement. The reformed budget process should also include a new focus on long-term spending commitments.”

James C. Capretta

The Fiscal Policy Context for a Conservative Reform Agenda

American Enterprise Institute – May 2016 - 32 pages

<http://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Federal-Budget.pdf>

“James Capretta argues in this new paper that the solution to the nation’s fiscal challenges is a serious and far-reaching reform agenda, for two reasons. First, he sees the crucial first objective of a conservative reform effort as to promote faster economic growth and rising middle-class incomes. Second, he notes that a serious reform agenda will also take aim at the modern welfare state, in all of its many forms, which is not only expensive and growing rapidly but is also a drag on growth itself, with its many disincentives for work.”

Navigating Business Tax Reform

Senate Committee on Finance – Hearing - April 26, 2016

<http://www.finance.senate.gov/hearings/navigating-business-tax-reform>

“If you own a small business today, you’re in danger of being ensnared in an outdated, overgrown tax code that Americans spend 6.1 billion hours and more than \$100 billion complying with each year. The code is punishing to those who don’t have a team of accountants and the luxury of time to plan investments around taxes. The tax code tells small businesses that their dollar is worth less, compared to sophisticated firms that can afford to make the rules work for them. I see an enormous opportunity to modernize the code and strip out a lot of that unfairness by radically simplifying our system of depreciation. That’s why today I released the Cost Recovery Reform and Simplification Act of 2016.”

Perspectives on the Need for Tax Reform

House Ways and Means Committee – Hearing – May 25, 2016

<http://waysandmeans.house.gov/event/hearing-on-perspectives-on-the-need-for-tax-reform/>

Dr. Douglas Holtz-Eakin, President, American Action Forum

Dr. J.D. Foster, Vice President, Economic Policy Division, and Deputy Chief Economist, U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Scott Hodge, President, Tax Foundation

Dr. Martin Sullivan, Chief Economist, Tax Analysts

Integrating the Corporate and Individual Tax Systems: The Dividends Paid Deduction Considered Debt versus Equity: Corporate Integration Considerations

Senate Committee on Finance – Hearings - May 17&24, 2016

<http://www.finance.senate.gov/hearings/integrating-the-corporate-and-individual-tax-systems-the-dividends-paid-deduction-considered>

<http://www.finance.senate.gov/hearings/debt-versus-equity-corporate-integration-considerations>

“Among the most significant – and inexplicable – inefficiencies in our business tax system is the fact that a significant portion of U.S. business income is taxed more than once. Under the current system, income earned only once by corporations – on behalf of its shareholders – is taxed twice, thanks to a fiction created in the law that treats a business and its owners as two separate, taxable entities.”

MONETARY POLICY

Dean Baker and Josh Bivens

The Wrong Tool For The Right Job

Economic Policy Institute – Report – May 5, 2016 – 14 pages

<http://www.epi.org/files/pdf/106055.pdf>

“Raising interest rates is a poor strategy for managing asset bubbles. Low rates did not cause the housing bubble of the early 2000s and higher rates would have been ineffective at preventing it. To deflate an asset bubble interest rates would have to be raised to levels that would cause enormous damage to the labor market. Fortunately, the Federal Reserve has numerous tools besides rate increases that would be more effective and inflict less collateral damage on the nonfinancial side of the economy.”

David Ranson

What Is Important — and Not Important — about Inflation

National Center for Policy Analysis - Issue Brief - May 19, 2016 – 4 pages

<http://www.ncpa.org/pdfs/ib192.pdf>

“From early times investors have rightly worried about the instability of the price level. Inflation large enough to wipe out real returns from stocks and bonds are all too common. Does that require that the rate of inflation be a vital consideration in investment decisions? Not necessarily. It is not so much inflation itself, but its instability or unpredictability that hardest hits investment performance. Egged on by statisticians, the Federal

Reserve, pundits and the press, investors spend scarce time and resources arguing about the degree of inflation. Yet the facts suggest much of the fuss is unnecessary.”

FINANCE

Daniel Kaufmann and Alexandra Gillies

From Panama to London: Legal and illegal corruption require action at the UK anti-corruption summit

Brookings – Blog – May 9, 2016

<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/future-development/posts/2016/05/09-corruption-panama-papers-kaufmann-gillies>

“The Panama Papers speak only indirectly to core aspects of today’s global corruption challenge, which are neither about Panama nor taxes. We ought to view the resulting scandals in a broader light, and recognize the immense, complex webs of corruption that increasingly link economic and political elites around the globe... The authors examine the core aspects of today’s global corruption challenge, and urge governments to take decisive action.”

Steps to Strengthen Financial Transparency, and Combat Money Laundering, Corruption, and Tax Evasion

The White House - Office of the Press Secretary - May 5, 2016

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/05/05/fact-sheet-obama-administration-announces-steps-strengthen-financial>

Today, the Administration announced several important steps to combat money laundering, corruption, and tax evasion, and called upon Congress to take additional action to address these critical issues. The United States has long led the global efforts to combat money laundering, corruption, and offshore tax evasion, and pursue the bad actors – including tax cheats, kleptocrats, and other criminals – who abuse the financial system or shell companies and other legal entities.

Ben S. Bernanke

Ending "Too Big To Fail": What's the Right Approach?

Brookings – Blog - May 13, 2016

<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/ben-bernanke/posts/2016/05/13-too-big-to-fail>

“While a lot of progress has been made in reducing the risks that the big American banks pose to the financial system, there’s much more to be done. Ben Bernanke shares what he thinks is the right approach to solve the problem.”

Legislative Proposals to Enhance Capital Formation, Transparency, and Regulatory Accountability

Subcommittee on Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises - Hearing – May 17, 2016

<http://financialservices.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=400629>

The Subcommittee will examine the current competitiveness of U.S. capital markets and regulatory burdens impacting capital formation, job creation, and economic growth. In addition, the Subcommittee will examine legislative proposals relating to these matters.”

Sumit Agarwal, Tal Gross and Bhashkar Mazumder

How Did the Great Recession Affect Payday Loans?

FRB Chicago – Economic Perspectives – May 2016 – 12 pages

<https://www.chicagofed.org/publications/economic-perspectives/2016/2>

“This article answers two important questions: Did payday borrowing rise during the Great Recession? And did the use of payday loans expand beyond low-income borrowers to include more middle-income borrowers?”

Aaron Klein

Understanding Non-Prime Borrowers and the Need to Regulate Small Dollar and "Payday" Loans

Brookings – Paper - Paper - May 19, 2016

<http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2016/05/19-nonprime-borrowers-and-need-for-small-dollar-and-payday-loans>

“In anticipation of a new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau rule on small dollar credit, Aaron Klein proposes a better framework for thinking about non-prime borrowers that need payday and other small-dollar loans, but often get trapped in never-ending debt cycles because of them.”

HOUSING

The Future of Housing in America: A Comparison of the United Kingdom and United States Models for Affordable Housing

House Committee on Financial Services – Hearing – May 12, 2016

<http://financialservices.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=400625>

“This hearing, in particular, will examine two reports that compare the affordable housing models of the United States and the United Kingdom. Both countries faced significant administrative costs in providing Members of the Committee affordable housing and experienced the need to implement innovative management practices while investing significant amounts of capital (including private capital) in housing programs. By outlining how the United Kingdom addressed these needs, the reports provide insight to policymakers charged with administering and improving affordable housing programs in the United States.”

Burcu Eyigungor

Housing's Role in the Slow Recovery

Reserve Bank of Philadelphia – Economic Insights - Second Quarter 2016 – 6 pages

<https://www.philadelphiafed.org/research-and-data/publications/economic-insights>

Why has homebuilding recovered so sluggishly after the Great Recession? The evidence points to some unusual supply and demand factors.

Fred Furlong

Household Formation among Young Adults

FRB San Francisco - Economic Letter - May 23, 2016 – 5 pages

<http://www.frbsf.org/economic-research/files/el2016-17.pdf>

“The muted housing recovery in recent years can be traced in part to slower household formation among young adults. Analysis suggests that the boom and bust in housing has been a key factor. Recent weakness in household formation relative to population growth among young adults represents a reversal of the unusual strength during the boom years. The net effect has left shares of current young adults heading households at levels similar to those in the mid-1990s before the housing boom.”

OTHER ECONOMIC POLICIES

Clifford Winston and Quentin Karpilow

Should the US Eliminate Entry Barriers to the Practice Of Law? Perspectives Shaped By Industry Deregulation

Brookings - Paper - May 17, 2016 – 6 pages

<http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2016/05/16-legal-deregulation-winston/aea-2016-final.pdf>

“New research from Clifford Winston finds that the monopolistic nature of the American Bar Association has inflated lawyer salaries due to a lack of competition, creating and enforcing state occupational licensing requirements, and encouraging income premiums of \$71,000 per year per lawyer.”

Intellectual Property Rights Violations: Federal Civil Remedies and Criminal Penalties Related to Copyrights, Trademarks, Patents, and Trade Secrets

Congressional Research Service – Hearing - May 27, 2016 – 23 pages

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL34109.pdf>

“This report provides information describing the federal civil remedies and criminal penalties that may be available as a consequence of violations of the federal intellectual property laws: the Copyright Act of 1976, the Patent Act of 1952, the Trademark Act of 1946 (conventionally known as the Lanham Act), and the Economic Espionage Act of 1996.”

Mark Dynarski

On Negative Effects of Vouchers

Brookings - Report - May 26, 2016 – 5 pages

<http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/reports/2016/05/26-on-negative-effects-of-school-vouchers-dynarski/vouchers-and-test-scores.pdf>

“Recent research on statewide voucher programs in Louisiana and Indiana has found that public school students that received vouchers to attend private schools subsequently scored lower on reading and math tests compared to similar students that remained in public schools. The magnitudes of the negative impacts were large. These studies used rigorous research designs that allow for strong causal conclusions. And they showed that the results were not explained by the particular tests that were used or the possibility that students receiving vouchers transferred out of above-average public schools.”

The Implications of President Obama's National Ocean Policy

House Committee on Natural Resources - Hearing – May 18, 2016

<http://naturalresources.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=400425>

Mr. Bob Zales, President, National Association of Charterboat Operators, Hurley, Mississippi

Ms. Meghan Lapp, Fisheries Liaison, Seafreeze, Ltd., North Kingstown, Rhode Island

Mr. Jim Lanard, Chief Executive Officer, Magellan Wind, Collingswood, New Jersey

Mr. Dan Keppen, Executive Director, Family Farm Alliance, Klamath Falls, Oregon

THE NEW DIGITAL ECONOMY

Aaron Smith

Shared, Collaborative and On Demand: The New Digital Economy

Pew Research Center - May 19, 2016 – 85 pages

http://www.pewinternet.org/files/2016/05/PI_2016.05.19_Sharing-Economy_FINAL.pdf

The sharing economy and on-demand services are weaving their way into the lives of (some) Americans, raising difficult issues around jobs, regulation and the potential emergence of a new digital divide.

The Sharing Economy: A Taxing Experience for New Entrepreneurs – Parts 1&2

House Committee on Small Business – Hearing – May 24&26, 2016

<http://smallbusiness.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=399146>

<http://smallbusiness.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=399147>

The U.S. economy is changing, and the face of the American worker is changing. Nowhere is this more evident than in the rise of the on-demand, or sharing, economy. Companies like TaskRabbit, Uber, Lyft, Etsy, and Airbnb have changed the way consumers buy services. They have also provided unprecedented freedom and independence to those who provide those services. These workers want to set their own hours and decide which jobs to take. They may work with more than one on-demand platform. They are the new face of small business entrepreneurs. The IRS is stuck in an outmoded idea of employee versus independent contractor. The tax code needs to evolve with the changing needs of this new workforce. This hearing will examine shortfalls of the current tax code in meeting these needs, as well as potential solutions for addressing them going forward.

Senator Elizabeth Warren

Strengthening the Basic Bargain for Workers in the Modern Economy

New America Annual Conference – Remarks - May 19, 2016 – 10 pages

http://www.warren.senate.gov/files/documents/2016-5-19_Warren_New_America_Remarks.pdf

“For many, the gig economy is simply the next step in a losing effort to build some economic security in a world where all the benefits are floating to the top 10 percent,” Warren declared. In her speech, she called for major changes to our antiquated worker classification system, which employers have exploited to get out of providing benefits and adequate pay to their workers. Warren also said she supports the right for contract workers to organize and bargain with the employer who actually controls their work, a nod to the Browning Ferris decision, and to Seattle’s ordinance that gives collective bargaining rights to Uber, Lyft, and taxi drivers.”

Marshall Steinbaum

Uber’s Antitrust Problem

American Prospect – Article - May 11, 2016

<http://prospect.org/article/uber%E2%80%99s-antitrust-problem>

“When the ride sharing service Uber settled a pair of class action lawsuits with its California and Massachusetts drivers last month, many saw it as the beginning of the end of Uber’s regulatory problems. In fact, the \$100 million settlement’s provision that Uber may continue to classify its drivers as independent contractors signals that the company’s legal problems are far from over. That’s because the real regulatory threat facing Uber may not be from labor standards, but rather from antitrust law.”

Katherine V.W. Stone

Uber and Arbitration: A Lethal Combination

Economic Policy Institute – Blog - May 24, 2016

<http://www.epi.org/blog/uber-and-arbitration-a-lethal-combination>

“Recent lawsuits, especially the proposed settlements of key Uber and Lyft cases in California, have brought attention to the misclassification of gig economy workers as independent contractors rather than as employees. In her blog post for Working Economics, UCLA law professor Katherine V.W. Stone writes that mandatory arbitration agreements represent a significant roadblock for drivers bringing lawsuits against Uber to gain rights under existing employment laws.”

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Kauffman Index of Growth Entrepreneurship: National Trends

Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation – Report – May 2016 - 60 pages

http://www.kauffman.org/~media/kauffman_org/microsites/kauffman_index/growth/kauffman_index_national_growth_entrepreneurship_2016_report.pdf

“The Kauffman Index of Growth Entrepreneurship is an early indicator of business growth in the United States, integrating several high-quality sources of timely information into one composite indicator of entrepreneurial business growth... This new report shows that U.S. entrepreneurial businesses are growing, and rose in the last year for the third year in a row. This year’s increase was driven by startups growing faster in their first five years than they were in previous years, and more young companies scaling up employment. The entrepreneurial activity increase in the 2016 Index represents the largest year-over-year increase in the past decade. Despite these promising markers, however, many U.S. growth indicators remain in a long-term decline.”

Emily Fetsch

Women and Entrepreneurship: A Blog Anthology

Kauffman Foundation – May 2016

<http://www.kauffman.org/blogs/growthology/2015/07/women-and-entrepreneurship-a-blog-anthology>

“In the past year, Kauffman Foundation bloggers have written about women entrepreneurs in-depth. The blog posts explore the specific challenges faced by women entrepreneurs including work-life balance, overcoming stereotypes, access to funding, and other assorted barriers. The blog posts also examine the benefits of women entrepreneurs, including their potential to increase economic growth. Here is our anthology of posts on the subject of women and entrepreneurship.”

Inspiring Entrepreneurs: Learning from the Experts

House Committee on Small Business – Hearing - May 11, 2016

<http://smallbusiness.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=220860>

“The Committee will hear from four individuals who are widely considered to be experts in the fields of small business and entrepreneurship: Marcus Lemonis, Susan Solovic, JJ Ramberg, and Melinda Emerson. This hearing will provide Committee Members with an opportunity to hear directly from experts about the lessons they have learned from a career focused on advocating for our nation’s small businesses.”

PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS - LABOR

Nick Hanauer

Confronting the Parasite Economy

American Prospect – Article - May 16, 2016

<http://prospect.org/article/confronting-parasite-economy>

“There are two types of businesses in America today: those that pay their workers a living wage—the real economy—and those that don’t—the parasite economy. And all of us who live and work in the real economy should be royally pissed at the way the parasite economy is sucking us dry. Here in the real economy, we solve the problems, build the things, and pay the wages that make America great. When politicians of both parties promise to attract “good jobs” to their districts or states, they’re talking about the kind of real-economy jobs that pay a decent middle-class wage—jobs that provide the income, benefits, and security necessary to participate robustly in the economy as a consumer and taxpayer. But in the parasite economy—where companies large and small cling to low-wage business models out of ignorance or habit or simple greed—“good jobs,” and the economic dynamism they produce, are in short supply.”

The Power of Parity: Advancing Women’s Equality in the United States

McKinsey Global Institute – May 2016

<http://www.mckinsey.com/global-themes/employment-and-growth/the-power-of-parity-advancing-womens-equality-in-the-united-states>

“While the barriers hindering women from fully participating in the labor market make it unlikely that they will attain full gender equality within a decade, the report finds that in a best-in-class scenario—in which each US state matches the state with the fastest rate of improvement toward gender parity in work over the past decade—some \$2.1 trillion of incremental GDP could be added in 2025. That is 10 percent higher than in a business-as-usual scenario.”

An Examination of the Administration’s Overtime Rule and the Rising Costs of Doing Business

Senate Committee on Small Business – Hearing - May 11 2016

<http://www.sbc.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=Hearings>

“We are going to hear from a diverse panel of experts and stakeholders on the impact this proposed rule will have on small businesses and organizations across the country... Under current rules, most employees making up to \$23,660 a year are automatically entitled to overtime pay when working more than 40 hours a week. The proposed rule we are discussing today would more than double the threshold to extend overtime requirements to anyone earning up to \$50,440. Additionally, the proposal sets the minimum threshold at the 40th percentile of weekly earnings for full-time salaried workers—meaning the amount could increase every year going forward.”

Final Rule: Overtime

Department of Labor - Wage and Hour Division (WHD)

<https://www.dol.gov/whd/overtime/final2016/>

“On May 18, 2016, President Obama and Secretary Perez announced the publication of the Department of Labor’s final rule updating the overtime regulations, which will automatically extend overtime pay protections to over 4 million workers within the first year of implementation. This long-awaited update will result in a meaningful boost to many workers’ wallets, and will go a long way toward realizing President Obama’s commitment to ensuring every worker is compensated fairly for their hard work.”

MANUFACTURING - INNOVATION

The New Faces of American Manufacturing

House Committee on Small Business – Hearing – May 12, 2016

<http://smallbusiness.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=399103>

“Over the next decade, it is likely that nearly three and a half million American manufacturing jobs will need to be filled. There is expected to be a “skills gap” that is expected to result in two million of those jobs going unfilled. The cause of the gap is multifaceted. Manufacturing output has increased in the United States nine out of the last thirteen quarters, and with it business’ need for skilled workers has increased. Exacerbating the shortage is the wave of retiring baby boomers, those Americans born between 1946 and 1964, who are retiring at a rate of 10,000 a day. The hearing will discuss these issues as well as examine innovative ways academia and manufacturers are addressing workforce development for the next generation of American manufacturers.

Leveraging the U.S. Science and Technology Enterprise

Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation – Hearing - May 11, 2016

<http://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/hearings?ID=32BC2342-2EE9-4DEC-B781-3026CF733C72>

Witnesses have been asked to testify about ways to improve the roles of the federal government, private sector, and academia in science and technology research and development, STEM education and workforce opportunities, and the application of research and development to commercial uses. Witnesses:

Dr. Kelvin Droegemeier, Vice Chair, National Science Board

Dr. Jeannette Wing, Corporate Vice President for Research, Microsoft

Dr. Robert D. Atkinson, President, Information Technology and Innovation Foundation

Dr. David Munson, Robert J. Vlasic Dean of Engineering, College of Engineering, University of Michigan

Scott Andes

How Do Companies Come Up With New Ideas?

Brookings – Report - May 3, 2016 – 17 pages

<http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports2/2016/05/~//media/Research/Files/Reports/2016/04/25-how-firms-learn/How-Firms-Learn/How-Firms-Learn-Andes.pdf>

“Companies are constantly innovating, but how do they do it? Scott Andes outlines the three methods of firm innovation and explains how cities can craft policies best suited to the ways local industries learn.”

Ron D. Katznelson

The \$83 Billion Patent Litigation Fallacy

Cato Institute – Regulation – Article – Spring 2016 – 6 pages

<http://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/serials/files/regulation/2016/4/regulation-v39n1-3.pdf>

“The government is attacking patent holders again today, and for the same purpose: to excuse entities that do not want to pay a fair price to license intellectual property they did not create. Substantial harm may have been done to innovation in aviation when the government, as virtually the sole customer, invented and exploited a narrative to justify expropriation for itself of a substantial value of the early aviation patents. Today’s assault on patent rights is even more worrisome: it does not merely expropriate the intellectual property created by previously obscure Ohio bicycle mechanics; it misuses flawed studies in an assault on the foundation of America’s innovative economy. All this for the benefit of a few very large firms whose markets are protected by network externalities whose business models call for incorporation of technology from many sources, and that have the economic power to fund massive lobbying campaigns to crush everyone else.”

The Vital Importance of High-Performance Computing to U.S. Competitiveness

Information Technology & Innovation Foundation – Report – April 2016 – 58 pages

<http://www2.itif.org/2016-high-performance-computing.pdf>

“High-performance computing has become indispensable for enterprises, scientific researchers, and government agencies to generate new discoveries and innovate breakthrough products and services. Unless the United States makes a sustained commitment to maintaining a robust ecosystem for high-performance computing, it risks ceding its current leadership position in this game-changing technology to competitors such as China, Japan, and the EU.”

The Pet Medication Industry: Issues and Perspectives

House Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade – Hearing - April 29, 2016

<https://energycommerce.house.gov/hearings-and-votes/hearings/pet-medication-industry-issues-and-perspectives>

According to the American Pet Products Association, 65 percent of U.S. households own a pet and Americans spent just over \$60 billion on their pets in 2015, and are expected to spend over \$62 billion this year.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY - TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Robert D. Atkinson, Daniel Castro, Stephen Ezell, Alan McQuinn, and Joshua New

A Policymaker's Guide to Digital Infrastructure

Information Technology & Innovation Foundation – Report – May 2016 – 32 pages

http://www2.itif.org/2016-policymakers-guide-digital-infrastructure.pdf?mc_cid=2ef00c4244&mc_eid=c56f7c6ab9

“Infrastructure has always been important to economic growth, but the infrastructure we need for today’s economy is rapidly changing with advances in information technology. Transforming traditional “bricks and mortar” infrastructures into hybrid digital infrastructures will unlock new economic opportunities, create jobs, and improve quality of life. Governments and the private sector should work together to develop comprehensive national strategies to facilitate more rapid deployment.”

Larry Downes

The FCC Noses under the Broadband Tent Again

Cato Institute – Regulation – Article – Spring 2016 – 6 pages

<http://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/serials/files/regulation/2016/4/regulation-v39n1-1.pdf>

“The deregulation of telecommunications in the last decades of the 20th century was an enormous benefit to consumers, making available technologies and information that were once barely imaginable. Unfortunately, there is a movement to re-regulate telecom, highlighted by the recent “net neutrality” rulemaking. This movement is propelled by some firms’ desire for rents under new regulation, and by Federal Communications Commission desires to regain political power and the benefits that come with it.”

Doug Brak

Zero Rating: The Economics and Innovation Behind Free Data

Information Technology & Innovation Foundation – Report – May 2016 – 20 pages

<http://www2.itif.org/2016-zero-rating.pdf>

“Zero-rating programs allow Internet users to access certain content and services without it counting against their monthly data plans. Some claim this violates the spirit of net neutrality principles. But in truth, it is a sign of healthy product differentiation and efficient resource allocation, which improves consumer value. The FCC and other regulators around the world should create more market certainty by declaring that open-participation zero-rating programs are in the public interest.”

Examining the Proposed FCC Privacy Rules

Senate Subcommittee on Privacy, Technology and the Law – Hearing - May 11, 2016

<http://www.judiciary.senate.gov/meetings/examining-the-proposed-fcc-privacy-rules>

“It’s no secret that the growth and success of the Internet is due in large measure to the flexible, handsoff approach taken by regulators, which has characterized its early existence... Nevertheless, as a result of the Obama Administration’s agenda that seeks to expand the executive branch’s power through increased federal regulations, the FCC is now forced to consider new Internet privacy regulations, which are the subject of today’s hearing. If enacted, it’s important that these new regulations don’t harm the Internet’s vibrancy, but instead ensure that the privacy protections of consumers around the country will be protected and in a better position at the end of the day.”

ITIF Urges FCC To Abandon Broadband Privacy Proposal

Information Technology & Innovation Foundation – Filing – May 2016 – 20 pages

<http://www2.itif.org/2016-broadband-privacy-comments.pdf>

“The FCC should abandon its flawed broadband privacy proposal, ITIF argued in official comments, because it rests on faulty assumptions about providers’ ability to collect information, market competition, consumers’ willingness to make trade-offs, and existing privacy safeguards. The FTC has long enforced fair trade practices across the Internet ecosystem and should continue its broadband privacy oversight, balancing consumer protection with innovative data use and an even field for competition.”

Martin A. Weiss and Kristin Archick

U.S.-EU Data Privacy: From Safe Harbor to Privacy Shield

Congressional Research Service – Hearing - May 19, 2016 – 19 pages

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R44257.pdf>

“This report provides background on U.S. and EU data protection policies and the Safe Harbor Agreement, discusses the CJEU ruling, and reviews the key elements of the newly-proposed Privacy Shield. It also explores various issues for Congress, including implications for U.S. firms of Safe Harbor’s invalidation and the role of the Judicial Redress Act in helping to ameliorate U.S.-EU tensions on data privacy and protection issues.”

Stuart N. Brotman

The European Union's Digital Single Market Strategy: A conflict between government's desire for certainty and rapid marketplace innovation

Brookings - Paper - May 24, 2016 – 7 pages

<http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2016/05/24-digital-single-market/digital-single-market.pdf>

“Many of the major success stories of the digital age—Google, eBay, Amazon, and Facebook, to name a few—have originated in the U.S. rather than Europe. According to European Commission (E.C.) President Jean-Claude Juncker that’s due to “cross-border barriers and differences in national telecoms, spectrum, copyright, e-commerce, data protection and consumer law regimes.” To bring Europe on a more globally competitive footing, the EU’s draft Digital Single Market Strategy (DSMS) aims to reduce geoblocking barriers for consumers purchasing digital content, create a new balance on protecting content creators’ rights in copyright, and harmonize rules throughout the EU for online purposes. But are the EU’s efforts sufficient? Stuart N. Brotman analyzes the DSMS’s efforts to improve geotracking, copyright, and e-commerce, but concludes that the EU’s commitment to “future proofing” seems likely to continue as an elusive goal.”

AGRICULTURE

Mark A. McMinimy

Agricultural Exports and 2014 Farm Bill Programs: Background and Current Issues

Congressional Research Service - Report - May 9, 2016 –28 pages

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R43696.pdf>

U.S. agricultural exports have long been a bright spot in the U.S. balance of trade, with exports exceeding imports in every year since 1960. But the trend of recent years was reversed in FY2015, and the reversal is expected to be more pronounced in FY2016. After climbing to a record \$152.3 billion in FY2014, U.S. farm exports declined to \$139.7 billion in FY2015, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) projects a further reduction to \$125 billion in FY2016. Meanwhile, the value of U.S. agricultural imports has continued to climb: In consequence, the U.S. agricultural trade surplus fell to \$25.7 billion in FY2015 from a peak of \$43.1 billion in FY2014, and it is projected to narrow further to \$6.5 billion in FY2016. Exports are a major outlet for many farm commodities, representing about 20% of the value of farm production.

Focus on the Farm Economy: A View from the Barnyard

House Committee on Agriculture – Hearing - May 24, 2016

<http://agriculture.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=3370>

Dr. David P. Anderson, Professor, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX
 Dr. Scott Brown, Professor, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO
 Mr. John Zimmerman, Northfield, MN, on behalf of National Turkey Federation
 Mr. Randy Mooney, Rogersville, MO, on behalf of National Milk Producers Federation
 Mr. David Herring, Newton Grove, NC, on behalf of National Pork Producers Council
 Mr. Tracy Brunner, Cow Camp Feedyard Inc., Ramona, KS, on behalf of National Cattlemen's Beef Association

Focus on the Farm Economy: Impacts of Environmental Regulations and Voluntary Conservation Solutions

House Committee on Agriculture – Report - May 17, 2016

<http://agriculture.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=3336>

Mr. Richard R. Ebert, President, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, Blairsville, PA
 Ms. Kate English, Partner, English Family Partnership, Fort Myers, FL
 Mr. Patrick O'Toole, President, Family Farm Alliance, Savery, WY
 Ms. Celia Gould, Director, Idaho State Department of Agriculture, Boise, ID
 Mr. Lee McDaniel, President, National Association of Conservation Districts, Washington, DC
 Mr. Terry McClure, President, McClure Farms LLC, Grover Hill, OH
 Mr. Tom Buman, CEO, AGREN, Carroll, IA

Jim Monke

Farm Credit System

Congressional Research Service - Report - May 17, 2016 – 12 pages

<http://www.fas.org/sfp/ers/misc/RS21278.pdf>

“The Farm Credit System (FCS) is a nationwide financial cooperative lending to agricultural and aquatic producers, rural homeowners, and certain agriculture-related businesses and cooperatives. Established in 1916, this government-sponsored enterprise (GSE) has a statutory mandate to serve agriculture. It receives tax benefits but no federal appropriations or guarantees. FCS is the only direct lender among the GSEs. Farmer Mac, a separate GSE but regulated under the umbrella of FCS, is a secondary market for farm loans. Federal oversight by the Farm Credit Administration (FCA) provides for the safety and soundness of FCS institutions.”

The Farm Credit System: Oversight and Outlook of the Current Economic Climate

Senate Committee on Agriculture – Hearing - May 19, 2016

<http://www.agriculture.senate.gov/hearings/the-farm-credit-system-oversight-and-outlook-of-the-current-economic-climate>

“FCA is an independent agency responsible for examining and regulating the banks, associations, and related entities of the Farm Credit System (FCS or System), including the Federal Agricultural Mortgage Corporation (Farmer Mac). The banks and associations of the FCS form a nationwide network of borrower-owned financial institutions that provide competitive credit to all creditworthy farmers, ranchers, and other eligible borrowers.”

Ashley Blackwell

Best Practices for Creating a Sustainable and Equitable Food System in the United States

Center for American Progress - May 12, 2016 – 14 pages

<https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/11115125/FoodDeserts-brief.pdf>

“In recent months, the national dialogue on environmental justice has intensified, with the water crisis in Flint, Michigan, forcing the American public to consider how everything from lead exposure to poor air quality disproportionately affects low-income communities and communities of color. While environmental justice—which strives to include and involve all people in the institution of environmental protections, regardless of

their backgrounds—is finally getting the attention it deserves, this issue extends beyond pollution hazards and exposure to toxic materials to include food environments as well. In particular, it includes the inequitable distribution of healthy food across socioeconomic and racial lines. In predominantly low-income neighborhoods and communities of color, this inequality often leads to food deserts: areas with limited access to fresh, healthy, and affordable food.”

Netting Billions: A Global Valuation of Tuna

Pew Charitable Trusts – Report - May 02, 2016 – 28 pages

http://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/assets/2016/05/netting_billions.pdf

“This report, in which The Pew Charitable Trusts presents the first effort to estimate the full global value of the primary commercial fisheries targeting these seven tuna species and the value of the resulting products, summarizes and discusses the findings of a much more detailed analysis that Pew commissioned from Poseidon Aquatic Resource Management Ltd., an independent fisheries and aquaculture consultancy based in the United Kingdom. Estimating the economic contribution of these fisheries informs and highlights the urgency of ensuring that the systems that govern the global ocean are robust and effective. Action is needed to guarantee a healthy and stable future for these species, as well as for the communities and businesses that depend on them.”

EMPLOYMENT - WAGES

Michael R. Strain

A Jobs Agenda for the Right

National Affairs – Winter 2016 – 18 pages

http://www.nationalaffairs.com/doclib/20131219_Strain_Winter2014.pdf

“Our unemployment crisis is certainly an economic crisis... The solution to this crisis does not consist of massive short-term stimulus programs, industrial policy, cumbersome new bureaucracy, unnecessary regulation, and cronyist giveaways. Neither will the best solution be found in lower marginal income-tax rates, cuts in federal discretionary spending, and a balanced budget, whatever the benefits of such policies may be. Instead, creative, genuinely conservative policies should be proposed and employed — policies that empower individuals, support their aspirations, increase their independence, help them to earn their own success, and promote virtue through work and personal responsibility.” Michael Strain outlines a comprehensive jobs agenda, including a proposal for relocation subsidies to help Americans move to places where finding a job is easier.”

R. Jason Faberman and Marianna Kudlyak

What Does Online Job Search Tell Us about the Labor Market?

FRB Chicago – Economic Perspectives – May 2016 – 12 pages

<https://www.chicagofed.org/publications/economic-perspectives/2016/1>

“This article finds that in 2011, online job search was much more prevalent and significantly more effective in helping job seekers gain employment than about a decade earlier. Moreover, it shows that online job search data generally capture the aggregate patterns of the U.S. labor market. The authors discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using these data for research, and summarize related studies.”

Martha Ross and Nicole Prchal Svajlenka

The Role of Place, Race, and Education in Youth Unemployment

Brookings – Report – May 24, 2016

<http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports2/2016/05/24-teen-young-adult-employment-recession-ross-svajlenka>

“The Great Recession and slow recovery have brought attention to the challenges young people face when progressing from adolescence and school into full-time employment.”

Teresa Kroeger, Tanyell Cooke, and Elise Gould

The Class of 2016: The Labor Market Is Still Far From Ideal For Young Graduates

Economic Policy Institute - Report - April 21, 2016

<http://www.epi.org/publication/class-of-2016>

“Young high school and college graduates were hit hard in the Great Recession. While young graduates’ economic prospects have brightened in recent years, they still face elevated unemployment rates and stagnant wages. Many groups—including young graduates of color, as well as young high school graduates entering the workforce—face particularly difficult economic realities. This report looks at trends in unemployment, underemployment, and wages of young high school and college graduates to paint a picture of the economy facing the Class of 2016.”

Joseph Kane and Adie Tomer

Increasing Opportunity in Infrastructure Occupations

Brookings – Report – May 13, 2016

<http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports2/2016/05/13-infrastructure-skills-kane-tomer>

“Millions of workers in infrastructure occupations earn competitive wages but will need to be replaced over the next decade. As levels of poverty and inequality rise, it’s critical to focus on this segment of the workforce to increase economic opportunity.”

Teresa Wiltz

Beating the Brain Drain: States Focus on Retaining Older Workers

Pew Research Center – Stateline - May 11, 2016

<http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2016/05/11/beating-the-brain-drain-states-focus-on-retaining-older-workers>

“Like California, nearly every state and locality faces the imminent departure of retirement-eligible employees. Anywhere from 30 to 40 percent of state workers are eligible for retirement... And states are scrambling to find ways to retain their most valuable seasoned employees. Finding replacements won’t be easy. State employees are more educated than the rest of the nation’s workforce, including federal and local government employees, according to the Congressional Research Service. So state personnel executives are experimenting with a variety of approaches to hang on to experience, including job-sharing and telecommuting, delayed retirement programs that pay lump sums to would-be retirees to keep working, training and development, and reward and recognition programs.”

Why Is Wage Growth So Slow? Part I&2

National Center for Policy Analysis – Blog - May 2016

<http://retirementblog.ncpa.org/another-take-on-slow-wage-growth-part-i/>
<http://retirementblog.ncpa.org/4780-2/>

“Wages have grown at a mere 2 percent a year since 2012. But this does not mean employers are being stingy. There are many factors attributable to slow wage growth, including the burgeoning cost of employer-provided benefits, such as health insurance, worker’s comp and unemployment insurance. This takes a bite out of workers’ wages. While some policymakers may just shrug and insist that slow wage and GDP growth are the “new normal,” others seem to believe that simply waving the magic \$15 minimum wage wand will fix everything. Both are wrong. Here is what could and should be done, regardless of what side of the political aisle we’re on.”

Are People in Middle-Wage Jobs Getting Bigger Raises?

FRB Atlanta – Blog - May 19, 2016

<http://macroblog.typepad.com/macroblog/2016/05/are-people-in-middle-wage-jobs-getting-bigger-raises.htm>

“Wage growth for all three categories has risen during the past few years. However, the timing of the trough and the speed of recovery vary somewhat. For example, wage growth among low-wage earners stayed low for longer and then recovered relatively more quickly. Wage growth of those in high-wage jobs fell by less but also has recovered by relatively less. In fact, while the median wage growth of low-wage jobs is back to its 2003–07 average, wage growth for those in high-wage jobs sits at about 75 percent of its prerecession average.”

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Daniel J. Ikenson

Beyond the American Manufacturing Competitiveness Act: Congress Should Get More Serious about Tariff Reform

Cato Institute - Free Trade Bulletin - April 26, 2016 – 4 pages

<http://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/ftb-67.pdf>

“Congress should be thinking bigger—much bigger—than the AMCA. Congress should aim to eradicate important deterrents to investment in U.S. manufacturing and impediments to its global success by eliminating, permanently, all duties on intermediate goods. Congress should also revise the antidumping law to forbid the imposition of “remedial” duties when the costs of such action to downstream industries are estimated to exceed the benefits to the petitioning industry.”

Ian F. Fergusson and Brock R. Williams,

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP): Key Provisions and Issues for Congress

Congressional Research Service – Report - May 4, 2016 – 91 pages

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R44489.pdf>

“Signed on February 4, 2016, after several years of negotiations, if implemented, TPP would be the largest FTA in which the United States participates, and would eliminate trade barriers and establish new trade rules and disciplines on a range of issues among TPP partners not found in previous U.S. FTAs or the World Trade Organization (WTO). In addition, the TPP is designed to better integrate the United States into the growing Asia-Pacific region and has become the economic centerpiece of the Administration’s “rebalance” to the region. Congress would need to enact implementing legislation for the agreement to enter into force for the United States. Such legislation would be considered under Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) procedures, unless Congress determines the Administration has not met TPA requirements.”

CHINA

Alexander Chudik and Arthur Hinojosa

Impact of Chinese Slowdown on U.S. No Longer Negligible

Dallas FRB – Economic Letter – May 2016 – 4 pages

<http://dallasfed.org/assets/documents/research/ecllett/2016/el1605.pdf>

“China has become a systematically important economy in the world, accounting for about one-sixth of the global economy. It is, therefore, of no surprise that a slowdown of Chinese economic activity impacts many economies globally, including the U.S... it appears that the impact of slowdown in China on the U.S. economy has increased over time—at the turn of the century, slower growth in China would have had a small effect on the U.S. Today, reducing Chinese output growth by 1 percentage point shaves about 0.2 percentage points from U.S. output growth.”

David Dollar

China As A Global Investor

Brookings - Asia Working Group Paper - May 2016 – 25 pages

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2016/05/china-as-a-global-investor-dollar/china-as-a-global-investor_asia-working-paper-4.pdf

“China’s economic rise is one of the factors creating strains in the international financial order... It is likely to emerge in the next few years as the world’s largest net creditor... Until recently, China’s main foreign asset has been central bank reserves, mostly invested in U.S. Treasury bonds and similar instruments. In the last couple of years, however, this pattern has started to change. China’s reserves peaked at about \$4 trillion at the end of 2014. Since then the People’s Bank of China has sold some reserves, but the country as a whole is still accumulating net foreign assets as evidenced by the large current account surplus. What is new is that the overseas asset purchases are coming from the private sector and state enterprises, not from the official sector. As investment opportunities diminish in China owing to excess capacity and declining profitability, this commercial outflow of capital from China is likely to continue at a high level.”

Christopher J. Neely

Chinese Foreign Exchange Reserves and the U.S. Economy

FRB Saint-Louis – Economic Synopsis – May 6, 2016

<https://research.stlouisfed.org/publications/economic-synopses/2016/05/06/chinese-foreign-exchange-reserves-and-the-u-s-economy>

“China’s very substantial foreign exchange reserves have declined precipitously and the Chinese policy corrections may impact the U.S. economy.”

Thomas Klitgaard and Harry Wheeler

The Turnaround in Private and Public Financial Outflows from China

FRB New York - Liberty Street Economics - May 09, 2016

<http://libertystreeteconomics.newyorkfed.org/2016/05/the-turnaround-in-private-and-public-financial-outflows-from-china.html>

“China lends to the rest of the world because it saves much more than it needs to fund its high level of physical investment spending. For years, the public sector accounted for this lending through the Chinese central bank’s purchase of foreign assets, but this changed in 2015. The country still had substantial net financial outflows, but unlike in previous years, more private money was pouring out of China than was flowing in. This shift in private sector behavior forced the central bank to sell foreign assets so that the sum of net private and public outflows would equal the saving surplus at prevailing exchange rates. Explanations for this turnaround by private investors include lower returns on domestic investment spending and a less optimistic outlook for China’s currency.”

ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMIC ISSUES

Fred Dewes

9 Things You Should Know About the Carbon Tax

<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/brookings-now/posts/2016/05/9-things-you-should-know-about-a-carbon-tax>

Putting a price on carbon could help combat climate change, curb the rising debt level, and even help the struggling coal community.

How a Carbon Tax Could Help Coal Workers and Their Communities

Brookings – Blog - April 26, 2016

<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/planetpolicy/posts/2016/04/26-coal-economy-workers-need-help-and-a-carbon-tax-could-provide-it-morris>

“As coal consumption declines, Adele Morris shows how a carbon tax – viewed by most economists as the most cost-effective climate policy – could be the best option for raising the revenues needed to revitalize coal country.”

Impact of EPA’s Clean Power Plan on States

House Environment Subcommittee Hearing - May 26, 2016

<https://science.house.gov/legislation/hearings/environment-subcommittee-hearing-impact-epa-s-clean-power-plan-states>

Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas): “The so-called Clean Power Plan will cost billions of dollars, cause financial hardship for American families, and diminish the competitiveness of American employers, all with no significant benefit. This past month, the Energy Information Agency (EIA) calculated that the Clean Power Plan will hit consumers with higher electricity rates. The rate increases being forecast by EIA will have real economic consequences and place a needless burden on low-income families. The president’s “Power Plan” is nothing more than a power grab.”

Brian J. Barth

Farmers Are the New Climate Warriors

The American Prospect – Article – May 2016

<http://prospect.org/article/qa-farmers-are-new-climate-warriors>

“Typically, carbon offsets have been tied to things like wind farms and tree planting projects. But in California, the Air Resources Board’s new rules have opened the carbon market to farmers. Not only is this an important tool to encourage more responsible agricultural practices—farms are responsible for about 13 percent of greenhouse gas emissions globally—but it seizes on the untapped opportunity offered by crop systems as a means to sequester carbon.”

ENERGY

The Outlook for U.S. Production of Shale Oil

CBO - Working Paper – May 2016 – 34 pages

https://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/114th-congress-2015-2016/workingpaper/51599-workingpaper_2016-01.pdf

This paper describes an approach to modeling U.S. production of energy from shale resources and the outlook for that production. Production is insensitive to the price of oil in the short run but quite responsive within two to three years.”

Caroline Preston.

Oil Battles Wind on the Great Plains

The American Prospect – May 20, 2016

<http://prospect.org/article/oil-battles-wind-great-plains>

“The Great Plains of Oklahoma are dotted with cattle, wheat fields, and the seesawing donkey-shaped jacks that drag crude oil from the shale rock beneath. Notwithstanding the collapse of commodity prices, some 190,000

active oil and gas wells in the state provide jobs, directly and indirectly, to an estimated one in six Oklahomans. Even the statehouse in Oklahoma City is surrounded by wells; one is nicknamed Petunia, after the flower bed on which it was drilled. But increasingly, in Oklahoma’s western half, the land is also populated by wind turbines—giant, white structures on farms with names like Blue Canyon and Renewable Frontier.”

Status of Advanced Nuclear Technologies

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee – Hearing - May 17, 2016

<http://www.energy.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/hearings-and-business-meetings?ID=9BDE2DBE-A6EF-4944-B32C-776AE178083B>

“We are holding this hearing because nuclear energy must be a national priority. It provides about 20 percent of our nation’s electricity, and 63 percent of our emissions-free electricity. It is safe and extremely reliable... We are entering a new era for nuclear power. The opportunity for innovation in nuclear technologies has not been this great since the 1960s. Despite the many difficult challenges associated with full deployment – technical, financial, bureaucratic, and license-related – there is unprecedented interest from both the private and public sectors. We can help by removing barriers and optimizing our public-private partnerships.”

Exploring 21st Century Mining Safety, Environmental Control, and Technological Innovation

House Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources – Hearing - May 25, 2016

<http://naturalresources.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=400508>

“This hearing will focus on the state of the modern mining industry and contemporary techniques, technologies, and practices of 21st century mines.”

Mark Muro and Devashree Saha

Rooftop Solar: Net Metering Is a Net Benefit

Brookings – Paper – May 23, 2016

<http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2016/05/23-rooftop-solar-net-metering-muro-saha>

“One of the most exciting infrastructure developments within metropolitan America, the installation of over a million solar photovoltaic (PV) systems in recent years, represents nothing less than a breakthrough for urban sustainability — and the climate. Prices for solar panels have fallen dramatically. Residential solar installations surged by 66 percent between 2014 and 2015 helping to ensure that solar accounted for 30 percent of all new U.S. electric generating capacity. And for that matter, recent analyses conclude that the cost of residential solar is often comparable to the average price of power on the utility grid, a threshold known as grid parity. So, what’s not to like? Rooftop solar is a total winner, right? Well, not quite: The spread of rooftop solar has raised tricky issues for utilities and the public utilities commissions (PUCs) that regulate them.”