AGRICULTURE
Shinkle, Douglas. “Bringing farmers’ markets to underserved communities.” NCSL Legisbrief, November / December 2011, Vol. 19, No. 47, 2 p. (Providing devices that can process electronic benefit transfer cards is a way to enable public assistance recipients to buy food at farmers’ markets.) VF : Agriculture

APPOINTMENT-LEGISLATIVE
Goodman, Josh. “Why redistricting commissions aren’t immune from politics”. Stateline, 1/27/2012. (Mario Carerra appointed to serve as the lone independent on the state commission charged with handling state redistricting in Colorado.)

BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES
Morton, Heather. “Are state-owned banks a viable option?” NCSL Legisbrief, November/December 2011, Vol. 19, No. 45, 2 p. (The Bank of North Dakota, formed in 1919, is the only state-owned bank in the U.S. Some states have considered following suit. Pros and cons of the institution are summarized.) VF : Banks

CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES
Katel, Peter. “Child poverty : Are out-of-wedlock births the root cause?” CQ Researcher, Oct. 28, 2011, Vol. 21, No. 38, p. 901-928. (The poverty level is at its highest rate in nearly 30 years. Children comprise one-fourth of the total U.S. population and one-third of all those living in poverty. Issues discussed include welfare funding, drug tests and families in crisis.)

Saunders, Jennifer. “Child health screenings under Medicaid.” NCSL Legisbrief, November / December 2011, Vol. 19, No. 43, 2 p. (Medicaid enrollees up to age 21 are eligible for a range of screening services but studies suggest most of these children do not fully benefit from the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment program.) VF : Medicaid

Clother, Steffanie and Tweedie, Jack. Bringing up Baby. State Legislatures January 2012 Vol. 38 No. 1 p. 24-26. For new parents, home visits by trained professionals can make all the difference. Forty-six states now fund some type of voluntary early childhood home visiting program.

COURTS
Gibeaut, John & Mahurin, Matt ill. ABA Journal January 2012 Vol. 98. p. 45-49. Co-Equal Opportunity. Legislatures are out to take over their state judiciary systems, while critics say it’s an attack on separation of powers.

CRIME & CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Lawrence, Alison. “The dope on drug sentencing.” State Legislatures, December 2011, Vol. 37, No. 10, p. 23-25. (States spend nearly 80 of funds directed for prisons, parole and probation for offenders involved with drugs. New approaches to drug sentencing can be more beneficial to offenders and less costly.)

Lawrence, Alison, and Donna Lyons. Principles of effective state sentencing and corrections policy : a report of the NCSL Sentencing and Corrections Work Group. Denver : National Conference of State Legislatures, August 2011, 42 p. (Seven principles of effective policy are identified and ways to put them in action are discussed. Examples of successful strategies are noted.) NCSL : Corrections
Lyons, Donna. “7 things lawmakers need to consider when reforming corrections policy.” State Legislatures, December 2011, Vol. 37, No. 10, p. 20-22. (This article is a summary of Item C&CJ*.)

Missouri Working Group on Sentencing and Corrections: Consensus report. December 2011, 10 p. (The Group, a bipartisan, inter-branch collaboration, recommends policies to: reduce prison population and corrections costs; redirect some of the savings achieved in strategies that could reduce crime and recidivism; hold offenders accountable through community-based methods.) Mo Docs: Department of Corrections

Petersilia, Joan. “Beyond the prison bubble.” National Institute of Justice Journal, Issue 268, October 2011, 6 p. (Rehabilitation and reentry programs work if they incorporate proven principles and are targeted to specific offenders.) VF: Alternatives to Incarceration

State reforms promoting employment of people with criminal records: 2010-11 legislative round-up. National Employment Law Project, et al., December 2011, 23. (Nationwide there are more than 30,000 laws that restrict access to employment and other rights and benefits for people with criminal records. This paper spotlights recent state laws that allow qualified people with criminal records to compete more fairly for employment.) VF: Employment Practices

DEMOGRAPHICS

Frey, William H. “Counting consequences.” State Legislatures, December 2011, Vol. 37, No. 10, p. 14-16. (The 2010 census shows that the United States has undergone sweeping demographic shifts. These shifts could require policy changes in everything from schools to the workforce to health care.)

Smith, Edward P. “Policy, politics and population.” State Legislatures, December 2011, Vol. 37, No. 10, p. 17-18. (Trends revealed by the 2010 census include a growing Latino population, swelling ranks of the poor and a continuing exodus from rural areas to cities and suburbs.)

DRUNKEN DRIVING

Drunken Driving. Teigen, Anne. “Impaired Driving and Ignition Interlock Laws” Legisbrief, February 2012, Volume 20, Number 7. “(Legislators continue to look for effective ways to alleviate the problem of drunken driving, including the use of ignition interlock technology. Advances have made the devices smaller, more accurate and less susceptible to tampering.)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Bartik, Timothy J. “Solving the problems of economic development incentives.” An essay in Reining in the competition for capital, edited by Ann Markusen. Kalamazoo, Mich.: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2007, p. 103-140. (Bartik writes that incentives will become more beneficial when the local decision-making process for awarding them improves. He discusses ways to make that improvement happen.) VF: Economic Development


Michel, Erica, and Luke Martel. “Examining state business climates.” NCSL Legisbrief, November/December 2011, Vol. 19, No. 46, 2 p. (Business climates can determine whether a company will expand or relocate in a given state. Annual surveys that rank business climate are noted.) VF: Economic Development

Peters, Alan, and Peter Fisher. “The failures of economic development incentives.” Journal of the American Planning Association, Vol. 70, No. 1, Winter 2004, p. 17-37. (The authors say the role of government is to provide foundations for growth through sound fiscal practices, quality infrastructure and good education systems and to allow the economy to take care of itself.) VF: Economic Development
Job’s Crisis. Most economists agree states can do a few things, although not a lot, to help create jobs:


EDUCATION


Manna, Paul, and Timothy Harwood. “Governance and educational expectations in the U.S. states.” State Politics & Policy Quarterly, December 2011, Vol. 11, No. 4, p. 483-509. (The authors examine three policy areas in this analysis of the relationship between state government and education policies: participation in voluntary National Assessment of Educational Progress testing, testing requirements for new teachers and graduation requirements in math and science. States with more centralized control over K-12 systems generally impose higher demands on local districts.)

Missouri education in perspective 2011-2012: Education in the “Show Me State.” Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2011, 25 p. (Missouri’s rankings from Item Ed* are reproduced. The state ranks very high in SAT score averages and is No. 1 in special education paraprofessionals who are highly qualified. It’s near the bottom in teacher salaries.) Ref LB2846.E24

Selingo, Jeff. A Disputed Higher-Ed System. The Chronicle of Higher Education 2012. The “disruption” of the higher-ed market is a popular refrain these days. Rising tuition prices and student debt have left many wondering if the current model is indeed broken and whether those like Harvard’s Clay Christensen are right when they say that innovations in course delivery will eventually displace established players. (VF Education-Higher)

Ed*.Bonner, Jessie. States weaken tenure rights for teachers. USA Today 1/26/2012. America’s public school teachers are seeing their generations-old tenure protections weakened as states seek flexibility to fire teachers who aren’t performing. (VF Teachers)

Charbonneau, Etienne and Van Ryzin, Gregg C. Performance Measures and Parental Satisfaction with New York City Schools. The American Review of Public Administration, January 2012, Vol. 42, Number 1 p. 54-65. (The public administration literature has consistently questioned the validity of satisfaction surveys as a measure of government performance, especially in comparison with more objective official measures.)

EMPLOYERS & EMPLOYEES

Cournoyer, Caroline. “Training for free.” Governing, December 2011, Vol. 25, No. 3, p. 54-55. (Georgia Works is a program designed to encourage businesses to hire more workers with training paid for by the state.)

State reforms promoting employment of people with criminal records: 2010-11 legislative round-up. National Employment Law Project, et al., December 2011, 23. (Nationwide there are more than 30,000 laws that restrict access to employment and other rights and benefits for people with criminal records. This paper spotlights recent state laws that allow qualified people with criminal records to compete more fairly for employment.) VF:Employment Practices
Tomaka, Laura. “Reworking workers’ comp: On 100th anniversary of system, states focusing on changes that cut business costs, remove uncertainties.” CSG Stateline Midwest, November 2011, Vol. 20, No. 11, p. 1+. (Illinois, which has the third-highest workers’ comp premiums in the country, adopted significant changes to its system on the last day of the legislative session. Changes enacted by other Midwestern states are also noted.)


Reilly, Thom and Reed, Mark B. “Budget Shortfalls, Employee Compensation, and Collective Bargaining in Local Governments.” State and Local Government in Review. 2011, Volume 43, Number 3. P.215-223. (The purpose of this study was to examine how local governments are responding to budget shortfalls and to explore how compensation practices across the United States are correlated to changes in service delivery.)

Laramore, Anthony. “Missouri’s Unemployment Crisis: The Labor and Industrial Relations Commission Ignores the Missouri Supreme Court”. St. Louis University Law Journal, Summer 2011, Volume 55, Number 4. P1469-1500. (Unemployment insurance has long been a part of the American social and economic structure. Diafatta-Wheaton v. Dolphin Capital Corp.)

ENERGY


Daniel. Fracking Controversy. CQ Researcher, December 16, 2011. Volume 21, Number 44. P. 1051-1069. (Environmental groups and the Obama administration have long promoted natural gas as a domestic energy source that is cleaner and cheaper than oil and offers a way for the United States to break it’s dependence on foreign energy suppliers. Discusses hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking”)

ENVIRONMENT

Morandi, Larry. “Restoring and Protecting Wetlands. State Policy Options”. National Conference of State Legislatures, August 2011, p. 1-8. (Wetlands provide critical fish and wildlife habitat, water quality protection, flood control, groundwater recharge and recreation benefits. This policy brief suggests state policy options that have the greatest potential to restore, enhance and create wetlands.)

ETHICS

Wood, Natalie O’Donnell. “Making the Most of Your Ethics Training”. Legisbrief, February 2012, Volume 20, Number 8. (The number of states offering ethics training has crept steadily up. Ethics training is considered crucial for public officials. This article discusses ways states can ensure effective training.)

FINANCE & REVENUE

State budget update, Fall 2011. Denver : National Conference of State Legislatures, 2011, 44 p. (Better revenue performance has led to an improvement in state finances. Collections in most states have stabilized or are growing, and the general outlook for the fiscal year is for continued modest growth. Due to tornado recovery efforts, Missouri is one of four states showing a budget gap. 50-state charts.) NCSL : State Budget

“Performance Measures in Booms and Bust”. State Policy Reports, November 2011, Volume 29, Issue 21. P2. (A recent analysis of states’ use of performance-based budgeting finds that the system is more widely used by the executive branch, and more widely used when the economy is strong.)

“Can States Learn from the Feds?” State Policy Reports, November 2011, Volume 29, Issue 21. p.4 (The federal budget is rife with complexities that are largely absent from state processes. A recent paper suggests that states might benefit from emulating federal funds.)

Kliesen, Kevin L. & Thornton, Daniel L. “How Good Are the Government’s Deficit and Debt Projections and Should We Care”? Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Review, January/February 2012, Volume 94, Number 1. P. 21-39. (Each year the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) publishes its Budget and Economic Outlook. The CBO’s deficit projections for the current fiscal year and the next 10 fiscal years are widely followed because they provide an assessment of the medium-term budget outlook based on current law and presumed path for the next decade.)

HEALTH, WELFARE & SOCIAL SERVICES

Hansen, Melissa. “Saving Money and Improving Care by Integrating Health Care”. Legisbrief, February 2012, Volume 20, Number 6. (Many Medicaid patients with several physical problems also have a behavioral health issue; integrating the care of their physical problems with their behavioral health needs is vital, and doing so could save states money while improving patients’ health.)

Cannon, Lou. “Quiet crisis : States trim programs for the neediest Americans.” StateNet Capitol Journal, Vol. 19, No. 36, November 21, 2011, p. 1-4. (The poor are more numerous in the U.S. now than at any time since the Great Depression. State responses to budgetary distress include cutting monthly cash assistance to TANF recipients, canceling scheduled benefit increases or reducing the number of years of eligibility.)

Farquhar, Doug. “Health impact assessments growing in use.” NCSL Legisbrief, November/December 2011, Vol. 19, No. 44, 2 p. (A health impact assessment is an evaluation of the potential health effects of a policy, plan, program or project before it is fully implemented. Examples of states’ use of the procedure are noted.) VF : Health Services

Nichols, Russell. “No money down : Cash-poor governments are considering a unique model for financing social programs risk-free.” Governing, December 2011, Vol. 25, No. 3, p. 38-41. (A United Kingdom model in which foundations and individuals put up the initial investment for expansion of a nonprofit program is being considered in Massachusetts. The nonprofit agrees to meet benchmarks and a government agency oversees progress. If it works, the government refunds investors.)

A Nation at Risk: Obesity in the United States. Obesity-United States-Statistics. May 2005

Saunders, Jennifer. “Child health screenings under Medicaid.” NCSL Legisbrief, November / December 2011, Vol. 19, No. 43, 2 p. (Medicaid enrollees up to age 21 are eligible for a range of screening services but studies suggest most of these children do not fully benefit from the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment program.) VF : Medicaid

Buckley, John F IV & Prysby, Nicole. 2012 State by State Guide to Managed Care Law. (Provides easy access to each state’s laws regarding this essential area of health care delivery.) Highlights and Updates.

Auerbach, David I ., Buerhaus, Peter I. & Staiger, Douglas O. “Registered Nurse Supply Grows Faster than Projected Amid Surge in New Entrants Ages 23-26.” Health Affairs, December 2011, Volume 30, Number 12 p. 2286-2291. (The vast preponderance of the nation’s registered nurses are women. In the 1980’s and 1990’s, a decline
in the number of women ages 23-26 who were choosing nursing as a career led to concerns that there would be future nurse shortages unless the trend was reversed.)

Branham, Mary. “Areas States Should Consider in Health Care Reform”. Capitol Ideas, January/February 2012, p.30-31. (With January 14, 2014 deadline for Affordable Care Act, some states are in different places in preparation.)

INSURANCE

Shah, Nilay D., et al. “Mayo Clinic employees responded to new requirements for cost sharing by reducing possibly unneeded health services use.” Health Affairs, November 2011, Vol. 30, No. 11, p. 2134-2141. (A 2004 change in Mayo’s health plan for its employees resulted in large decreases in the use of diagnostic testing and outpatient procedures. Employees had to absorb more of the cost for these services. At the same time cost-sharing for primary-care visits and preventive services was eliminated.)

Sheils, John F., and Randall Haught. “Without the individual mandate the Affordable Care Act would still cover 23 millions; premiums would rise less than predicted.” Health Affairs, November 2011, Vol. 30, No. 11, p. 2177-2185. (The authors conclude that the individual mandate might not be essential to successful implementation of the Affordable Care Act.)

Kenney, Genevieve, Buettgens, Matthew, Guyer, Jocelyn, Heberlien, Martha. “Improving Coverage for Children Under Health Reform Will Require Maintaining Current Eligibility Standards for Medicaid and CHIP”. Health Affairs, December 2011, Volume 30, Number 12. P. 2371-2380. (When the Affordable Care Act of 2010 is fully implemented, it will extend health insurance coverage to many adult Americans who currently lack it. It is not known how this legislation will affect children and parents who would otherwise be uninsured.)

PENSIONS & RETIREMENT

Jankowski, Joh. “Caregiver credits in France, Germany, and Sweden : lessons for the United States.” Social Security Bulletin, 2011, Vol 71, No. 4, p. 61-76. (Pension credits for those who are out of the workforce while caring for dependent children or elderly relatives are used in almost all public pension systems in the European Union. The author analyzes how the credits work and discusses what role they could play in future reforms to the U.S. Social Security system.)

Michael Corkery. Pubic Pensions Increase Private-Equity Investments. Wall Street Journal, 1/26/2012. Large public pension plans are pouring more money into private-equity funds, deepening ties between government workers and an industry currently under the harsh glare of U.S. presidential politics.

Snell, Ronald. “State Defined Contribution and Retirement Plans”. National Conference of State Legislatures, January 2012. p 1-10. A number of states are departing from defined, traditional retirement benefit plans.

REFERENCE


SCHOOLS-REFORM

Wieder, Ben. ‘Parent trigger’ bills in Florida would change rules for failing schools. Stateline, 1/27/2012. (Legislation that would allow a majority of parents to demand changes in a persistently failing school is stirring debate in Florida.)

STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT
Barrett, Katherine, and Richard Greene. “He loves me, he loves me not.” Governing, November 2011, Vol. 25, No. 2, p. 68-70. (Organizations whose duty it is to determine if there is real value in certain government expenditures can lose friends, influence and budgets after issuing performance audits.)

Greenblatt, Alan. “Piecing it together.” Governing, November 2011, Vol. 25, No. 2, p. 54-60. (Is it possible to delete partisanship from the redistricting process? California voters created a citizens commission in 2008 to draw redistricting maps, directing it to ignore incumbent protection and to create compact districts.)

Frisardi, Raquel. “Missouri’s health care battle and differential judicial review of popular lawmaking.” Washington University Law Review, 2011, Vol. 89, No. 1, p. 207-239. (The author examines Proposition C from 2010, a constitutional amendment to “deny the government authority to penalize citizens for refusing to purchase private health insurance.” Frisardi finds that Prop C attempts to enforce constitutional accountability of the federal government to the people it is obligated to serve.)


Tech. Olsaker, Eva. “Making sense of cloud computing in the public sector.” Government Finance Review, October 2011, Vol. 27, No. 5, p. 28-32. (Cloud computing, which provides users with data access from remote locations, is explained, along with the potential benefits.)

Rethinking Colorado’s government: principles and policies for fiscal sustainability. Report of the University of Denver Strategic Issues Panel on State Government, 2011, 47 p. (The panel concluded that Colorado has a cyclical and structural fiscal imbalance and needs to re-examine traditional governmental practices. Key principles for policymaking are discussed.)

Schultz, David. Stupid public policies and other myths, or, Ten stupid things that government does that don’t work and waste your money and why they do them. Hamline University Graduate School of Management, December 18, 2008, 51 p. (Schultz looks at public policies that are repeatedly proposed—in spite of extensive research that indicates the policies will not enhance economic development. These include tax incentives, enterprise zones, and construction of entertainment centers.)

“Statewide county 9-1-1 survey results.” Missouri County Record, Fall 2011, Vol. 17, No. 3, p. 22-27. (A table shows how each county funds its 911 call center, average monthly call volume and the percentage of calls that are from landlines and from cell phones.)


Anderson, Janet. “Rightsizing Government: The Literature and the Detroit Experience”. State and Local Government in Review. 2011, Volume 43, Number 3. P. 221-232. (Public service providers everywhere are hearing the calls for government transformation, and a new wave of rightsizing initiatives has emerged under related concepts such as reengineering, restructuring, and reorganization.)

STATE-FEDERAL RELATIONS

Frisardi, Raquel. “Missouri’s health care battle and differential judicial review of popular lawmaking.” Washington University Law Review, 2011, Vol. 89, No. 1, p. 207-239. (The author examines Proposition C from 2010, a constitutional amendment to “deny the government authority to penalize citizens for refusing to purchase private health insurance.” Frisardi finds that Prop C attempts to enforce constitutional accountability of the federal government to the people it is obligated to serve.)

TAXATION
Corporate tax dodging in the fifty states, 2008-2010. Washington, D.C. : Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, Citizens for Tax Justice, December 2011, 32 p. (The report examines the reported state and local income tax payment from 265 Fortune 500 companies, finding that 68 firms paid no income taxes at all in at least one profitable year during the period in question. State corporate income taxes have gone from .5 percent of Gross State Product to .28 percent since 1986. Suggested reforms are offered. Numerous charts.) VF : Taxation

McCabe, Mike. “Unique tax landscape : Most states rely heavily on income tax, but South Dakota hasn’t had one in 70 years.” CSG Stateline Midwest, November 2011, Vol. 20, No. 11, p. 5. (South Dakota, like six other states, relies on revenue streams other than income tax. More than 80 percent of its total tax revenue comes from sales taxes.)

Victor, Kirk. “The might Amazon : State legislative fights over Internet sales tax collection have been fierce, with the big Internet retailer playing the heavyweight.” Governing, November 2011, Vol. 25, No. 2, p. 26-35. (It’s estimated that states will lose $11.4 billion in sales tax revenue due to e-commerce purchases. States have pursued a variety of methods to get Internet retailers to collect the tax.)


TECHNOLOGY ISSUES

Olsaker, Eva. “Making sense of cloud computing in the public sector.” Government Finance Review, October 2011, Vol. 27, No. 5, p. 28-32. (Cloud computing, which provides users with data access from remote locations, is explained, along with the potential benefits.)

TERM LIMITS

Valentine, David C. “The impact and implications of term limits in Missouri.” Missouri Legislative Academy, Report 16-2011, November 2011, 14 p. (Valentine finds that term limits did not achieve the sponsors’ original objectives and they have had significant negative consequences that were not anticipated by supporters or opponents. Numerous charts, graphs.) VF : Term Limits – Missouri