

POLICY WATCH – June 2019

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Summer is here! But too many of us aren't taking the vacation time we have earned. Read below why we aren't, how that affects our health, productivity and wallets. We celebrate all of the graduates from high school and college and share some good advice from graduation speeches of 2019. Don't miss why it's important to also recognize the average students, too, who have "talents outside the arena."

We also delve into the upcoming 2020 Census and why getting an accurate count is critical for the future of California. We can't afford to lose congressional seats and Electoral College votes, as well as federal tax dollars for schools, roads and other public services. A complete count is needed.

Hope you do take that summer vacation – you've earned it!

Best,



Cynthia

Next Chapters for Grads and Us



As students graduate from college and high school, it is a good time to reflect on what this milestone means. Graduation ceremonies are filled with honors and recognition of students' accomplishment but often the students who have "talents outside the arena" are not among those receiving glory at graduation.

Margaret Renki says in [Let's Hear it for the Average Child](#), New York Times, May 31, 2019 [Link](#)) there are other students who also should be recognized for their contributions.

Renki urges, "Parents, we ask you to hold your applause until the names of all the medal winners have been announced. When the ceremony is over and your child has not left her seat, though nearly every other kid is taking home ribbons and trophies and enough scholarship offers to make a real dent in the national debt, please take a few moments to congratulate the winners as they head off to their well-earned celebrations. Then we ask that you return to your seats. We have a few special achievements left to acknowledge."

She then praises another kind of student: “To the student who does all the homework in his hardest subject and turns it in promptly, who studies diligently for tests and shows up at every before-school help session, who has never once read an online summary instead of the actual book and who nevertheless manages to earn no grade higher than a C: You have already aced the real tests. School is the only place in the world where you’re expected to excel at everything, and all at the same time. In real life, you’ll excel at what you do best and let others excel at what they do best. For the rest of your life, you will never again think of this C, but you’ll bring your character and your capacity for hard work to all your future endeavors.”

Renki continues: “To the student with friends scattered hither and yon, across grades and groups and genders: You may feel like an outsider at every insider gathering. You may wonder what it’s like to feel deeply enfolded within a group whose very membership confers identity. How easy it would be, you may think, to be told where to go and what to wear and whom to stand next to when you get there! In truth, membership in a group always feels provisional; insiders inevitably wonder if they’re the next to be cast out. But a gift for friendship that transcends circumstance, for recognizing kinship wherever it blooms? That gift will make the world your home.”

Renki wants recognition to the student who has a passion for reading: “To the student who sits in the back of the room with the chemistry textbook propped open and a library book tucked inside: You’ll have to learn chemistry, there’s no getting around it, but we revel in your love for the written word. In times of trial and worry, of disappointment and despair, a book will be your shield. Immersing yourself in a grand story will be a respite from your troubles, and a lifetime spent lingering over language will give you the right words when you need them yourself. No one writes a better love letter than a lifelong reader.”

And she calls out the importance of those who aren’t the star athletes: “To the bench warmers and the water boys and the equipment managers who follow every play without getting a smudge on their pristine jerseys: We delight in your love for the game, and we salute your loyalty to the team. You may never score the winning goal or hit a walk-off home run or feel the exultation of your teammates as they carry you from the field, but you will know the pleasure of belonging, and you will be spared the sadness of fading glory, too. When you look back on these years, what you’ll remember is the pride of wearing that jersey, the privilege of supporting your team.”

Renki lauds those students whose empathy takes priority over their studies: “To the student who bombed the history final because you stayed up all night talking to a friend whose heart is breaking: There is honor in your choice. You can make up the history lessons, but compassion is not a subject we offer in summer school. Today we rejoice for the A you’ve earned in Empathy, the blue ribbon you’ve won in Love.”

Renki’s final comments offer fresh insight to the “students whose talents lie outside the arena: So let us send you forth with just one last reminder of a truth that somehow you already understand, though school is not the place where you learned it: Life is not a contest, and the world is not an arena. Just by being here, unique among all others, offering contributions that no one else can give, you have already won the one prize that matters most.”

All students at graduation time are given advice on what their next steps should be. Some of the most inspiring speeches given to this year’s graduates focus on taking risks, not fearing failure and being true to oneself. Here is gathering of some of the ones that resonated with me:

From the [10 Most Inspiring Speeches of 2019 \(Link\)](#):

Tara Westover is the talk of the town with her best-selling memoir, *Educated*. At Northeastern in a speech titled "The Un-Instagrammable Self," Westover touched on how we have a "third self" which is our "virtual avatar" that we share to the world. We use our perfectly posed photos of "brunch" and "rarified vacations" to hide the messiness. But, how does this propel us forward? Westover captures how we hide these facets of our lives and, in doing so, we miss so much.

"They are beautiful, unblemished lives. But sometimes I think that when we deny what is worst about ourselves, we also deny what is best. We repress our ignorance, and thus we deny our capacity to learn. We repress our faults, and thus we deny our capacity to change. We forget that it is our flawed human self, and not our avatar, who creates things and reconsiders and forgives and shows mercy.

Living legend Oprah Winfrey gave a rousing speech at Colorado College, calling on the class of 2019 to truly take a stand for the betterment of the world. These are times of turmoil and stress, but Oprah sees only fresh graduates who are ready to confront these problems head on.

"The truth is, you cannot fix everything. But what you can do, here and now, is make a decision, because life is about decisions. And the decision is that you will use your life in service; you will be in service to life. You will speak up. You will show up. You will stand up. You will sit in. You will volunteer. You will vote. You will shout out. You will help. You will lend a hand. You will offer your talent and your kindness however you can, and you will radically transform whatever moment you're in – which leads to bigger moments. You have no idea what your legacy will be."

Madeline Albright, the former Secretary of State spoke on how the world needs "doers" right now – people who will not stand idly by hoping issues will resolve themselves. Albright told Bucknell graduates that it's their time to "chart your own course."

"You learned how to put your opinions – and your assumptions – to the test.

This is important, because from this day forward, you will have to rely not on grades or guidance from professors to tell you how you are doing and where you stand.

You will have to rely, instead, on an inner compass; and whether that compass is true will determine whether you become a drifter who is blown about by every breeze; or a doer, an active citizen determined to chart your own course, question your assumptions, and, when necessary, sail unafraid against strong winds."

Has any commencement speech gotten more buzz this year than Robert F. Smith's? Of course, the billionaire investor's address was beautifully written and delivered, but, in a delightful surprise, he also vowed to pay off all the student loan debt for the Morehouse class of 2019. Smith told the crowd that when "Dr. King said the 'arc of the moral universe bends toward justice,' he wasn't saying it bends on its own accord. It bends because we choose to put our shoulders into it together and push." In this incredible act of philanthropy, Smith undeniably puts action to Dr. King's words.

"The degree you earn today is one of the most elite credentials that America has to offer. But I don't want you to think about it as a document that hangs on the wall. Or reflects the accomplishments you made up until now. That degree is a contract. It's a social contract. It calls on you to devote your talents and energies to honoring those legends on whose shoulders both you and I stand.

I don't call upon you to be bitter, I call upon you to make things better. Despite all the challenges we face, America is an extraordinary country. Our world is getting smaller by the day. And you are equipped with every tool to make it your own.

Don't sit around and wait for someone to anoint you ready for the next challenge. Don't wait your turn. Bet on yourself and have the confidence to stand up and say, 'my time is now.' "

From [The Best Commencement Speeches of 2019](#), by Mahita Gajanan, Time, May 30, 2019, ([Link](#)).

Bill Nye at Goucher College on May 24.

"Nowadays, you are going to have to steer our spaceship. Take charge of Earth. It's no longer a matter of just being good stewards. From now on, we humans will have to deliberately control what we do to our atmosphere, the land and sea to ensure that we maintain as much biodiversity as possible while taking care of all of us. Now, when it comes to changing the world, don't be scared. Don't freak out. When you have to perform doing anything ... you might be nervous. You might be scared and that fear can stop you cold. But don't let it. As we say in the theater and on television, take that fear and turn it into excitement ... Take a chance. Make a difference ... Turn your fear into excitement and change the world."

Good advice for graduates and those of us who also want to succeed in life!

Census 2020 – Undercount Could Be Worst in 30 Years

In NPR's [2020 Census Could Lead To Worst Undercount Of Black, Latinx People In 30 Years](#), by Hansi Lo Wang, June 4, 2019, ([Link](#)), features a new report by the Urban Institute that found that "challenges threatening the upcoming 2020 census could put more than 4 million people at risk of being undercounted in next year's national head count. Based on the institute's analysis, the 2020 census could lead to the worst undercount of black and Latino and Latina people in the U.S. since 1990."

"Miscounts of this magnitude will have real consequences for the next decade, including how we fund programs for children and invest in our infrastructure," says Diana Elliott, a senior research associate at the Urban Institute who co-wrote the report released Tuesday.

Nationally, black residents could be undercounted by as much as 1.7 million people (3.68%); 2.2 million Latinos (3.57%); and 1.3 million children (6.3%).

"All of these projections are based upon what the Urban Institute considers a "high-risk" scenario. Still, John Thompson, a former Census Bureau director who reviewed the report, says that these estimates "may be a little bit on the conservative side. It could be as bad as 1990. It could be worse."

"Census Bureau researchers have warned that including the citizenship question would very likely scare households with noncitizens into not responding to the census. In a separate study, the bureau concluded the question was a "major barrier" to full participation in the head count, especially at a time of increased immigration enforcement and rising anti-immigrant rhetoric around the U.S."

"The Supreme Court is expected to rule by the end of June on whether the Trump administration can include the citizenship question. Newly disclosed documents belonging to a major GOP redistricting strategist involved in the administration's push for the question are complicating the legal battle.

Regardless of how the court rules, the Urban Institute researchers say all of the public attention on the question has created a chilling effect on census participation among Latinx and immigrant groups — a factor they included in their projections for a "high-risk" scenario."

"The report also points out new ways of conducting the U.S. census that have not been thoroughly tested and could pose another risk to the count's accuracy. These methods include allowing all households to complete an online form and expanding the use of existing government records to help complete questionnaires for households that don't respond themselves. Uncertainty in funding in recent years has led the Census Bureau to cancel field tests for the 2020 census, including test runs designed for rural and Spanish-speaking areas."

"Not only are these new additions insufficiently tested in a decennial census environment," write the report's authors, "but the best evidence suggests they will disproportionately improve the count of those who are already easiest to count, leaving the hard-to-count population a lingering challenge."

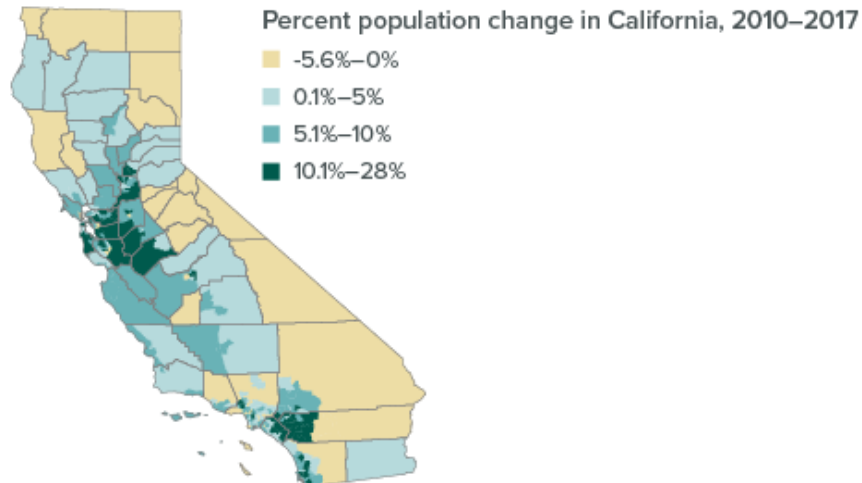
"At the state level, these trends mean that states with more historically undercounted groups — including people of color and renters — are more likely to have inaccurate population counts in 2020. While California, Texas and Nevada face high undercount risks, states with older populations that are more likely to be white and owning homes — including Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and West Virginia — have the greatest potential for being overcounted, according to the institute's analysis. In the 2010 census, for example, white homeowners were overcounted because some with multiple homes were counted incorrectly at multiple addresses."

"Whether it's an overcount or undercount, the concern is that political representation and federal funding will not be fairly shared after the 2020 census. The new population numbers will determine how many congressional seats and Electoral College votes each state gets, as well as guide the distribution of around \$880 billion a year in federal tax dollars for schools, roads and other public services."

"Despite their report's dire warning about potential undercounts, the Urban Institute's researchers emphasize there is still an opportunity to overcome these challenges by driving up public interest and participation in next year's count."

California is expected to face many of the challenges outlined in the report. The Public Policy Institute of California ([Link](#)) says, "An undercount could affect California's political representation in Congress: The decennial census is the sole basis for reallocating the 435 seats in the US House of Representatives. Given recent population trends, California is likely to maintain its 53 seats. But if the census does a poor job of reaching hard-to-count populations and immigrant communities, it could miss more than 1.6 million residents—and the state could easily lose a seat. The census will also be used to redraw district lines; its accuracy is essential to correctly representing local communities."

The 2020 Census will realign political representation based on areas of population growth.



“The US government uses the census count to distribute billions of dollars every year: The census count lays the foundation for many federal programs to deliver resources on a per capita basis or to specific populations, such as young children in poverty. In fiscal year 2016, California received an estimated \$115 billion in federal funding tied to the state’s population count. For some programs, such as Medi-Cal (the state’s Medicaid program), California’s base federal funding allocation is subject to a strict minimum level. But for others, like the Children’s Health Insurance Program, an undercount could put funding at risk.”

“Large segments of California’s population are historically hard to count: In 2017, about 72% of all Californians (29 million) belonged to one or more groups that the census has historically undercounted, including renters, young men, children, African Americans, and Latinos. Those living in nonstandard housing—conditions exacerbated by the state’s housing crisis—may also be hard to reach. Meanwhile, adding a question about citizenship status may make immigrants and others more reluctant to share information with the government. A number of states, including California, have taken legal action to prevent the addition of this question, with arguments now headed to the Supreme Court.”

“State and local partners are essential in ensuring an accurate count: To prepare for the census, state and local governments help verify the Census Bureau’s address lists, an effort that will conclude by summer 2019. These agencies also play a critical role in encouraging participation. California’s budget for census outreach—\$100 million in 2018–19, with another \$54 million proposed for 2019–20—exceeds that of any other state. These funds are allocated according to the location of hard-to-count communities, with options for local governments, community-based organizations, media, and schools to receive funding. Community and philanthropic organizations are also contributing to outreach efforts.”

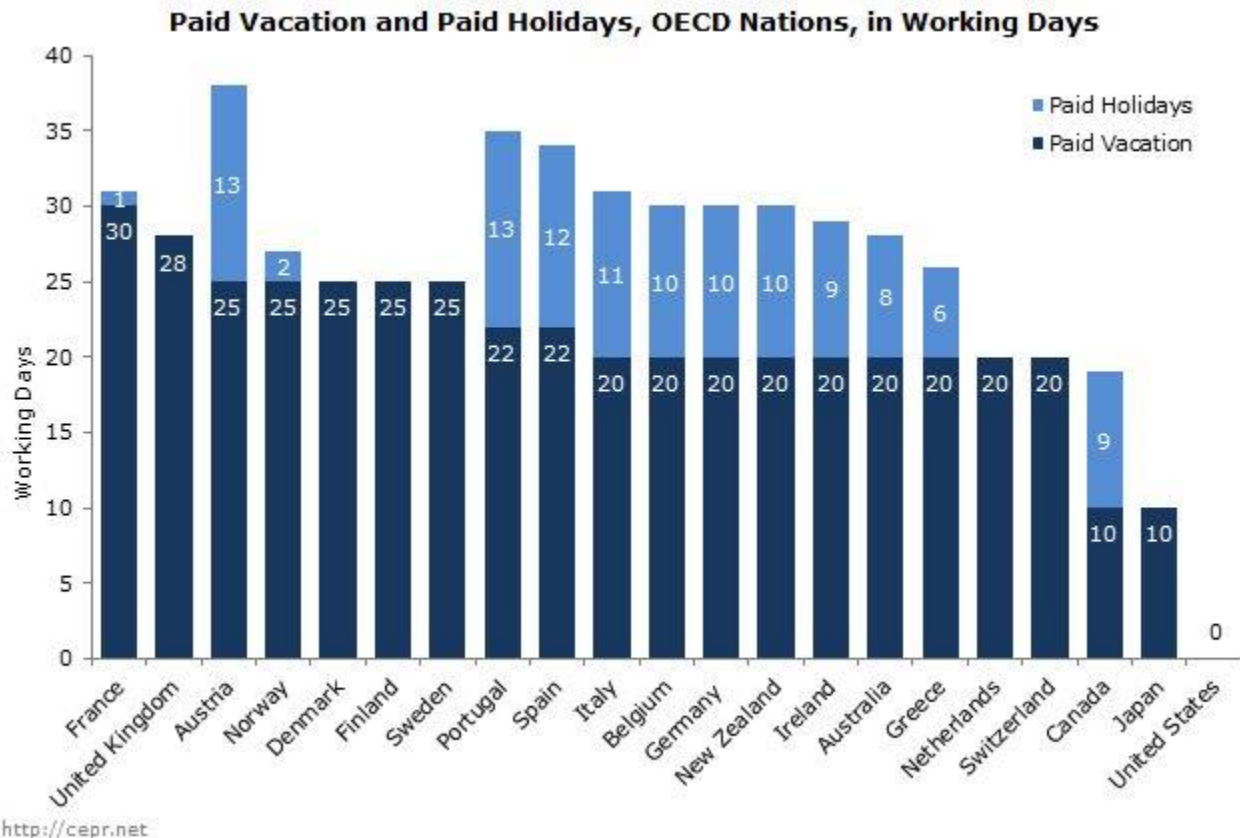
Getting an accurate count in California is critically important for our future. NBLC appreciates the Governor and State Legislature’s commitment to funding the Census and has high hopes that Attorney General Becerra’s court challenge of the addition of the citizenship question prevails in the Supreme Court.

Summer is Vacation Time – Not?!

In [The U.S. is the Most Overworked Developed Nation in the World](#), by G.E. Miller, 20 Something Finance ([Link](#)) we learn that Americans are working more hours than any other western nation and taking less vacation time than any other western nation.

American Paid Vacation Time & Sick Time:

- There is not a federal law requiring **paid sick days** in the United States.
- The U.S. remains the only industrialized country in the world that has **no legally mandated annual leave**.
- In every country included except Canada and Japan (and the U.S., which averages 13 days/per year), workers get at least 20 paid vacation days. In France and Finland, they get 30 – an entire month off, paid, every year.
- Then there's this depressing graph on **average paid vacation time in industrialized countries**:



American Average Work Hours:

- At least 134 countries have laws setting the **maximum length of the work week**; the U.S. does not.
- In the U.S., 85.8 percent of males and 66.5 percent of females work **more than 40 hours per week**.
- According to the **ILO**, "Americans work 137 more hours per year than Japanese workers, 260 more hours per year than British workers, and 499 more hours per year than French workers."

In [Top 5 Reasons Americans Don't Use Their Vacation Days](#) by Chloe Della Costa, Showbiz Cheat Sheet, February 23, 2018, ([Link](#)), the top five reasons given for not using vacation time are:

1. Fear of returning to a mountain of work (40%)
2. The belief that nobody else can do the job (35%)
3. Inability to afford taking time off (33%)

4. Fear of being seen as replaceable (22%)
5. To show greater dedication to the company and the job (28%)

According to [Only 28% of Americans plan to max out their vacation days this year](#), by Megan Leonhardt, CNBC Make It, Apr 27 2019, ([Link](#)), “Among Americans who are currently employed, 13% say they plan to take a quarter of their vacation days or fewer this year. That’s according to recent poll of nearly 2,600 U.S. adults conducted by Bankrate, which also finds that 4% of Americans aren’t planning to take any vacation time at all, even though their employers offer it. The average American only took about 54% of their available time off in the previous 12 months, Glassdoor found in 2018.”

“For many American workers, vacation time is paid time off, so if you don’t use it, you may be losing out on more than just a day away from the office. For example, If you’re earning \$40,000 or more a year, those vacation days are usually worth thousands of dollars, Scott Dobroski, community expert at Glassdoor, tells CNBC Make It.”

“And even if they get out of the office, many Americans don’t fully leave work behind. Glassdoor found that 29% of employees who took time off say a co-worker contacted them about a job-related matter while they were on vacation.”

“Taking a real break is an important habit. Research shows time off may be good for your health and even boost your productivity at work in the long run. Not to mention real health benefits. Medical research has found that working long hours could increase the risk of heart disease and an increase risk of stroke. Other studies show that overwork can lead to sleep deprivation, with has been linked to several medical conditions, including diabetes. Whereas taking time to recharge, even if it’s just a short vacation, can lead to measurable improvements.”

“Taking a vacation can be good for your career, too. A German professor of organizational psychology found that vacations can help alleviate burnout, while also making workers more resilient and able to cope with stress. “We know that when people can rest, relax and recharge, there’s a ripple effect of benefits in terms of productivity, creativity and collaboration when they return to work,” Dobroski says. “Employees are not really realizing that they could perform better and refreshed if they take time off.”

“Making sure that employees are taking adequate time to recharge is also on the shoulders of employers. “It’s a two way street,” Dobroski says. About a quarter of respondents say they don’t get any paid vacation, Bankrate found.”

Members in the News

Wells Fargo Overhauls Giving Strategy, Commits \$1 Billion for Affordable Housing

Wells Fargo said Wednesday that it’s overhauling its corporate philanthropy strategy to focus on three key issues hurting underserved communities: housing affordability, individuals’ financial health and small business growth.

Canine Companions Model for Sketch Artists at NYC’s Society of Illustrators

The Society of Illustrators is a non-profit organization of artists and members with the mission of promoting Illustration, its history, practices and artistry.

Sonoma Raceway Launches 50th Anniversary Book

To honor 50 years of racing history in the Sonoma Valley, Sonoma Raceway has released its limited-edition 50th anniversary book.

Redwood Credit Union's Earl Chavez Honored with Volunteer of the Year Award

Earl Chavez, assistant branch manager at the Ukiah branch of Redwood Credit Union (RCU), was recently honored with a Volunteer of the Year Award by the Ukiah Chamber of Commerce.

North Bay Children's Center's Bright Futures Makes Impact

"In 2018, Kaiser Permanente granted \$150,000 to the North Bay Children's Center's (NBCC) Bright Futures campaign to help insure in the broadest sense a healthy path of for a successful life for all children," said Alena Wall, Regional Community Health Manager, Kaiser Permanente.

Kaiser Permanente San Rafael and Santa Rosa Hospitals Recognized as Safety Leaders

Kaiser Permanente hospitals in San Rafael and Santa Rosa received an "A" grade, the highest possible, for patient safety from The Leapfrog Group, continuing a track record of excellence.

Sonoma County Office of Education Increases Student Engagement

On Friday, May 17, the Sonoma County Office of Education hosted the Rooster Fellowship Public Exhibition at the Petaluma Hotel in downtown Petaluma.

Basin Street Properties Looks to the Future, Forming Executive Committee and Announcing Key Promotions

Basin Street Properties, a prominent northern Nevada and northern California real estate investment, development and management firm has promoted two senior executives and formed an Executive Committee to provide vision, oversight and direction for Basin Street's extensive business ventures.

Dominican University of California Partnering to Bring New Courses to Campus

Last year, the college teamed up with Make School, a San Francisco-based coding program, in a first-of-its-kind partnership to offer its students a computer science minor.

BioMarin Seeks FDA OK For Gene Therapy

A potential one-shot-and-you're-done hemophilia A treatment from BioMarin Pharmaceutical Inc. will target regulatory approval in the United States and Europe after showing dramatic decreases in bleeding during clinical trials.

Read more online at www.northbayleadership.org/news



Who We Are

Over twenty five years ago, business leaders founded the North Bay Leadership Council on a simple premise: We can accomplish more by working together. Today, the Council includes 54 leading employers in the North Bay. Our members represent a wide variety of businesses, non-profits and educational institutions, with a workforce in excess of 25,000. As business and civic leaders, our goal is to promote sound public policy, innovation and sustainability to make our region a better place to live and work. For more information: Call 707.283.0028 / E-mail info@northbayleadership.org

www.northbayleadership.org