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Editor's Introduction

The first 2023 issue of the CJPP presents a mix of articles about social policy and politics. It underscores the diversity of topics covered by the journal as well as the wide range of scholars who contribute to it.

Our lead article examines the timely issue of restrictions on sexual and reproductive healthcare. Yuki Hebner and colleagues show that faith-based hospitals commonly impose specific restrictions, and provide evidence that the portion of faith-based hospitals in California has increased in recent years. This has important regulatory policy implications.

In our second article, Jamshid Damooei and Ruslan Korchagin offer an innovative new index to assess the level of childhood deprivation within each California county. The high cost of childcare emerges as a factor closely linked to instances of deprivation. The authors contend that a high quality, universal system of childhood education could largely address the problem.

The last two articles move us directly to the political realm. We present two perspectives on Alaska's recently adopted system of ranked choice voting (RCV). This is a topic of significant relevance to California based readers, as RCV is commonly advocated as a means to counter extreme party polarization, a concern that motivated structural changes in the Golden State's own electoral system such as the "top two" primary system. Jerry McBeath examines Alaska's reasons for moving to RCV in the context of the state's political history and analyzes the results of recent elections using the new system. Benjamin Reilly and colleagues focus on how the Alaska system fits with efforts to counter polarization, and analyze early whether early election results indicate that RCV has been successful in this regard.

We hope readers find the articles provocative. We also encourage scholars interested in state politics and policy to consider the CJPP as an outlet for their own work.