The Carter-Baker Commission: 16 years later

In 2005, former President Jimmy Carter and former Secretary of State James A. Baker, III, co-chaired the Commission on Federal Election Reform, which produced a report on the U.S. electoral process and recommendations on maximizing ballot access and election integrity.

In spring 2021, The Carter Center and the Baker Institute conducted a series of five webinars that again examined critical challenges facing the U.S. electoral system. A new report includes the results of discussions by a range of election officials and experts who provided hands-on analysis about the problems confronting our elections and advice on how to solve them. Read it here.
America on edge: Settling for second place?

The United States risks ceding its longstanding global leadership in science and engineering to China, write senior fellow Neal F. Lane and former Lockheed-Martin CEO Norman Augustine in *Issues in Science and Technology*.

Read the authors’ recommendations and concrete steps to advance U.S. international research and economic competitiveness.

Center for Energy Studies: Focus on climate change

**CES a finalist in global climate challenge competition**

A carbon-storage project led by the Center for Energy Studies is a finalist in the first international *Climate Challenge Cup* competition. The winners will be announced Nov. 10 at the United Nations 2021 Climate Change Conference currently in progress in Glasgow, Scotland. In the meantime, read more of the CES’ climate-related work here — including this week’s blog on a dispute over one of Poland’s largest lignite mines, an important source of jobs and serious environmental concerns.

**A net-zero Saudi Arabia? Not so fast**

Saudi Arabia has declared a goal of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2060 — a formidable task for a country built on oil, but an essential one for the kingdom’s future, write Center for Energy Studies fellow Jim Krane and co-author Karen Young. However, the Saudis have a number of advantages to help them make the shift.

Read more in *Al-Monitor*. 
“The disruptions that are caused by the pandemic have worsened a lot of things. ... We would have continued to see a rise in the synthetic opioid-related overdoses, but the pandemic worsened it.”

Katharine Neill Harris, Ph.D., fellow in drug policy, in Yahoo Finance

Latest research

**Iran Won’t Back Down.** “As the U.S. and Iran prepare for talks to revive the nuclear agreement that Washington abandoned in 2018, the leadership in Tehran is laying the groundwork for a newly assertive foreign policy,” writes fellow Mohammad Ayatollahi Tabaar in Foreign Affairs. Read the full article [here](#).

![Iranian leader](image)

**A dubious exceptionalism: Texas vs. other states’ curriculum standards.** Texas social studies curriculum standards do not give public school students the balanced coverage of religion they need to function effectively in an increasingly diverse society, contends nonresident scholar David R. Brockman. His comparison of equivalent curriculum standards in five culturally similar states identifies lessons Texas can learn from its counterparts. Read Brockman’s paper [here](#).

![Texas Capitol](image)

**The fracas with France.** Paris and Washington are past the immediate AUKUS crisis, but two major, related issues will remain high on Biden’s foreign policy agenda for the balance of his term, writes fellow Joe Barnes: China’s military expansion in the Pacific and the EU’s role in great power politics. Read more at the [Baker Institute Blog](#).
Upcoming events

Webinar — The Way Forward: Immigration Reform for the 21st Century. At this virtual conference featuring a keynote address by Fort Bend County Judge KP George, experts discuss the challenges faced by the undocumented immigrant population in the U.S. and potential policy solutions to benefit the country and domestic economy. **Nov. 4 | 9:00 a.m. CDT**

Roundtable Dialogue: Are We Moving Toward a “Post-American” Regional Security Complex in the Persian Gulf? At this member-exclusive event, Middle East fellow Kristian Coates Ulrichsen examines the factors reshaping regional security interests in the Persian Gulf. For those attending in person, breakfast will be served at 8:00 a.m. The program can also be viewed virtually; visit the **event page** for details. Consider joining our Roundtable to enjoy this and other member events! **Nov. 11 | 8:00 a.m. CST**

Webinar — Old Conflict, New Frameworks, Evolving Discourses: The Future of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 30 Years After Madrid. Experts reflect on the Madrid Peace Conference's unfinished business in the shadow of triumphs and failed efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli and Israeli-Palestinian conflicts. **Nov. 16 | 9:00 a.m. CST**

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