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December 2020

U.S. Productivity Increased at 4.6 Percent Rate in Third Quarter

U.S. productivity increased at a solid 4.6 percent pace in the third quarter, slightly below the initial estimate, while labor costs fell at a slower pace.

Read more [here](#).



FCC Announces Billions in Subsidies to Provide Rural Area Broadband Access

The Federal Communications Commission announced that about \$9 billion in subsidies will be awarded to help bring broadband access to rural areas across the U.S.

Read more [here](#).



Entergy Arkansas, ADE Partnering in Online Career/Technical Education Courses

Entergy Arkansas and the Arkansas Department of Education recently announced a \$482,000 grant that will be used to develop 20 new Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses.

Read more [here](#).



U.S. Unemployment Claims Hit Highest Level Since Mid-September

The Labor Department reported that another

853,000 Americans filed for first-time unemployment benefits during the most recent reporting period.

Read more [here](#).



Employers Debate Whether to Require COVID-19 Vaccine for Workers

Companies will soon face a tough decision about whether to require their employees to get vaccinated for COVID-19.

Read more [here](#).



Attorneys General, FTC File Lawsuits Against Facebook

Forty-eight attorneys general, as well as the Federal Trade Commission, have filed lawsuits against Facebook alleging illegal power grabs.

Read more [here](#).



Online Shopping Faces Difficult Holiday Test

This holiday season, online shopping will strain the retail and shipping industries as never before with about 800 million more packages expected to be delivered than last year.

Read more [here](#).



EPA Declines to Tighten Soot Emissions

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has opted to retain current air quality standards for both fine and coarse forms of particulate matter commonly known as soot.

Read more [here](#).



CBO: Deficit Climbs 25 Percent to \$430 Billion Through November

The federal deficit in October and November, the first two months of the 2021 fiscal year, came to \$430 billion, an increase of \$87 billion, or 25 percent, over the same period last year.

Read more [here](#).



Biden Under Pressure to Quickly Regulate Methane

Dozens of environmental groups recently sent a letter to President-elect Joe Biden's transition team urging them to "move swiftly" on regulating methane emissions.

Read more [here](#).



Research: Millions of Smart Devices Vulnerable to Hacking

Researchers at a cybersecurity firm say they have identified vulnerabilities in software widely used by millions of connected devices – flaws that could be exploited by hackers.

Read more [here](#).



Bureau of Labor: Manufacturing Job Openings Increase

Manufacturing job openings increased from September to October, according to the Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Read more [here](#).



China Posts Record Monthly Trade Surplus in November

China notched a record \$75.4 billion trade surplus in November, driven by a 46 percent jump in exports to the U.S.

Read more [here](#).



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