



The Weekly Page

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Pages Learn About The Legislature



Pages Write Bills, Hold Mock Hearings



During the first three days of their week, pages worked individually or in small groups to write bills designed to address issues which were relevant to them and the state.

Criteria for writing a good bill was discussed before students selected issues to research and develop. Then they used bill templates to formulate official-looking bills in preparation for a mock committee hearing on Thursday. Pages also wrote media releases for their bills which are included in this newsletter.

Pages read their bills and “committee members,” governed by the rules of parliamentary procedure, debated the pros and cons of the proposals. Each bill was voted upon resulting in a “DO PASS” or “DO NOT PASS” recommendation that determines whether the bill continues on in the legislative process. Because pages are in the Page School for only two hours a day for one week, there is not sufficient time to fully develop the final versions of their bills. However, the process of writing and presenting their own bills provides an excellent exposure to the real legislative process.

Page School on the web

The Page School has its own web site. You can find us at: <http://www.leg.wa.gov/PageSchool> This newsletter has been posted there.

Save Our Sleep!

Olympia – House Bill 1011 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Gabriela Menendez, Macy Bergford, and Hannah Whelan. “This bill addresses the issue of school start times. The bill will require each Middle School and High School in the State of Washington to start any time after 8:50 am,” said Rep. Menendez. This bill is to promote school start times being postponed until at least 8:50 am. Sleep deprivation within teens interferes with their education. Starting so early is what’s causing these issues.



Senate Bill 5050: “Unsafe Biking Habits”

Olympia – Senate Bill 5050 was introduced yesterday by Senators Alex Tuminello and Ally Moriarty. “This bill addresses the issue of unsafe cyclists. The bill will improve safety on roads by preventing unsafe biking habits,” said Sen. Tuminello. The



bill will require all bikers on main roads to get a form of identification on their bikes, such as a license plate. This will allow enforcement when a law is broken.

Senators Hirsch and Hill Out to End Police Brutality

Olympia – Senate Bill 7999 was introduced yesterday by Senators Charlie Hill and Sam Hirsch. “This bill addresses the issue of police body cameras. The bill will require all law enforcement personnel to wear body cameras while on duty,” said Sen. Hirsch. This bill also increases speeding ticket fines by \$160, enough money for two cameras, and it will set aside 10% of DUI fines in order to fund the body camera program. While these seem like hefty costs, the projected decrease in controversial police brutality cases will be worth the money. In conclusion, this bill should be a great way to provide better accountability methods for law enforcement.



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Vaccines and Immunizations Required for Children Under the Age of 18 to Attend Schools and Public Events

Olympia – 2/17/2015, Representatives Owen Brummel, Gabe Bryant, and Hunter Rodgers introduced House Bill 1963 which addresses the issue of vaccinations of minors. “This bill is beneficial to our society, because it will help protect our children and citizens from harmful, contagious diseases, such as HPV, measles, and chicken pox,” said Rep. Rodgers. “The bill aims to deny unvaccinated children access to the public school system because they



pose a health threat to children with immune deficiencies or other physical handicaps, as well as other unvaccinated children or adults. However, unvaccinated children may be home-schooled or placed in a low population secondary school (under 50 occupants).”

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Man’s Best Friend

Olympia – Senate Bill 7998 was introduced yesterday by Senators Abby Snyder and Sarah Seeman. “This bill addresses the issue of animal shelters. The bill will fund animal shelters to improve their quality,” said Sen. Snyder. This bill will require a 1% tax on all cat and dog food on the market. The money from the tax will go to the nearest local government funded animal shelter. The shelters will then use this money to lower the cost of spaying and neutering, lower costs of micro chipping, expand the shelter to fit more animals, improve the overall quality of the shelters (cleanliness and care of animals), and help treat sick animals.



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Police Body Cameras to Ensure Accountability of Your Police Forces

Olympia – House Bill 2242 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Aiden Ewing, Mary Lawrence, and Clare Lawrence. “This bill addresses the issue of police body cameras. The bill will manage accountability of actions of police officers and decrease misinterpretations of situations involving police,” said Rep. C. Lawrence. Officers will be required to wear these cameras at all times, with a penalty of a month’s suspension if the camera is removed or turned off. An exception will be while police are inside the public’s homes in order to maintain their privacy. When police departments in Rialto, California assigned cameras to 22 of their officers, the use of force declined by 60%. “Unclear resolutions of incidents involving police can be put away by passing this bill and requiring police officers to wear body cameras,” said Rep. M. Lawrence.



Abortion for Teenage Pregnancies

Olympia – Senate Bill 7777 was introduced yesterday by Senators Gianluca Dinaro, Thomas Pulliam, and Isaac Selby. “This bill addresses the issue of abortion. The bill will reduce suffering on the part of teen mothers and their children caused by limitations on abortion,” said Sen. Selby. This bill will legalize abortion for women under the age of 18 or past the stage of fetal viability, provided that the mother notifies her parents and that counseling classes for the teen and her parents are given.



Teenagers who become pregnant are often forced to bring a baby into a hostile environment because they are prohibited from having an abortion past the state of viability. In 2002, about 86,000 women under the age of 18 underwent an abortion. Washington State currently prohibits all women from having an abortion after their baby has become viable. This often puts teen mothers in difficult socioeconomic situations as well as babies in situations adverse to successful development.

Washington State Ban on Plastic Retail Bags

Olympia – House Bill 3289 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Yoko Fedorenko, Hana Fedorenko, and Tony Alvarez. “This bill addresses the issue of plastic bags. The bill will eliminate all business use of plastic retail bags,” said Rep. Alvarez. The Legislature finds that plastic bags are negatively impacting our environment. It takes 1,000 years for polyethylene bags



bags to break down. As they break down, polyethylene bags don't biodegrade. Instead they break down

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Search for “Page School” in the Archives to watch yourself in the committee hearings.

into smaller and smaller toxic molecules that go on to contaminate water and soil resulting in detrimental effects to the health of our ecosystems. Approximately 1 billion mammals and seabirds die each year because of plastic bag ingestion.

Military Veterans and Health Care for the Veterans

Olympia – Senate Bill 7123 was introduced yesterday by Senators Sean Ryan, Kyle Erickson and Brandon Apperson. “This bill addresses the issue of veterans with PTSD. The bill will be helping veterans find ways to afford and find treatment for their PTSD. We will use therapy and watch over them to make sure nothing happens,” said Sen. Sean Ryan. It has been proven that every 1 out of 5 veterans have and live with PTSD. Health care with PTSD costs way more than you would expect. It is

3.5 times more than regular health care. Scientists have experimented with using medical marijuana to help veterans with PTSD. Scientists have tested many different things, like marijuana, to help cure the veterans with their PTSD and many other problems that they have.



Decreasing Carbon Emissions

Olympia – The issue of carbon dioxide emissions was considered in committee hearings yesterday when Senator Valencia Crawford introduced Senate Bill 5742. “Our bill will lower the level of CO₂ emissions in the atmosphere,” said Sen. Crawford. The idea of the bill is

to lower the tax on electric cars to 6%. We want to make electric cars more affordable and common, because the CO₂ emissions are lower than from the average car.



An Enactment Relating to Parental Consent in the Setting of an Abortion.

Olympia – House Bill 3333 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Kalyn Rodne and Christopher Miyake. “The bill addresses the issue of abortion. It will involve parental consent for minors receiving an abortion,” said Rep. Rodne. This bill requires women applying for an abortion who are 18 and younger to have parental consent. In previous years, it has shown that only 60% of minors receiving an abortion voluntarily involve their parents. With this bill ratified, there will be a decrease in the abortion rate due to parental consent being required.



Obesity Outbreak

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Emily Broersma and Lynn Chou introduced Senate Bill 7011, which addresses the issue of childhood obesity.



“The bill is a good one because the bill will lower the percentage of heart attacks and strokes and raise the percentage good health care,” said Sen. Chou. This bill will require that food

purchased by schools be 60% healthy state grown food and 40% unhealthy food. Between 1977 and 2006, there has been an increase in childhood obesity and the percentage is rising even more. Research shows that students who buy school lunches have a higher risk of becoming obese than students who bring food from home. In order to prevent childhood obesity, schools must have more state grown foods in schools than junk food.

Controversial GMO Bill Is Introduced

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Sophia Cho and Erynn Glaesemann introduced Senate Bill 5109, which addresses the issue of labeling genetically modified foods. “The bill is significant because it will assist more people to be attentive to how

GMOs affect their bodies and what exactly GMOs are,” said Sen. Glaesemann. The Legislature finds that common food additives, especially genetically modified foods, are harmful to people’s health and to the environment. Studies show that GMO foods can threaten the wellbeing of many animal species, such as causing organ damage, gastrointestinal and immune system disorders, and many more.



Big Ideas in Government

Throughout the week pages grappled with understanding the three “big ideas” for a representative government: governing is a complex process, successful democracies rely on responsible citizens, and government affects our life every day. As they participated in daily discussions and group activities, listened to guest speakers, and proposed bills in mock committee hearings, their understanding of these concepts deepened. Class activities introduced new vocabulary words, explained legislative procedures, and explored the bill writing process. On Friday, they individually wrote about one of these “big ideas” to demonstrate the depth of their new knowledge.

Page Program Over 125 Years Old

The Legislature’s page program has been in existence since 1891. This photo is of pages who served decades ago. The first female page served in 1937. In the past, pages were required to do ironing and cleaning for members. Page duties today are much more professional and include delivering campus correspondence, helping with mailings in legislative offices, and handing out documents on the floor of the House and Senate.





Guest Speakers Visit Page School

This week **Supreme Court Justice Mary Fairhurst, Senator Mike Padden (R-4th), and Senate Intern Coordinators Emily McCartan and Diana Hart** joined the pages during classes on Wednesday. Each spoke about what led them to their current positions and shared insightful information about the legislative process or other aspects of government. Pages were able to interact with these guests by asking questions and sharing their own views in response to the speaker’s questions.



House and Senate interns use their own writing skills to help pages with bills and media releases

Every Wednesday, like clock-work, House and Senate interns arrive in class just as instructions are being given to pages on how to craft the language in their bills. As the students get settled in front of computers and access the templates for their bill writing activity, the college interns are poised to answer questions, help supply appropriate wording, and help edit wordy sentences. Both teachers agree that the interns have a nice way of approaching the students with ideas and critiques, which makes it a win-win opportunity for all involved.

The Long Standing Issue Pertaining to School Start Times

Olympia – The issue of school start times was considered in committee hearings yesterday when Senators Aiyana Parham, Lindsey Dunn, and Emery Edwards introduced Senate Bill 5114. “Our bill will require a later school start time,” said Sen. Parham. Requiring schools to start at a later time is proven to help health issues, attendance, enrollment rates, academics, obesity, and depression. The strongest evidence on the im-



impact of starting schools later was in a recent study focusing on first year students in the U.S Air Force Academy. During the two years of the study, start times ranged from 7 a.m. to 8:40 a.m. The study found that students assigned to start classes before 8 a.m. performed worse in not only their first period course but in all of their courses.

Kids Will Be Kids

Olympia – The issue of juvenile sentencing was considered in committee hearings yesterday when Senators Merideth Hackett, Zsa Zsa Toms, and Skye McCaw introduced Senate Bill 5432. “Our bill will ban the trying of juveniles as adults unless an A class felony is committed,” said Sen. McCaw. Laurence Steinberg, professor of psychology at Temple University and director of the McArthur division that conducted a study on the topic, said “in all likelihood, a large number of juveniles who are



being tried as adults are not competent to stand trials.” They will be tried as minors, and punished and/or rehabilitated as such. In cases of Class A felonies, the mental health and home/

community of the individual youth will be evaluated in order to determine if they are eligible for rehabilitation or if they require greater punishment.

GMO – the Right to Know

Olympia – The issue of GMO labeling was considered in committee hearings yesterday when Senator Chase Simerka introduced Senate Bill 6971. “Our bill will require the labeling of all GMO foods in Washington to have a label saying GMO,” said Sen. Simerka. There are over 14,000 manmade chemicals added to American food supply today. Children are suffering the most from additives, because of their exposure to food chemicals from infancy that is causing long term problems.



Experienced Educators

Sharon Heath is in her second year as the Page School teacher; however, she is definitely not new to the Washington Legislature having worked nearly 20 years for the Legislature’s computer support agency. She has also earned a Master’s in Education and has taught middle school as well as college students.

Leo O’Leary has been teaching and coaching in and around Olympia for the past ten years and is in his fourth session as a Page School teacher. “I really like the fact that I can help kids make their dreams come true through both education and athletics,” he said as he introduced himself on Monday.



Competitive Edge Results in Jeopardy Win

On Friday, pages tested their knowledge of the legislative process in a spirited game of *Jeopardy*. Winning teams were awarded certificates and brightly colored stickers that they wore proudly for the rest of the day.



Thanks for a **GREAT** week!

