



The Weekly Page

VOLUME 9 ISSUE 4

FEBRUARY 8, 2013

Pages Learn About Legislature



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 par-



ticipated in daily discussions, listened to guest speakers, and proposed bills in mock committee hearings, their understanding around the concepts deepened. On Friday, they wrote about one of the big ideas to demonstrate the depth of their new knowledge.

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. They discussed the

criteria for making a legislative solution work before selecting issues to research and develop. Then they used bill templates on class computers to formulate official-looking documents in preparation for mock committee hearings on Thursday. Some topics for policy bills included gun violence, wolf attacks in Eastern Washington, and smoking in cars when children are passengers. Pages read their bills and class “committee members,” governed by the rules of parliamentary procedure, debated the pros and cons of the proposals. A “DO PASS” or “DO NOT PASS” recommendation was then voted upon, allowing a bill to continue on in the legislative process. As in the real political system, some bills died in committee.



Legislator wants better informed voters



Olympia – House Bill 2517 was introduced yesterday by Representative John Vogel. “This bill addresses the issue of uneducated voters and will motivate citizens to find out

more about the candidates,” said Rep. Vogel. The bill directs the Secretary of State’s office to remove party affiliations from ballots in all state elections. “This will encourage voters to do research on candidates instead of simply voting for the same party they always do,” said Rep. Vogel. A recent study by the Pew Research Group found that half of Americans would fail a basic test of civil and current events. That makes it important for voters to become educated in politics and this will be the first step, according to the representative.

Senators cook up new food warning labels



Olympia – Senate Bill 6789 was introduced yesterday in the Health Care committee by Senators

Josie Veatch and Caleb Wyllie. “This bill addresses the issue of unhealthy food additives and will help to educate consumers about the prepared foods they eat,” said Sen. Wyllie. Ninety percent of Americans’ household food budgets are spent on processed foods filled with unhealthy additives such as potassium bromate, which has been banned worldwide except in Japan and the United States, say the senators. The bill will require foods processed and/or manufactured in the state to have new warning label on their packaging to bring awareness to consumers regarding the unsafe additives. “Hopefully companies will start switching to healthier alternatives due to shoppers avoid-

ing foods with these labels,” said Sen. Veatch. The senators felt that though there may be a slight increase in food costs, the cost is worth the benefits that come from healthier diets.

Doors open on dispensaries



Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Mason Gaul, Sophia Triche, and Greg DeHart introduced House Bill

1669, which addresses the issue of medical marijuana accessibility. “The bill is a good one because it will make it easier for patients to get the drug they need,” said Rep. Gaul. Currently, patients can either grow their supply or find someone else to grow it for them. “The problem occurs when patients can’t grow it or don’t know anyone who will do it for them,” said Rep. DeHart. This bill would legalize dispensaries throughout the state. These facilities would be licensed by the state and the product would be taxed. “With this economy, we need all the revenue we can get,” said Rep. Triche.

Rep wants to tighten gun licensing

Olympia – Yesterday, Representative Mykaila Reach introduced House Bill 3417, which addresses the issue of gun violence. “The bill is a good one because it will create a safer society,” said Rep. Reach.



Since 1982 there have been 62 mass shootings in the United States, and 49 of the shooters obtained their guns legally, according to the lawmaker. This bill will require all gun buyers to have a gun handling license. To obtain one of these licenses, buyer will have to pass a psychological exam and a gun safety course. “These licenses are going to help diminish mass murders in our wonderful state,” said Rep. Reach. “If this law passes, our streets, malls, and all other public places will be safer than they have ever been.”

Bill cracks down on gas guzzlers



Olympia – Senate Bill 5711 was introduced yesterday in the Environment and Marine Waters committee by Senator Casey Duff. “This bill addresses the issue of carbon dioxide emissions and will provide incentives for purchasers of new cars to select those that are more gas efficient,” said Sen. Duff. The bill will provide a one-time incentive of \$2,000 to buyers purchasing new cars that average more than 50 miles per gallon. “The time to take action is now, we must attempt to slow global warming or run the risk of droughts, rising oceans, and losing our glaciers in our national parks,” he said. The bill also proposes a \$200 fine on purchases of cars that get 17mpg or less.

You, minus CO2



Olympia – House Bill 2431 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Callan Madden and Jordyn Toste. “This bill addresses the issue of CO2 emissions and will make our air cleaner,” said Rep. Madden. Washington has 8.3 millions registered vehicles that emit many types of pollutants. Cars and trucks give out a total of 314 million metric tons of CO2 emissions. “Currently there are only five counties in Washington State that require an emission test on cars every two years—Pierce, Clark, King, Spokane, Snohomish,” said Rep. Toste. If this bill becomes a law, emission testing will be extended to all 39 counties. Counties that don’t currently have emission centers can designate

automotive repair shops to be official centers. This will reduce the cost of building new facilities to create emission centers, according to the lawmakers.

Welfare fraud addressed



Olympia – House Bill 3245 was introduced yesterday by Representative Jenna-Marie Garcia. “This bill addresses the issue of EBT card misuse and will save the state money,” said Rep. Garcia. Welfare

recipients have been using their electronic benefit transfer cards in more than 100 casinos, card rooms, and bingo halls. More than 20,000 withdrawal from ATM machines inside casinos were made in one year alone. “This is costing the state millions of dollars,” said Rep. Garcia. This bill will require store owners to refuse sales for merchandise that is illegal when the purchase is attempted with an EBT card. The fine will be \$300.

Feeding the hungry



Olympia – Senate Bill 5678 was introduced yesterday by Senators Kira Estes, Lindsey Fischer, and Isabel Boettcher. “This bill addresses the issue of hunger in Washington state and will provide incentives for farmers and food manufacturers to donate to food banks,” said Sen. Estes. “Washington is currently the 32nd hungriest state,” said Sen. Boettcher. Between 2008 and 2011, there was an estimated growth in the rate of hunger by 85 percent. “Food banks are being closed because fewer people have extras to give in this bad economy,” said Sen. Fischer.

Senators want to reduce child obesity



Olympia – Senate Bill 6666 was introduced yesterday by Senators Jacob Hopkins, Chance Mattox, and Samuel Orlin. “This bill addresses the issue of childhood obesity and will improve the health of the youth in our state,” said Sen. Mattox. The legislation requires all schools to offer healthier food choices for students, as well as requiring high schoolers to complete a certain number of exercise hours before graduation.

While parents smoke, kids choke



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Laura Srebnik, William Langevin, and Makenzie May, introduced Senate Bill 7117, which addresses the issue of secondhand smoke in cars where children are passengers. “The bill is a good one because it will improve the health of minors,” said Sen. May. Secondhand smoke contains more than 250 chemicals, some that could lead to cancer. “These children are trapped in the car and are too young to make their own decisions about their health,” said Sen. Langevin. Children are more at risk compared to adults for health problems relating to secondhand smoke, ranging from ear infections to asthma and bronchitis.

Law targets elderly drivers



Olympia— Yesterday, Representative Josh Lusink introduced House Bill 1562, which addresses the issue of elderly drivers. “the bill is a good

one because it will reduce the number of fatal accidents among seniors,” said Rep. Lusink. Drivers age 75 and older have a 37 percent higher crash rate than younger drivers; and because they are more physically fragile, they are more likely to be injured in a car crash. If this bill passes into law, a doctor’s recommendation will be necessary for drivers over the age of 65 to renew their license. In addition, a vision and practical driving skills test will be required to make sure they are safe drivers.

Ranchers deal with predatory wolves

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Curtis Haley, Michael Otter-Johnson, and Lucas Gauger introduced Senate Bill 6123, which address-



es the issue of wolves killing livestock in Eastern Washington. “The bill is a good one because it will reduce the number of cattle and sheep lost due to wolf attacks,” said Sen. Haley. When passed, the bill will allow farmers to use a firearm to defend his animals if a single wolf is threatening livestock within 100 feet of his property.

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.

Food additives harmful to health



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Esther Pollock and Caroline Vadino introduced Senate Bill 6347, which addresses the issue of harmful food additives, such as potassium bromate, have been linked with cancer. “The bill is a good one because it will

reduce unnecessary health hazards and promote human wellness,” said Sen. Pollock. The legislation requires that all food processors in the state adopt new nutritional labels that list all food additives and provide a warning if there is a link to health risks. “There are over 14,000 man-made chemicals added to our American food supply. We need to help educate our citizens and provide the necessary information that allows them to be healthy consumers,” said Sen. Vadino.

Gun licenses required before purchase

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Sam Boobar, Mikey Green, and



Thomas Green introduced Senate Bill 5462, which addresses the issue of gun violence. “The bill is a good one because it will make society safer,” said Sen. Thomas Green. In

2011, 79 people died in the state of Washington due to gun related crimes. "Guns are everywhere in our state," said Sen. Boobar. Concealed weapons permits were issued to 392,784 people in 2012. This bill will require buyers to apply for a license before purchasing any weapon. Prior to receiving the license, a course in gun safety must be passed and a document proving the person has not committed a felony must be provided. Licenses must be renewed every two years.

Health risks of abortion emphasized

Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Lilly Sedlak, Brandi Dahlinger, and Austin Skeith introduced House Bill 3743, which addresses the issue of abortion. “The bill is a good one because it will give patients full disclosure regarding the health risks associated with abortion,” said Rep. Sedlak. According to

the lawmakers, abortion is linked to increased depression, cigarette smoking, violent behavior, and alcohol and drug use.

Women who have abortions are 3.4 times more likely to commit suicide than those who do not. “The bill simply requires physicians to explain to their patients the physiological and psychological



health risks that may accompany the voluntary termination of pregnancy, as well as explain to them what an abortion is and how it is performed,” said Rep. Skeith. Before the procedure, a document must be signed by the patient and doctor verifying the counseling session, a 24-hour waiting period, and the final decision.

Predatory wolves are killing livestock



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Megan Rosenkranz, Olivia Shulke, and Maxwell Shulke introduced Senate Bill 5237, which addresses the issue of predatory

wolves in Eastern Washington. “The bill is a good one because it allows farmers and livestock owners to protect their property,” said Sen. Rosenkranz. Studies have reported that wolves in Eastern Washington are a main factor in the death of cattle and sheep. Locals from Spokane have been most severely effected by the killings of their cattle. Cattle is also an easy source of nutrients for the wolves and since they are slow the cows are an easy target. The bill proposes to allow farmers to kill wolves threatening their herds on their property within 100 yards and putting livestock in eminent danger.. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife must then be contacted for removal of the remains.

Watch us live at TVW.org

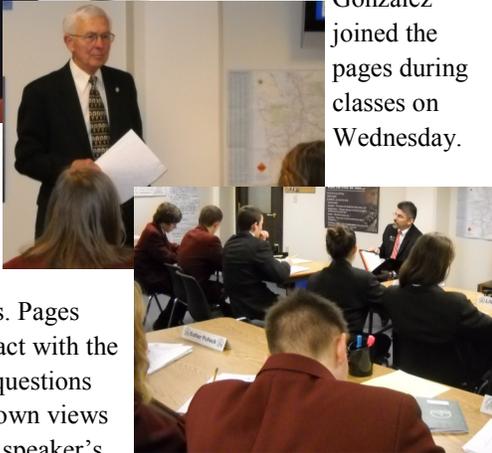
Search for Page School in the Archives to watch yourself in the committee hearings.

Guest speakers visit Page School



Lt. Gov. Brad Owen, Parks Commissioner Joe Taller, and Supreme Court Justice Steven Gonzalez joined the pages during classes on Wednesday.

Each shared insightful information in regard to the legislative or judicial process. Pages were able to interact with the guests by asking questions and sharing their own views in response to the speaker's questions.



Teachers passionate about education



The Washington State Legislature's 2013 Page School employs certificated civics teachers Judi Orr and Lisa McGrath. Judi is a retired social studies and English teacher who taught for over 35 years in the Clover Park School District, and Lisa has been teaching over 15 years in public high schools and at the college level in North Carolina. "I just moved to Washington in November and am loving learning about my new state," said Lisa. Both teachers enjoyed meeting students from all parts of Washington and teaching them more about how



state government functions. "One of my favorite activities is watching committee hearings. Seeing citizens testify about various issues alongside experts in the field is just fascinating to me," said Judi.

Page program over 120 years old



The Legislative page program has been in existence since 1891. This photo is of pages who served in past years. 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 Senate and House.

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.

