



# The Weekly Page

VOLUME 9 ISSUE 5

FEBRUARY 15, 2013

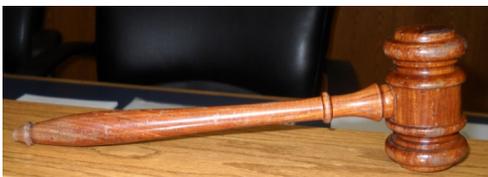
## Pages Learn About Legislature



### 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 participated 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. 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.

### Doggie seatbelts advocated



Olympia – Senate Bill 6280 was introduced yesterday in the Transportation committee by Senator Nathan Adams. “This bill addresses the issue of pet distractions while driving and will reduce the number of inattentive drivers on the road,” said Sen. Adams. In a 2010

survey by the Automobile Association of America, 31 percent of people said they were distracted by their dog while driving no matter where the dog was in the car, and 20 percent of those people admitted to letting their dog sit on their lap while they drove. If this bill becomes law, it will require the use of approved restraints, animal carriers, or crates for all animals in a moving motor vehicle. “Restraints not only limit distractions, but also protect you, your pet and other passengers in the event of a crash or sudden stop,” said Sen. Adams.

### When parents smoke, children choke



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Alexis Bates and Josie Armstrong introduced Senate Bill 5555, which addresses the issue of smoking with children in the car. “The bill

is a good one because it will prevent a lot of children from having serious health issues like lung diseases caused by second-hand smoke,” said Sen. Bates. Tests have shown that air pollution in smokers’ cars can reach levels nearly 10 times the hazardous levels set by the EPA. “Second-hand smoke is toxic and children in cars cannot escape exposure,” said Sen. Armstrong. The bill bans smoking in cars where children are present.

### Local Foods, Better Moods



Olympia – House Bill 3000 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Sarah Wingard, Emily Ganz, and Kelby Hunt in the Health Care and Wellness committee. “This bill ad-

resses the issue of childhood obesity and will not only encourage a healthy lifestyle, but also stimulate local farming businesses in Washington,” said Rep. Wingard. According to studies, the rate of overweight children has tripled since 1980. This has created a host of problems later in life including Type 2 diabetes, arthritis, and heart disease, the leading killer of adults. “Studies show that people begin forming their eating and lifestyle habits in childhood, so early intervention is the key to maintaining a healthy lifestyle,” said Rep. Hunt. If House Bill 3000 becomes a law, at least 50 percent of the produce used in the school cafeteria must be locally grown, while the other 50 percent can be imported produce. Unhealthy lunch items with little to no nutritional value will be swapped for healthier food choices to encourage a better diet among the state’s youth. “This bill not only helps solve the rising epidemic of childhood obesity in the state by providing more nutritious options for students, but also gives Washington’s local farms a huge boost. If Wash-

ington were to decrease obesity levels, we could save a total of \$4,165 million dollars in the state in 2018,” said Rep. Ganz.

### Legislature tightens up gun sales



Olympia – House Bill 1796 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Payton Jones and Alycia Gerou. “This bill addresses the issue of gun safety and will require full back-

ground checks for all gun purchases,” said Rep. Jones. There were 62 mass shooting between 1982-2012; and, in those case, 49 of the shooters obtained their firearms legally. Currently in the state checks are required only for gun purchases made through licensed dealers and are completed in a matter of minutes. Guns bought from private parties or at gun shows do not require a background check. This bill will require that all firearm sales be conducted at a licensed dealership. Private sellers must go to a gun shop to complete the transaction. “A background check and a waiting period of 24 hours is required before the gun sale can be completed. Copies of the authorized sale form must be filed at the dealership and a copy must be sent to the local police department,” said Rep. Gerou.

### Save our college students



Olympia – Senate Bill 7890 was introduced yesterday by Senator Jenna Jasa. “This bill addresses the issue of aggressive credit card companies and will reduce the pressure undergrads feel to apply for the cards,” said Sen. Jasa. Recent statistics show that the average college student owes

\$8,600 on his or her credit card and cannot afford to pay it off. When credit card marketers set up displays on campuses, they offer free hats, t-shirts, pizzas, and even iPods to lure students into applying for cards with high interest rates, according to the senator. If this bill becomes law, credit card companies will be banned from marketing on campuses and will forbid colleges and the card companies from partnering to co-brand cards to alumni. “It’s hard enough for college students to manage what little money they have. If they really want a card, they can go to their local bank and apply for one,” said Sen. Jasa.

## Lawmakers say children's health going up in smoke



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Jacob Lewis and Logan Taylor introduced House Bill 2348, which addresses the issue of secondhand smoking in cars.

“The bill is a good one because it protects the well being and future of our youth,” said Sen. Lewis. Secondhand smoke contains more than 250 chemicals known to be highly toxic and can cause cancer. The concentration of secondhand smoke in cars can exceed that in homes and bars up to 100 times. Those who were exposed to secondhand smoke in their youth are more likely to get cancer and other life threatening diseases. “The smoke trapped in cars is toxic and children in a vehicle can not escape exposure,” said Sen. Taylor. Secondhand smoke is associated with lung disease, heart disease, asthma, and ear infections and can lead to an increased risk of sudden infant death syndrome. This bill makes smoking any tobacco products in vehicles with passengers under the age of 18 a secondary violation which could result in a 3-week suspension of a driver's license.

## Clearing the sleepy moor



Olympia—Senate Bill 6543 was introduced yesterday in the Education committee by Senators Joseph Pratt, Nolan Wolf, and Jonathan Yake. “This bill addresses the issue of teen sleep deprivation

and will result in students who are more alert and productive in classes,” said Sen. Wolf. The bill would allow for more realistic sleeping and waking patterns in high school students by requiring all high schools to start no earlier than 8 a.m. It would also implement a 20-minute rest period during the second half of the school day. Studies show that adolescents require 8 1/2 to 9 hours of sleep in order to perform at levels on a par with national and international competitors. Teens report

anxiety, depression, irritability and other complaints related to lack of sleep.

## Students lack science and math skills

Olympia – House Bill 2896 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Christian MacEwen and Christopher



Olson in the Education committee. “This bill addresses the issue of low academic achievement in the area of science and math and will provide a better employment future for our students,” said Rep. MacEwen. In 2012, more than 20 percent of tenth grade students failed the math end-of-course tests, and 30 percent failed the science end-of-course tests. “Our curriculum is behind on a global and national level, putting students at a disadvantage for future global jobs,” said Rep. Olson. If this bill becomes law, school districts will be required to offer Algebra 1 by the end of 7th grade. The current 7th grade curriculum in science would begin in 5th grade. “This would force middle schools and high schools to offer more advanced math and science classes, and the result would be more competitive graduates in the job market,” said Rep. MacEwen.

## Reps want to preserve wolf population

Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Jazlynn Webb and Lauren Davis introduced House Bill 1111, which addresses the issue of wolves in Eastern Washington. “The bill is a good one because it



requires the owners of the livestock to dispose of all deceased animals on the ranch immediately following the animal's death,” said Rep. Davis. Wolves are attracted to the smell of dead animals. “By burning the carcasses of livestock that die on the ranches, the wolves will not come around to hurt the other cattle,” said Rep. Webb. This bill will help protect livestock from being hunted by the wolves and will also help preserve the wolf population.

### Lawmakers level the playing field



Olympia – House Bill 3998 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Peter Condyles, Jake Kasinger, and Chris Cabrera.

“This bill addresses the issue of high school sports eligibility and will make the standards the same for all school districts in the state,” said Rep. Condyles. Currently the WIAA requires that all high school athletes have a minimum 2.0 GPA to play on their sports teams. Schools are allowed to set a higher GPA requirement if they wish. “This leads to an unfair advantage, if some players are benched for low grades at one school but others are allowed to play with low grades at another school,” said Rep. Cabrera. If this bill becomes law, all high school athletes will be required to maintain a 2.5 GPA to play. Players may not be failing any class and may have no more than one school disciplinary action in the semester they are on the team. Schools may not set higher standards. “This will level the playing field in all competitions,” said Rep. Kasinger.

### Senators want to give ranchers the ability to protect their livestock



Olympia – Senate Bill 6480 was introduced yesterday by Senators Mick Mauritzen, Jacob Vatter, and Brittany Mills.

“This bill addresses the issue of wolves killing livestock in Eastern Washington and will give ranchers permission to kill the threatening predators,” said Sen. Mauritzen. Currently, Eastern Washington has eight of the 12 recorded wolf packs in the state. By September 2012, wolves had killed over 40 head of cattle on the Diamond M Ranch, resulting in a loss totaling over \$100,000. This bill would allow ranchers to kill any wolf within 100 feet of livestock if the wolf is showing aggressive behavior. “Ranchers would have to report the kill to the Depart-

ment of Fish and Wildlife, which would help the state keep track of the wolf population,” said Sen. Mills.

### Teens in the Land of Nod



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Sydney Briggs, Genny Geiger, and Gisella Alessi introduced Senate Bill 7576, which addresses the

issue of sleep-deprived teenagers. “The bill is a good one because it will increase high school students' ability to do well and learn more,” said Sen. Briggs. This bill will push back high school start times. “Students work more efficiently and are able to do better in all categories if they are well rested. School should be mentally challenging, not physically challenging,” said Sen. Geiger.

### Up in smoke



Olympia – Senate Bill 6776 was introduced yesterday by Senators Jessica Armstrong and Elizabeth Johnson.

“This bill addresses the issue of smoking in cars with children present and will improve the health of our young people,” said Sen. Johnson. Smoke from cigarettes in a car emits 50 times more small airborne particles than smoke emitted per mile by a car’s exhaust pipe. Studies indicate that children are more at risk than adults for adverse health effects of secondhand smoke, ranging from ear infections to asthma and bronchitis. This bill will prohibit adults from smoking in vehicles if children are in the car. This will be a secondary offense and carries a fine of \$175 and 20 hours of community service.

### 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.

## Senators require labeling for genetically modified foods



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Amanda Bailey, Audrey Cooper, and Sarah Trawczynski introduced Sen-

ate Bill 7777, which addresses the issue of genetically engineered food products. “This bill will allow our export market to thrive,” said Senator Trawczynski. Currently the state does not require disclosure of food products that have been altered. According to the senators, agri-business is losing billions of dollars because food made with genetically modified organisms are not labeled; 49 countries have laws mandating this disclosure. “Many foreign markets have restricted the imports of our crops because of safety concerns,” said Sen. Bailey. The bill requires labeling of any food product for retail sale with the words “genetically engineered” if it is partly or entirely produced via genetic engineering. The disclosure applies to seed, seed stock, or any raw agricultural commodity, as well.

## Bag the bags

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Will White and Thad-



daeus Hug introduced Senate Bill 6483, which addresses the issue of plastic bag pollution. “The bill is a good one because it will help our environment and promote the practice of using eco-friendly bags in retail and grocery stores,” said Sen. White. Not only does the manufacture of these bags waste valuable oil and contribute to global warming, but the bags also harm marine animals that mistake them for food. “Plastic bags take an estimated 500-1,000 years to decompose and make up nearly 5 percent of all garbage going to landfills,” said Sen. Hug. This bill requires a 10 cent per bag fee to be paid by consumers. The money will fund the production of reusable and environmental-

ly friendly canvas bags to be handed out at all retail and grocery stores. “When a similar tax was put into place in Ireland in 2002, the use of the plastic bags dropped by over 90 percent,” said Sen. White.

## Exercise and proper diet go hand-in-hand

Olympia – House Bill 1789 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Teresa Meyers, Lizzy May,



and Nora Loney. “This bill addresses the issue of childhood obesity and will improve the health of our children,” said Rep. Loney. The obesity problems has been growing over the years, according to the research done by the representatives. From 1980-2008, obesity levels in 6 to 11-year-olds increased 13 percent. Obesity is also causing strokes in younger people. The sharpest increase —51 percent—was among men 15 through 34. This bill will require all public schools to offer a physical education class five days a week for at least 45 minutes. The bill also provides for school lunches to include more fruits and vegetables that are locally grown. “The money will come from the school lunch fees, which will increase by \$2,” said Rep. Meyers.

## 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.



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

Guest speakers visit Page School



Mary Selecky, Health Department Director; Sen. Christine Rolfes (D-Bainbridge Island) from the 23rd district; and Cristina Labra, Minority Language Education Outreach Coordinator



from the Secretary of State’s office, joined the pages during classes on Wednesday. All guests shared insightful information about their jobs. Pages were able to ask questions and sharing their own views in response to the speakers’ comments.

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.

