



The Weekly Page

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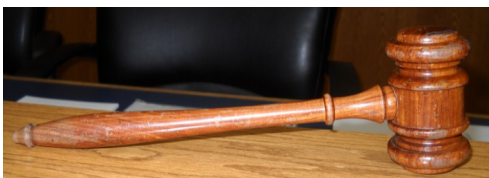
Pages Learn About Legislature



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

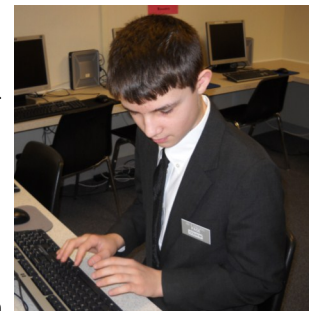
bills designed to address issues which were relevant to them and the state. They discussed the criteria for making a legislative solution work before selecting issues to research and develop. Then they used bill templates on class computers to formulate official-looking documents in preparation for mock committee hearings on Thursday. Topics for policy bills included plastic bag pollution, wolves in Eastern Washington, abortion and the cost of the death penalty. 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.

cannot escape exposure,” said Sen. Armstrong. The bill bans smoking in cars where children are present.

Vehicle volcanoes to become dormant if Rep. Meenk has his way

Olympia – House Bill 1010 was introduced yesterday by Representative Colin Meenk in the Transportation committee. “This bill addresses the issue of second-hand smoke in vehicles and will improve the health of passengers,” said Rep. Meenk. Tests have shown that air pollution in smokers’ cars can reach levels nearly 10 times the hazardous levels set by the Environmental Protection Agency. “Kids are more at risk than adults for adverse health effects, ranging from ear infections to asthma and bronchitis,” he said. If this bill becomes law, smoking will be banned in vehicles that have passengers. This will be a secondary law and violators will be fined \$500.



Saving the world...one bag at a time

Olympia – House Bill 1623 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Angel Garay, Mariah Bicondova, and Ahsha



Womack. “This bill addresses the issue of plastic bag pollution and will help clean up the environment,” said Rep. Garay. *The Seattle Times* is just one business that relies on the product, estimating that it uses 300,000 plastics bags a week for its newspaper deliveries. “In addition to harming the environment, plastic bags also harm marine wildlife,” said Rep. Womack. About 100,000 whales, seals, turtles, and other marine animals are killed by plastic bags each year when they mistake the decomposing bags for food and accidentally ingest them. This bill proposes that grocery stores, outlets and retail stores be required to offer only bags made of organic or recyclable materials after 2014. “Stores that have a supply of plastic bags will have a year to use them up, but during this time, they will need to charge their customers who want a plastic bag an extra fee,” said Rep. Bicondova. As is currently the situation, recycled bags will be purchased by the consumer for reuse each time they visit the store.

Senator calls for repeal of cell phone law



Olympia – Senate Bill 5454 was introduced yesterday by Senator Garrett Nelson. “This bill addresses the issue of the state’s current cell phone laws and will benefit more drivers,” said Sen. Nelson. The current law is hard to enforce. A survey released by State Farm Insurance in

2012 found that 68 percent of drivers ages 18-29 text while driving. For the overall population the percentage of drivers texting behind the wheel rose from 32-34 percent. “Clearly people are not following this law,” said Sen. Nelson. The new proposal will repeal both the cellphone and the texting while driving laws. However anyone who has an accident, and it is determined that it was their fault and a cellphone was part of the

cause, then that person will be restricted from using electronics while driving for a year with a notation made on their drivers license to that affect.

Cut-off moves bills closer to becoming laws

This week pages spent time on the floor of either the House of Representatives or the Senate delivering amendments or other documents to legislators for their vote. Pages got a first-hand look at how parliamentary procedure is used as lawmakers considered bills which are still active. Hundreds of bills have been introduced in the two chambers since opening day on Jan. 14, but only about 15-20 percent will actually make it to the end of the law making process. In addition to handing out documents, pages were busy listening to their legislators express their views and watching the voting process. Wednesday, March 13, is the cutoff for bills in their house of origin. At that time, those bills which are still alive will be sent to the opposite chamber where the process of considering legislation for public hearings in committees will begin anew. Bills which make it out of the second chamber will be sent to the Governor for his approval. The 105-day session is scheduled to end by April 28.

Plan to prevent mass shootings proposed



Olympia – Senate Bill 5803 was introduced yesterday by Senators Shelbie Sessen and Holt Maki. “This bill addresses the issue of gun violence and will make our communities safer,” said Sen. Maki. Since 1982 there have been at least 62 mass shootings. There were 68 automatic hand guns, 35 assault weapons, 20 revolvers and 19 shotguns used in the incidents. More than ¾ of the guns were obtained legally. This legislation will ban the ownership, possession, purchase, and sale of all handguns and assault rifles for private use. People will still retain the right to bear arms as they may continue to possess shotguns and rifles for hunting purposes. Violators will incur penalties from fines to jail time.

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New House bill saves livestock and money



Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives John Sullivan, Sequoyah Stitt, and Gus Phillips introduced House Bill 1001, which addresses the issue of wolves attacking cattle in Eastern Washington. “The bill is a good one because it will help farmers protect their livestock without harming an endangered species,” said Rep. Sullivan. This bill will require the farmers to install Nite-Guard devices on their fences to deter wolves before any compensation can be claimed for animals killed by predatory gray wolves. “The wolves are protected under the federal Endangered Species Act in the western two thirds of the state, but on the east side, we have had several attacks such as the one at the Diamond M Ranch,” said Rep. Stitt. Currently farmers are given a set payment for their dead cattle but it doesn’t nearly make up for the money lost, according to the lawmakers. In 2010, the USDA reported that wolves had killed 8,100 head of cattle, resulting in a total revenue loss of more than \$3.5 million. “This would save tax payers money because they would have to compensate fewer farmers with the solar devices in place which scare the wolves off before they can do harm,” said Rep. Phillips. they do now.

Retail and grocery stores go green

Olympia – Senate Bill 6024 was introduced yesterday in the Environment and Marine Waters committee by Senators Clara Mastin and Rebekah Richards. “This bill addresses the issue of plastic bag pollution and will clean up our state,” said Sen. Richards. The bags use up natural resources, consume energy during manufacturing, create litter, choke marine life and add to landfill waste. It takes 10-20 years for a bag exposed to air to decompose, according to the senators. This bill will require all retail and grocery stores to pro-



vide reusable bags for customers to purchase. Any plastic bags that stores provide must carry an extra charge for their use. “Some cities in Washington are already doing this and many countries like Australia have already banned or taken action to discourage the use of plastic bags,” said Sen. Mastin.

No more free lunches!

Olympia – Senate Bill 7596 was introduced yesterday by Senators Jarryd Dressor and Cooper Antin. “This bill addresses the issue of aggressive credit card companies and will help protect students from accumulating debt,” said Sen. Antin. Credit cards have been marketed to students through tables set up on college campuses, and nearly a third of these students have been offered a free gift to sign up. T-shirts, Frisbees, candy, pizza—even iPods are handed out when a credit card application is returned. “In 2006, the average undergraduate student owed \$2,169 in credit card debt, while the average graduate student owed \$8,612. This is deplorable,” said Sen. Dressor. This bill prohibits credit card companies from soliciting business from students on college campuses throughout the state.



An incentive to hire the homeless



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Hannah Hoepfner, Emily Allen, and Josiah Corwin introduced

Senate Bill 5269, which addresses the issue of homeless people. “The bill is a good one because it will give those living in shelters and on the streets a chance for a new life,” said Sen. Hoepfner. Families make up 40 percent of the homeless population. Homelessness can result in death. Seven hundred street people die each year from hypothermia. If this bill becomes law, businesses will be given tax incentives to hire the homeless.

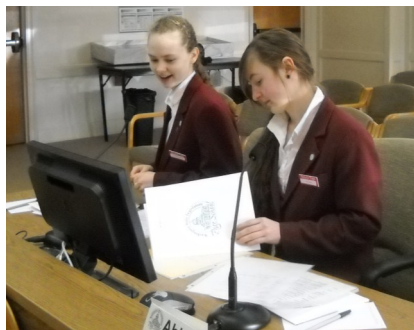
Death penalty on the way out



Olympia – House Bill 3409 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Tyler Bonnell, Henry Nordhorn, and Joseph McDermott. “This bill addresses the issue of the death penalty and will save millions of taxpayer dollars,” said Rep. Bonnell. Death penalty cases can cost up to more than a million dollars each because the trials last two to three times longer than normal cases. For example, Conner Schierman killed a family of four in 2006, and so far his trial has cost the state \$2.4 million with more appeals to come. Research has shown that the cost of capital punishment is over four times greater than the cost of keeping an aggravated murderer in prison for life, according to the representatives. This bill will abolish the death penalty and replace it with life without parole. “The millions of dollars that are currently being spent on capital cases would better serve society through education and counseling for victim’s families rather than being used for more killing,” said Rep. McDermott.

Senators want a more educated decision about abortions

Olympia – Senate Bill 5926 was introduced yesterday in the Law & Justice committee by Senators Abby Berg and Alexis Hoepfner. “This bill addresses the issue of abortion and will educate women on the important decision they are



making,” said Sen. Hoepfner. Approximately 18 percent of all pregnancies in the United States end in abortion. Washington State currently does not require any counseling or information sessions for women considering the procedure, according to the senators. This bill will require pregnant women wishing to have

an abortion to view an ultrasound and listen to the baby’s heart-beat. “According to studies, this may encourage women to make a more educated choice on whether or not to abort their child. The hope is that the mother will choose to live a life with less regret,” said Sen. Berg.

Reps strike back against childhood obesity epidemic



Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Cody Hill, Hannah Cherry, Hannah Heizer, and Shane Murphy introduced House Bill 3259, which addresses the issue of childhood obesity. “The bill is a good one because it will help our young people stay healthy,” said Rep. Murphy. In 2004 an estimated 17 percent of children and adolescents ages 2-19 were overweight. This rate has more than tripled since 1980, according to the lawmakers. “It’s an epidemic. It is estimated that one in three children born in 2000 will develop type 2 diabetes in their lifetime,” said Rep. Hill. This bill will require all public schools to provide one hour of physical education per day. This will include learning about fitness, healthy foods and how to make healthy choices in day to day life.

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.



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.

Guest speakers visit Page School

Adam Cooper, Legislative Assistant for Sen. Jeanne Kohl-Welles (D-Seattle) from the 36th district; Meagan Allen, Legislative Assistant to Rep. Terry Nealey; and Rep. Hans Zeiger (R-Puyallup) from the 25th district 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.



Schools need to wake up to the reality of sleep deprivation in teens



Olympia – Senate Bill 5231 was introduced yesterday by Senators Jessica Linde, Emily Arras and Yasmine Arbob. “This bill addresses the issue of sleep deprived teens

and will promote academic success and better health in our young people,” said Sen. Arras. Teenagers that do not get enough sleep have worse grades, more depression, anxiety and irritability, poorer attendance, and greater tendency toward delinquency and violence. A recent study showed that 15 percent of students who reported being tired at school actually fell asleep in class. “This is due mainly to the fact that high school starting times interfere with biological clocks of teens. Waking a student up at 7 a.m. is similar to waking an adult at 4 a.m.,” said Sen. Arbob. This bill will extend the school day by 30 minutes to provide for a nap time for students following their lunch period. “Students will be provided with a sleeping mat and a room where a staff member will supervise,” said Sen. Linde. Studies have shown that a 20 minute power nap can dramatically increase alertness and performance. A study at NASA showed that military pilots who took 40 minute naps improved performance by 40 percent and alertness by 100 percent.

Lawmakers take aim at wolf problem

Olympia – House Bill 1000 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Rade Pilkinton and Cory Ricklick. “This bill addresses the issue of wolves killing livestock in Eastern Washington and will help ranchers protect their herds,” said Rep. Pilkinton. One livestock owner reported that in the last year alone, he had \$100,000 in losses due to wolf attacks. “The problem is that wolves are a protected species and it is illegal to shoot them,” said Rep. Ricklick. This bill will allow ranchers to shoot wolves that are threatening their herds. After a wolf has been shot, the rancher must notify the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife who will verify that the shooting was legitimate. “Owners of livestock should be able to protect their income and land,” said Rep. Pilkinton.



Senators want more regulations for abortions



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Dalton Saggau, Aryanna Vermerie, and Jessica Woods introduced Senate Bill 7998, which addresses the issue of abortions in Washington State. “The

bill is a good one because it will reduce the number of abortion performed every year,” said Sen. Saggau. Abortions in Washington are very easy to access, according to the lawmakers. “Women are not required to have abortions performed by a licensed physician or in a hospital, nor are they required to have more than one physician present. Also the teens that are having abortions are not required to tell a parent or get consent from a parent before the abortion,” said Sen. Woods. There were 4,578 abortions performed on minors in 2010. This bill requires parental consent for teens under the age of 18 and that, for all women, a licensed physician perform the procedure at a hospital or licensed medical center. Physician will give all women the option of a free ultrasound or hearing the heartbeat of the baby before the procedure.

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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.

