



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 sleep deprived teens, the death penalty, abandoned animals, and welfare fraud. 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.

Lawmakers want to save lives of unborn



Olympia – House Bill 3998 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Brendan Standaert and Hunter Raines. “This bill addresses the issue of abortion and will hopefully convince

many women to continue their pregnancies,” said Rep. Standaert. Many women regret having an abortion afterwards and they become depressed and have other emotional problems, according to the lawmakers. The bill will require sonograms to be performed by a licensed medical doctor 24 hours prior to an abortion and the heartbeat must be heard by the mother. “The bill will save the lives of thousands of innocent unborn children each year. When Texas passed a similar law, the abortion rate decreased by 80 percent,” said Rep. Raines.

Senators put limits on EBT cards

Olympia – Senate Bill 7333 was introduced yesterday by Senators Kyla Connelly, Mariah Curtiss,



Sandra Maszak, and Emily Olson. “This bill addresses the issue of welfare fraud and will save the state millions of dollars in unnecessary spending,” said Sen. Curtiss. At least 20,465 separate withdrawals were made through Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards at Washington casinos in one year. Welfare debit cards are also being sold on the streets and on Craigslist, according to the senators. “In order to replace a card, clients can visit DSHS offices and get a new one issued on the spot, with no questions asked,” said Sen. Olson. Analysis shows that DSHS offices replaced approximately 27,000 cards each month last year. If this bill becomes a law, restrictions will be placed on card usage at various locations and businesses, all EBT cards will include a photo ID, and cash withdrawals from ATMs using EBT cards will be prohibited.

Childhood obesity address by Legislature

Olympia – House Bill 1898 was introduced yesterday in the Health Care & Wellness committee by Representatives



Kelsey Austin and CeCe Mamallo. “This bill addresses the issue of childhood obesity and will improve the health of our young people,” said Rep. Austin. The bill mandates more physical activity for children attending public school, more vegetable gardens, fresher foods in schools and stores, along with better education on the issue for parents and children. In 2003-2004, an estimated 17 percent of children and adolescents ages 2-19 were overweight. “Washington State spends \$1.3 billion annually on health care costs related to adult obesity, and we need to start educating people at an early age so

they can begin practicing healthier behaviors to avoid obesity later in life,” said Rep. Mamallo.

Stop death penalty now!



Olympia – House Bill 3333 was introduced yesterday in the Judiciary committee by Representatives Mason Klippert and Etienne Ballou. “This bill addresses the death penalty and will save the government millions of dollars,” said Rep. Ballou. An average \$90,000 per death row inmate is spent each year, and Washington State has eight convicts there, currently. “Jonathan Lee Gentry has been there since 1991; that’s 22 years and almost \$2 million!” said Rep. Klippert. This bill will repeal the death penalty. The savings on pre-trial costs, jury selections, trials, incarcerations, and appeals would be significant, according to the lawmakers.

Wolves treated humanely if bill becomes law

Olympia – House Bill 1341 was introduced yesterday in the Agriculture and Natural Resources committee by Representatives Melissa Blevins and Heather Griffin. “This bill addresses the issue of



wolves killing livestock in Eastern Washington and will prevent further attacks of cattle and sheep,” said Rep. Griffin. In 2008 wolves are known to have killed nearly 200 cattle and sheep in Montana. In Washington State five calves were attacked by wolves on the Diamond M Ranch, bringing wolf/livestock conflicts to 15 in a 3-month period. If this bill becomes law, ranchers will be required to install biofences and/or Night Guards as a preventative measure against wolf attacks. “These devices will make wolves frightened but will not harm them,” said Rep. Blevins. The devices will be a requirement if ranchers want to collect compensation for attacked livestock in the future.

Energy waste in schools tackled by senators



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators John Hamming and Conor Mills introduced Senate Bill 7777, which addresses the issue of energy consumption in

public schools. “The bill is a good one because it will greatly reduced energy costs,” said Sen. Hamming. Recent studies show that small public schools spend an average of \$620,000 per year for utilities, according to the senators. “Many schools built in the past add 10 to 20 percent to a budget because of poor quality ventilation systems and could cost the districts thousands of dollars. They are just not structurally efficient,” said Sen. Mills. This bill proposes to require schools to use programs to reduce energy costs. “One school in Crook County, Oregon, saved \$10,000 in one year using a program called RCM,” said Sen. Hamming.

Lawmakers call for abolition of death penalty



Olympia – House Bill 3445 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Kameron Jones and Nolan Gaffney.

“This bill addresses the issue of capital punishment and will save the lives of those that have been wrongfully convicted and save the state money,” said Rep. Jones. Wrongful convictions are most often attributed to mistaken eyewitness testimony, the false testimony of informants, fraudulent scientific evidence and prosecutorial and police misconduct, according to the lawmakers. “Each case carrying a potential death penalty sentence increases court fees by \$700,000. Currently there are eight convicts sitting on death row. Eliminating even two cases would save the state more than a million dollars,” said Rep. Gaffney. The bill calls for the complete elimination of the death penalty.

Legislature cracks down on elderly drivers

Olympia – House Bill 2950 was introduced yesterday by Representatives McKenna Hines and Brittany Curtiss. “This bill addresses the issue of elderly drivers and will prevent senior citizens from causing fatal acci-



idents,” said Rep. Hines. A recent study by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety has shown the crash rate of older drivers begins to climb in the 70s, with a sharper jump at age 80. In fact, drivers aged 75 and older have a 37 percent higher crash rate than younger drivers. This bill proposes that people over the age of 70 be required to get annually tested on their hearing, reflexes, and vision. In addition, they will be required to take a physical driving test every two years.

Football players get their heads examined

Olympia – Senate Bill 5557 was introduced yesterday in the Health Care committee by Senators Haley



Raines, Nathan Bradley, and Katelynn Schilling. “This bill addresses the issue of head injuries in high school sports and will make football a safer game,” said Sen. Raines. At least 67,000 of 1.2 million high school football players each fall will suffer dizziness, slurred speech, and confusion from concussions suffered in games, according to the lawmakers. While other serious injuries have declined in the past 10 years, the percentage of injuries from concussions has nearly doubled. The bill requires better protective head gear for all athletes and x-rays of football players before each season.

No more snoring students!

Olympia – House Bill 3059 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Jazzmyn Barton and Cindy Linares. “This bill addresses the issue of sleep deprivation in teens and will improve their health



and academic success,” said Rep. Barton. While the recommended amount of sleep is 8.5 to 9.5 hours per night for teens, 85 percent get less than 8.5 hours. Sleep deprivation has serious consequences and can lead to inability to pay attention, loss of creativity, and mood and motivation problems. The bill mandates that public high schools start no earlier than 9 a.m. “After the Minneapolis Public School District changed their starting times from 7:15 to 8:40 a.m., they found students obtained five or more extra hours of sleep per week. They also showed improvement in attendance and increased daytime alertness, as well as a decrease in student-reported depression,” said Rep. Linares.

Pet shops and animal mills get tougher regulations



Olympia – Senate Bill 5008 was introduced yesterday in the Human Services & Corrections committee by Senators Anna Browne and Katherine Vos-

burg. “This bill addresses the issue of abandoned and euthanized pets and will improve the lives of animals in rescue shelters,” said Sen. Vosburg. Five out of 10 dogs and seven out of 10 cats are put down because there is no one to adopt them, and pet shops and animal mills are increasing their sales of animals, according to the senators. “Many animals from mills are subjected to abuse and disease,” said Sen. Browne. The bill will put a high price tag of \$400 on licenses for professional breeders and will ban animal mills. The fine for an unlicensed sale will be \$2,000.

Bill hopes to get needed health care for kids

Olympia – House Bill 2727 was introduced yesterday in the Health Care & Wellness committee by Repre-



sentatives Perrin Fenimore and Jenny Wen. “This bill addresses the issue of uninsured children and will improve health care for all minors,” said Rep. Wen. Over 4 percent of Washington state’s children are uninsured. The current health program, called Apple Health, is not sufficient enough to solve the problem, according to the representatives. More than 97,000 of Washington state’s children lack health coverage even with the Apple Health care provided to the families. The bill proposes taxing candy, soda, and cake to provide money to pay for universal health care for all children under the age of 18.

Teens get more ZZZ’s for some A’s

Olympia – House Bill 1234 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Emily Hill and Fiona West. “This bill addresses the issue of sleep deprived teens and will reduce health problems and



promote students’ academic performance,” said Rep. Hill. According to a recent study by Brown University Medical School, students that received less sleep earned school grades of C, D, and F. The study also showed that sleep deprivation causes a shorter attention span, memory impairment, and reduced academic performance. The bill calls for all public high schools to start one hour later. “This change in school starting times will promote a healthier lifestyle for students, which will reduce the money spent on healthcare in the future,” explained Rep. West.

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.

Non-lethal methods suggested to protect livestock and wolves in Eastern Washington



Olympia – Senate Bill 5555 was introduced yesterday in the Environment and Marine Waters committee by Senators Lydia Wolfe, Kyle Stull, and Sofia Svensson. “This bill addresses the issue of wolf attacks in Eastern Washington and will prevent more incidents of livestock being lost to predatory wolves,” said Sen. Wolfe. One rancher in the area estimated that the cost to his farm was nearly \$100,000 in cattle kills. Currently, ranchers are compensated for animals killed by wolves. However, this bill will require farmers who want to be paid for lost livestock to install Nite-Guard Animal Control Lights on their fences. “The Nite-Guard emits a red light that scares wolves away. It can ensure the safety of livestock and can also decrease the odds of wolves attacking people,” said Sen. Stull. The bill’s requirement of reporting sightings can help the tracking of wolves and decrease the amount of incidents involving predatory wolves, according to the lawmakers.

Gun violence causes too many innocent deaths



Olympia – Senate Bill 6025 was introduced yesterday by Senators Ezra Alldredge, Madi Berry and Brycen Armstrong. “This bill addresses the issue of gun violence and will prevent the deaths of innocent victims,” said Sen. Berry. The senators say that when buying a weapon, there is no background check on the buyer. “This makes a risk for the public because mentally ill citizens, criminals and other people that risk the safety of others are able to have easy access to a weapon that may be used to harm others,” said Sen. Armstrong. This bill will require background checks and medical records before the sale of any gun is made.

Senators help children in need of care

Olympia – Senate Bill 5525 was introduced yesterday by Senators Cadence Monti and Isabel Vaishampayan. “This bill addresses the issue of uninsured children and get them the medical help they need,” said Sen. Monti. Studies show that 73,000 children in Washington State have no health insurance. “Many families are stuck between not making enough money to purchase their own health insurance and making too much money to get state assistance,” said Sen. Vaishampayan. This bill will require all children under the age of 18 to have medical insurance. Those families that cannot pay for their own insurance will have help from the state. To pay for the costs of insurance, the Legislature will enact a tax on candy, chips, and soda pop in order to get the money it needs. “Our main focus is to support students and have them live the healthy life that everyone deserves,” said Sen. Monti.



Guest speakers visit Page School



Senator Annette Cleveland (D-Vancouver) from the 49th district, Representative Sam Hunt (D-Olympia) from the 22nd district, and Secretary of the Senate Hunter Goodman 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.

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Watch us live at TVW.org

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

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. “My favorite activities are watching committee hearings and Supreme Court cases. Seeing citizens testify at public hearings alongside experts in the field is just fascinating to me. And I love trying to figure out how the justices might vote after hearing their cases,” said Judi.



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 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.

