



The Weekly Page

VOLUME 9 ISSUE 12

APRIL 5, 2013

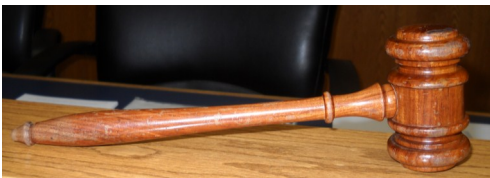
Pages Learn About Legislature



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, sleep deprived teenagers, medical marijuana dispensaries, and high school sports eligibility. 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.

House sets the bar higher for athletes

Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Nate Mueller and Jacob Borden introduced House Bill 1337, which addresses the issue of high school sports eli-



gibility standards. “The bill is a good one because it will better prepare athletes for a successful future,” said Rep. Mueller. Currently school teams must follow minimum academic standards set by the Washington Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA). “But, some high schools set the standards higher while others keep the lower standards. This creates an unfair advantage for some teams,” said Rep. Borden. This bill will require all high school athletes to have at least a 2.5 GPA with no failing grades to participate in sporting events. No school will be allowed to raise the standards, so the playing field will be even for all teams. “By passing this bill we will be encouraging athletes to do their best. They will be able to get better jobs after high school and even go to college where they can continue to excel in sports,” said Mueller.

Abortion restrictions proposed



Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Senna Larson and Holly Rimbly introduced House Bill 3972, which addresses the issue of abortion. “The bill is a good one because it will

provide women with more information about the procedure and, hopefully, persuade them to change their minds,” said Rep. Larson. In 2002, about 86,000 women 18 years and younger received an abortion. Women are often uninformed of other options besides an abortion or given any details of the operation, according to the lawmakers. This bill proposes providing counseling for women in addition to requiring a sonogram before they get an abortion. Also, minors will need a parent or guardian present during the procedure.

Farmers v. Wolves in an Eastern Washington brawl



Olympia – Senate Bill 5333 was introduced yesterday by Senators Ben McBride, Scott Campbell, and Clint Tosland.

“This bill addresses the issue of wolves killing livestock in Eastern Washington and will preserve the lives of our farm animals,” said Sen. McBride. In 2008 wolves were known to have killed nearly 200 cattle and sheep in Montana. Five calves were attacked by a pack of wolves at the Diamond M ranch in northeastern Washington bringing wolf-livestock conflicts to 15 in a three month period. “We don’t want to eliminate this endangered species altogether, but we have to stop the killing somehow,” said Sen. Campbell. The bill will require ranchers to install night guard animal control lights and biofences to scare wolves away from farm animals if they want to be compensated for the loss of any animals killed by

wolves. Ranchers will also be allowed to shoot attacking wolves.

Senators attempt to curb gun violence



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Madeleine Garza, McKenna Lautenbach, and Marlowe Keller introduced Senate Bill 6396, which addresses the issue of gun violence. “The bill is a good one because it will create a safer community,” said Sen. Lautenbach. In 2012 there were seven mass shooting in the United States. According to the senators, reports show that a majority of these shooters exhibited signs of mental illness. This bill will require citizens to pass a rigorous mental health exam and an extensive background check in order to purchase a firearm or obtain a concealed weapons permit. “Innocent lives could be saved if our proposals are adopted,” said Sen. Garza.

State requires helmet inspections for athletes

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Michael Marvin and Lucas O’ferall introduced Senate Bill 5569, which



addresses the issue of athletic head injuries. “The bill is a good one because it will help protect student athletes from serious head injuries like concussions,” said Sen. Marvin. Three NFL players who died recently were found to have suffered severe brain trauma in their 40s and 50s as a result of concussions sustained while playing football. The bill will require a certified state athletic trainer to check every helmet in all schools before the season begins, halfway through the season and before every playoff game.

Gun owners to submit to testing



Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Rachel Nagy and Gavin Wanless introduced House Bill 1775, which addresses the issue of gun violence. “The

bill is a good one because it will keep Washington State safe,” said Rep. Wanless. In the last 30 years there have been at least 62 mass shootings across the country, with the killings unfolding in 30 different states. In 2009, Maurice Clemmons shot four police officers in a Parkland coffee shop. This bill requires gun buyers to completed a weapons safety test, identity check and a criminal background check before purchase.

House bill ensures medical marijuana patients will get their drugs at affordable prices



Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Andrew Littman and Matt Soldano introduced House Bill 2608, which addresses the issue of medical marijuana. “The bill is a good one because it will ensure that medical

marijuana patients get the help they need at a price they can afford,” said Rep. Soldano. Current law allows patients to grow marijuana for their own use or have one other person do it for them. “If a person is too sick to grow it themselves or doesn’t know anyone who can provide it for them, there are access points in some cities where they can buy the marijuana,” said Rep. Littman. By law, however, dispensaries are illegal, even though many cities don’t prosecute or close them down. “When the legislature tried to create a system to regulate the dispensaries a few years ago, the Governor vetoed the bill because marijuana is still illegal at the federal level,” said Rep. Littman. This bill will set up a system to license all medical marijuana dispensaries in the state. It also ensures that the medicine will not be heavily taxed like general adult marijuana is expected to be. “We need to keep medical marijuana inexpensive and accessible, as well as to separate it from the general marijuana use industry,” said Rep. Soldano.

Prevention of DUIs is focus of Senate bill



Olympia – Yesterday, Senator Alec Ibanez introduced Senate Bill 6347, which addresses the issue of drunk driving. “The bill is a good one because it will keep the highways safe,” said Sen. Ibanez. In 2010, 230 people were killed by impaired drivers. Washington is in the top 10 offending states and alcohol-related crashes have cost over \$935 million annually.

“Although the current law requires the installation of ignition interlock devices on cars after a person is convicted of a DUI, many offenders don’t have them put into their vehicles,” said Sen. Ibanez. According to the senator, there are only three State Patrol officers in the entire state assigned to enforce this requirement. This bill will transfer six more State Patrol officers to help enforce the interlock rule. In addition, those convicted of DUIs will be required to buy red license plates for their vehicles so they will be easily spotted by police and other drivers. “When you see a red plate, you will steer clear of that driver and hopefully avoid any collisions,” said Sen. Ibanez.

Math/science teachers get incentive to raise student scores



Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Kevin Reimer and Alex Murray introduced House Bill 1316, which addresses the

issue of low science and math skills in students. “The bill is a good one because it will improve scores and help students compete in the global job market in the future,” said Rep. Reimer. Out of the top countries in the world, the U.S. ranks among the lowest in math and science. “On the International Student Assessment, we came in 31st in Math and 23rd in science,” said Rep. Murray. This bill will require teachers applying for math/science teaching jobs to have degrees in those subjects. In addition, their pay will improve as their students’ standardized test scores improve, according to the lawmakers.

Lawmakers stop confidential abortions for minors



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Brianna Rachinski and Dakota Littlefield introduced Senate Bill 7289, which addresses the issue of abortions for minors. “The bill is a good one because it

allows parents/legal guardians to be involved in a minor's decisions to have an abortion,” said Sen. Rachinski. A minor that chooses an abortion creates the risk for themselves of depression and suicidal thoughts. “Whether a minor opts for an abortion often hinges on a parent’s knowledge of or participation in the decision-making. Washington state doesn’t require any kind of parental involvement,” said Sen. Littlefield. If this bill becomes law, minors will be prohibited from obtaining abortions without parental consent.

Senators tighten up interview procedures by police



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Sydney Morris and Naomi Gish introduced Senate Bill 5432, which addresses the issue of the death penalty. “The bill is a good one because it will

prevent innocent people from having years of their lives lost in prison,” said Sen. Morris. Between 1973 and 2008, 129 death row inmates were exonerated and freed from prison. One of those was from Washington State. “Even one wrongfully imprisoned person is too many. We took years away from that person which they can never get back,” said Sen. Gish. Some innocent people have been found guilty because of police departments coercing them into confessing to crimes they did not commit. Twenty-five percent of the exonerated cases were caused by false confessions and incriminating statements. If this bill becomes a law all police departments will be required to electronically record all interrogations to provide an accurate record of the proceedings. These recordings will be reviewed by a police official of that department.

House takes a stand against child obesity



Olympia – House Bill 2841 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Pei-Ming Tokuda, Alena Zurcher, and

Tiffany Carlile. “This bill addresses the issue of childhood obesity and will improve the health of our future generations,” said Rep. Zurcher. In 2003-2004, an estimated 17 percent of children and adolescents ages 2-19 were overweight. Also, 80 percent of high school students do not get the recommended number of servings of fruits and vegetables. To solve this problem lawmakers are proposing that public schools be required to have a healthy, balanced meal program that includes fresh fruits, raw vegetables, and protein, as well a physical education program that will include a minimum of 30 minutes of exercise in the target heart rate for that age group each day. “We want to encourage local farmers to provide part of their crops to school lunch programs by offering tax incentives,” said Rep. Tokuda.

Policy committee cutoff deadline brings bill process closer to an end

This week bills were voted out of policy committees on Wednesday as they continued through the lawmaking process. Transportation, Ways and Means, Capital Budget, Finance and several Appropriations and Oversight committees continued to meet for the last time to decide what funding would look like for many state programs and new legislation. During floor sessions on Thursday and Friday, pages got a first-hand look at how parliamentary procedure is used by lawmakers as they considered remaining bills from the opposite chambers. Hundreds of bills have been introduced in the two chambers this session, but only about 15-20 percent will actually become laws. Pages were busy on the floors of both the House and the Senate, delivering documents, listening to their legislators express their views and watching the voting process. House and Senate members have only three more weeks to amend and pass legislation. Bills which are passed during final cutoff weeks will be sent to the Governor for his signature by the session’s end on April 28.

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.

Bill keeps homeless kids in school and off the streets



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Meagan Hodgins and Laura Martin introduced Senate Bill 5949, which addresses the issue of the youth homeless population in Washington state. “The bill is a good one because it will reduce the homeless

student population in Washington state,” said Sen. Hodgins. During the 2010-2011 school year there were more than 26,000 homeless Washington students counted. Over the course of two years, the number of homeless students across the country increased by 41 percent and is still accumulating from the worsening economy. Being homeless can effect how children learn, lead to depression, and can be misdiagnosed as learning disabilities, labels that stick with a child for years and only make the situation worse, according to the senators. This bill will provide greater funding for transportation to school and meals for the students. “We want to encourage more students to stay in school so they can get a good education and become wage-earning adults who will benefit the state,” said Sen. Martin.

Senators hit the snooze alarm

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Eli Champagne, Troy Conley, and Jonathon Carlson introduced Senate Bill 5861, which addresses the issue of sleep deprived teens. “The bill is a good one because it will enhance learning capability and health in teenagers,” said Sen. Champagne. Research in the 1990s found that later sleep and wake patterns among adolescents are biologically determined. Experts recommend that teens get 8.5 to 9.5 hours of sleep every night. Unfortunately, only 15 percent of teens get the amount of sleep they need. Sleep deprivation affects creativity, communication, problem solving, decision making, mood, motivation and the ability to pay attention, according to the senators. This bill will require all public high school to start no earlier than 8:30 a.m. “When the Minneapolis Public School District changed the start times of seven high schools from 7:15 a.m. to 8:40 a.m., students obtained five or more extra hours of sleep per week which resulted in a improvement in attendance and enrollment rates, an



increased daytime alertness, and decreased self-reported depression. We can have this same result if the bill passes,” said Sen. Carlson.

Coaches, athletes and parents to get training in recognizing symptoms of concussions



Olympia – House Bill 2114 was introduced yesterday by Representatives T.J. Haslett and Hanna Hoffman. “This bill addresses the issue of head injuries caused in athletic competitions and will reduce the number of concussions on the playing field,” said Rep. Hoffman. Concussions are occurring at an all-time high of 300,000 per year in football alone, according to the lawmakers. Of all high school in the state, 52 percent do not have emergency medical staff at games. “Many of the head injuries occur due to the lack of training of the coaching staff,” said Rep. Haslett. This bill will require coaches, players, and parents to attend workshops annually to learn the signs and symptoms of concussions. The workshops will be presented by certified medical doctors or other health staff.

Gun violence bill introduced in House



Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Amanda Landon, Nora Petersen, and Kara Wood introduced House Bill 1259, which addresses the issue of gun violence. “The bill is a good one because it will create safer communities,” said Rep. Petersen. In many mass-shootings, the weapons used were ones that had several magazines containing more than 10 bullets. “Adam Lanza killed 26 people with 154 shots in less than five minutes. He had nine 30-round magazines with him that day,” said Rep. Wood. This bill will require background checks in all gun purchases. Ammunition clips with more than 10 bullets each will not be allowed for sale.

Watch us live at TVW.org

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

EBT card fraud exposed

Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Ben Borden and Anthony Creasy introduced House Bill 3210, which addresses the issue of welfare fraud. “The



bill is a good one because it will save the state a lot of money,” said Rep. Borden. Electronic Benefit Transfer cards are debit cards that are loaded each month with the amount of money each welfare recipient is allotted. Cards are to be used for food and other necessities for the family. “Recent findings have uncovered thousands of EBT cards for sale on the internet and on Washington’s streets. A card with \$600 on it can be purchased for \$100,” said Rep. Creasy. In addition, an estimated \$2 million of EBT money has been accessed in casinos. “This bill is designed to stop the fraud that has currently taken place from the misuse of the welfare cards,” said Rep. Borden. If this bill passes, all cards will be reissued with picture ID. Only one replacement card will be issued per year.

New procedures for high school athletes with head injuries adopted



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Allie Hill and Delaney Hewitt introduced Senate Bill 5011, which addresses the issue of athletes sustaining head injuries. “The bill is a good one because it will increase safety

on the field,” said Sen. Hewitt. In order to reduce concussions and the effects they have on student athletes, this bill will require that all schools have a certified athletic director who can diagnose concussions appropriately and accordingly. “One in 10 high school athletes has had a concussion, and 66 percent of Washington high schools don’t have a qualified athletic director who can evaluate head injuries,” said Sen. Hill. After an athlete is hit in the head and/or experiences noticeable head trauma, he will be required to sub out and be checked for symptoms before returning to the field of play.

Bill hopes to encourage science and math teachers to stay in education

Olympia – House Bill 1234 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Bryson Cornehl, Makenna



Donaldson, and Coleman Entringer. “This bill addresses the issue of students lacking in science and math skills and will improve student achievement in those areas,” said Rep. Entringer. New math or science teachers often leave the profession because they can get higher salaries in private companies. With the high turnover, students are not getting the best, most experienced teachers. In order to keep math and science teachers in school and maintain student excellence in math and science, this bill will create an incentive program that will pay those teachers an extra stipend if they can raise the test scores of their students. “The extra money could entice the teachers to remain in the profession,” said Rep. Cornehl.

Senators revive sleep-deprived teens

Olympia – Senate Bill 5678 was introduced yesterday by Senators Serena Baserman and Caroline Bartels.



“This bill addresses the issue of sleep deprivation in teens and will improve the health and academic success of high school students,” said Sen. Baserman. Failure to get enough sleep has serious results, such as problems with mood, learning, relationships and productivity. The bill mandates that high schools start times be revised so that high school students and elementary students switch schedules. “We will collaborate with communities to help with day care and transportation so this can work,” said Sen. Bartels. When other school districts have later start times for high school and middle school students, they found improved attendance, reduced absences, increase concentration levels, and a general all-around excellence in studies, according to the lawmakers.

Welfare EBT cards to change

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Emily Beaton and Briess Potter introduced Senate Bill 5742, which addresses the issue of fraudulent use of EBT cards.



“The bill is a good one because it will reduce the amount of electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card fraud that is costing the state of Washington millions each year,” said Sen. Potter. Welfare recipients are illegally selling cards on internet sites such as Craigslist and then falsely reported them as lost or stolen, with no questions asked. More than 20,000 recipients had their cards replaced three or more times last year, according to the senators. The bill will require ID photos and names to be printed on all future EBT cards. If the cards are reported as lost or stolen, the PIN number will be frozen or changed. ATM cash machines inside casinos will be programmed to reject the cards, as well.

Guest speakers visit Page School



Richard deSam Lazaro, policy adviser for Gov. Jay Inslee; Ken Boad, Senate Assistant Sgt. at Arms; Rep. Jaime Pedersen (D-Seattle) from the 43rd district; and Sen. Andy Hill (R-



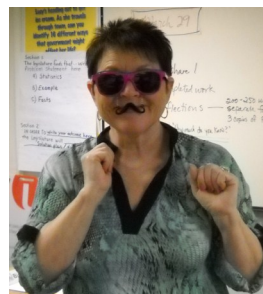
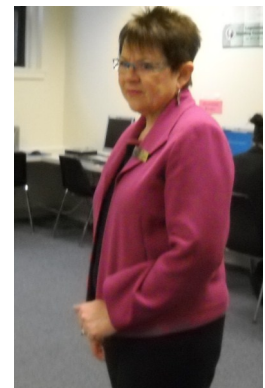
Redmond) from the 45th district, Sen. Steve Litzow (R-Mercer Island) and Sen. Joe Fain (R-Auburn) from the 47th district joined the pages during classes on Wednesday. All guests shared insightful information about their jobs. Pages were able to ask questions and sharing their own views in response to the speakers’ comments.

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.



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.

