



The Weekly Page

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Pages Learn About Legislature

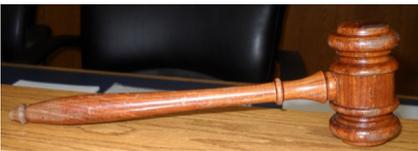


Big ideas in government

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 gun violence, plastic bag pollution, welfare fraud and smoking in cars. 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.



The high drinking age in the United States is actually detrimental to society

Olympia – Senate Bill 6969 was introduced yesterday by Senators Sarah Cornelius and Roy Chapman. “This bill addresses the issue of underage drinking and will decrease the legal drinking age to 18,” said Sen. Cornelius. However, underage drinkers account for 17.5% of the nation’s consumption which amounts to \$22.5 billion a year. Deaths with alcohol consumption involved are not correlated with the drinking age. Additionally several incidents can be attributed to the current age limit restriction discouraging underage drinkers from seeking help. Not getting help often leads to more dangerous activities. For example, a college freshman, 18, participated in a fraternity initiation that required him and several other freshmen to consume 10 gallons of hard liquor and wine. After becoming heavily intoxicated he was placed unconscious onto a couch where he died of alcohol poisoning. Later, reporters asked his parents if they thought had the legal drinking age been 18, do they think the fraternity would have sought out help. The parents agreed that their child’s life could have been saved if the fraternity wouldn’t have been concerned about the consequences they may face admitting him to a hospital.



Legislature Pushes For New Gun Regulations

Olympia – House Bill 1055 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Alexa O'Brien and Lily Sneva. "This bill addresses the issue of gun safety and will require new safety precautions for those owning guns," said Rep. O'Brien and Sneva. It establishes gun safety because it will decrease the number of deaths that were caused by children misusing guns. It will require people to take a class on gun use and safety before obtaining a gun. Additionally people will have to have a mental illness assessment before obtaining a gun. A person with a mental illness may not obtain a gun. All guns must be locked in a safe that recognizes finger prints. Both representatives are trying to prevent occurrences like the Newtown shooting and Virginia Tech shootings. For the safety of the people, the legislators hope that this bill passes both chambers and gets signed by the Governor.



Senate Bill Addresses Elderly Car Accidents

Olympia – Senate Bill 5748 was introduced yesterday by Senators Chase Simerka and Julian Rosner. "This bill addresses the issue of elderly drivers and will reduce the death and accident rates of elderly drivers," said Sen. Simerka. In 20 years there will be three times the present number of elderly drivers, which will cause more accidents if nothing is done. In 2006, 6,017 elderly drivers died in road accidents, which was 14% of total car deaths. This problem will be solved by having drivers over the age of 70 take a driver's test. If they don't pass they will be able to take a drivers class. Once they take the class they will be able to take the driving test again. If they don't pass they will have their license revoked.



Senators Educate the Legislature on Math and Science

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Harrington and Odegaard introduced Senate Bill 5734, concerning the reform of math and science education. The United States' ranking in



math, according to the TIMSS assessment, is "fifty-one points below the international average." In science, America is twenty below the international average. Teachers are paid a ridiculously low salary which encourages mediocrity. To increase the quality of teachers, the Senators suggest "the Legislature will also increase the pay to all teachers." Longer school years and studies into other country's teaching styles are also possible solutions. The Senators propose taxes on marijuana to pay for these changes in education.

Reducing Drunk Driving in Washington

Olympia--- Today, Representatives Alex Wallis and Caroline Hallman introduced House Bill 2222 to reduce drunk driving on our roads, making our streets and highways safer. According to recent study, Washington is number 8 in the nation at 37% for drunk driving accidents. As the years go on, this problem will



worsen if we do nothing to prevent these drunk drivers from getting behind the wheel. If this bill becomes a law, every person convicted of DUI will be fined and brought before a judge. If found guilty, they will be required to purchase the ignition interlock device (IID) which requires a

Breathalyzer test to start their car. This purchase will be out of the drivers own expense and if he/she is not able to pay the required amount they will be eligible for financial assistance. If this bill passes there will be safer roads in Washington and the amount of accidents due to drunk driving will decrease by a considerable amount.

Abortion Prevention

Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Corrin Black and Brittany Noelck introduced House Bill 2716, which addresses the issue of abortion. "The bill is a good one because it will prevent abortions in Washington State," said Rep. Black. This bill will reduce the abortion rate by requiring that girls under the age of 18 must get a signature from a parent or guardian in order to get an abortion, unless in the cases of health, rape, or incest. If this is the case, the minor must have three hours of counseling. In addition, all who want an abortion must have an ultrasound or sonogram.



3 STRIKES—YOU'RE OUT!



Olympia – House Bill 2801 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Briann George, Jason Rowland, JaQuori McLaughlin, and Hans Zeiger. This bill reduced the number of DUI's necessary to constitute a felony

from five to three. Rep McLaughlin states "this will be an excellent bill because it will decrease the number of drunk drivers clogging our roads." This bill will also require two time DUI offenders to get special orange license plates for their personal vehicles which will mark that they are repeat offenders.

New Gun Control Laws

Olympia – House Bill 1111 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Tate Munnich, Luke Anderson, and Milo Rolland.

"This bill addresses the issue of gun violence and will require background checks on all gun sales, limit size of ammunition clips, and ban sales of high capacity assault weapons," said Rep. Rolland. "Guns are bad!" said Rep. Munnich. The bill will attempt to reduce the number of shootings in Washington by requiring background checks for all purposes, including online and gun show sales.



No more GMOs

Olympia- Today, Representatives Ethan and Bethanie Heitzman introduced House Bill 2757, which addresses the issue of GMOs in food products. "This bill protects us from the danger of health corruption caused by GMOs. After all we can't know



the extent of damage these products cause for we have not researched or tested nearly enough to have a competent understanding," said the Representatives. Research has found that the antibiotics,

which were injected into food before harvesting, are entering the consumer's body and making them immune to the antibiotics people must depend on to save their lives when sick or injured. Also studies have shown that GMOs may be the cause of health issues like allergies, asthma, infertility, and even cancer. Part of the reason manufacturers use GMOs is to make crops

unsusceptible to harmful insects. When placed before a GMO product, insects won't even touch the thing. "If bugs won't put it in their bodies how sure are we that it should be put into ours? GMOs in the food we eat are inconspicuously corrupting our health and we mean to reduce the GMO content in food in order to preserve the health of the public," according to both Rep. Ethan and Bethanie Heitzman.

Second-Hand Smoke

Shelton - Yesterday, Senators Nicole Piper and Susana Diego introduced House Bill 5501 that addresses second-hand smoke. This bill is good because it will prevent the risk from second-hand smoke from adult drivers that can harm young passengers. Studies also indicate children are more at risk than adults.

Tests have shown the air pollution in a smoker's car can reach levels nearly 10 times the hazardous levels set by the environment protection agency. Secondhand smoke contains more than 250 chemicals known to be toxic or cancer-causing.



The state already requires foster children not to be exposed to second smoke. In order to prevent health risk from second-hand smoke adults should get charged \$200.00 when the police catch them smoking. Since the police have a machine that can detect whether a person is drunk or not, we can also do the same thing to detect smoking. However if they get pulled out a second time, they can get a double charge.

Should Schools Let Students Sleep?

Olympia – Senate Bill 6420 was introduced yesterday by Senators Cecil Samson and Jasmyne Sims. "This bill addresses the issue of school start times and will increase quality of learning and health of students," said Sen.



Samson. The Legislature will require all schools K-12 to start school no earlier than 9:00 a.m. Studies show that most teenagers are very sleep deprived. It has been found that later sleep and wake patterns for adolescents are

biologically determined. It's natural for teens to want to stay up later and wake up later. Minneapolis Public School District recently changed the starting times of 7 high schools from 7:15 a.m. to 8:40 a.m. Students improved in attendance, alertness, grades, and over all attitude. Starting school at a later hour will help kids get a better education, which also means, a better life.

Death Penalty Harms State Budget and Public Safety

Olympia – Senate Bill 5476 was introduced yesterday by Senators Louie Zagula and Madi Thomas. “This bill addresses the issue of the death penalty and will eradicate all possibility of administering the death penalty,” said Sen. Zagula. The bill provides the evidence that the death penalty is not only too costly and faulty but is also ineffective in preventing extreme



crimes. Trying a suspect for the death penalty costs, on average, \$470,000 more for the state than charging them for life in prison without parole. One would assume then, for the high price of trying

these criminals, that the trials would be effective. However, 129 convicts originally sentenced to the death penalty have been exonerated, 17 of which were because of new DNA evidence, a field which will continue to increase in reliability and probably release more prisoners. Finally, there is no evidence to show that administering the death penalty deters criminal activity. Only 1% of questioned police officers believe the death penalty decreases crime rates. New Jersey, a standout example, actually experienced decreased crime rates when the death penalty was eliminated. Considering this, there seems to be a strong argument in favor of eradicating the death penalty to save lives, money, and reduce crime.

Plastic Bags are Detrimental to the Environment

Olympia – Senate Bill 6789 was introduced yesterday by Senators Maija Diamond, Kinzey Davidson, and Rachel Allen. “This bill addresses the issue of plastic bags causing pollution by charging a tax that will eventually stop the use of plastic bags,” said Sen. Diamond. This bill will eventually stop the use of plastic bags to save marine life and our environment. A beached gray whale in West Seattle was found to have 20 plastic bags in its stomach. More than 10 gulls in the Strait of Juan de Fuca were found to have eaten plastic. 50 percent of this was thin film used to make disposable plastic bags.



Guest speakers visit Page School

Rep. Susan Fagan (R-9th), Sen. Jamie Pedersen (D-43rd) and Commissioner of Public Lands Peter Goldmark 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.

Bill Announced to Help Limit Harmful Effects of Second-Hand Smoke

Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Isayah Runyon and Aaron Dyer introduced House Bill 2777, which addresses the issue of second-hand smoke in a motor vehicle with passengers under the age of 18.

“The bill is a good one because it will help to decrease the number of minors affected by second hand smoke,” said Rep. Dyer. Violators will be charged with a secondary offense, and a \$250 fine. The EPA have shown through research that the air pollution level can exceed the levels marked as 'hazardous' more than ten times over when smoking in a motorized vehicle. Second-hand smoke has 250 known chemicals that are toxic or cancer-causing which can cause hazardous and potentially deadly diseases. One out of every five deaths in the U.S. annually are caused by smoking tobacco products which is approximately 438,000 people. Studies have



shown that children are even more at risk than adults from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke. This bill would greatly reduce the number of youth that are exposed to the harmful affects of second-hand smoke.

Are You Eating Cancer?

Olympia—Yesterday, Representatives Preston Burnett and Rachel Hammons introduced House Bill 3333, which addresses the issue of harmful food additives. Ingredient labels on food products are often looked over or regarded as unimportant. One



out of the 20,000 babies is born without the ability to metabolize phenylalanine, one of the two amino acids in aspartame. It is also used as a certified rat poison. Potassium bromate is by far the most dangerous, and it is used mainly in bread to increase the volume and to produce a fine

crumb structure. The small amounts of bromate in bread may pose a cancer risk to consumers. Bromate has been banned virtually worldwide except in Japan and in the United States. To reduce risk of cancer, potassium bromate and aspartame will be banned in the State of Washington. This will cost the government no money, but it will cost consumers money to buy higher quality products. It is a good investment because it will reduce health risks, therefore eliminating future hospital bills.

Abolishing Abortion

Olympia— Yesterday, Senators Piper Phillips and Amberly Jennings introduced Senate bill 5000, which addresses the issue of abortion. “This bill is very reasonable because it protects the future youth of Washington State. The problem we are addressing is that abortion in Washington is too easily accomplished. Only two states require both parental consent and notification,” said Senator Jennings. Only 60% of minors obtaining abortions voluntarily involve their

parents. “Abortion has been made as a means for a teen to hide her pregnancy from her parents,” explains Senator Phillips. “We believe that abortion is practically murder. We couldn’t come up with any good reasons to kill an unborn child. Research shows that most women say aborting their child will save them from alleged risk, but there are risks to having an abortion as well.”



Fix for Misinforming Women

Olympia – Senate Bill 5001 was introduced yesterday by Senators Nani Woodard and Addison Jeske. “This bill addresses the issue of abortion and

will require ultrasounds and a 24 hour waiting period before abortions can happen,” said Sen. Jeske. This bill mandates that all abortion clinics will be required to show the mother an ultrasound of her baby



and give her 24 hours to decide whether or not to continue with the abortion. Mothers need to realize that there is life inside of them and they can’t do that when abortion clinics are hiding everything,” said Sen. Woodard. This misinformation needs to stop. If this bill passes, Washington will become the 10th state to require ultrasound services and the 25th to require a 24-hour waiting period.

Green, Yellow, STOP

Olympia – Senate Bill 5013 was introduced yesterday by Senators Julia Graham and Eddie Goodman. “This bill addresses the issue of drunk driving and will reduce the rate of fatalities and



injuries caused by it,” said Sen. Goodman. States like Minnesota, Georgia, and Ohio have already joined the program and currently require the plates of citizens with previous DUI’s to have special colored license plates. One

woman’s daughter died from an oncoming car on the freeway in Minnesota. The girl was 17 years old and the oncoming car was driven by someone driving under the influence. The man lived but was severely injured; however, the girl died instantly. The girl’s mother is glad that the state is moving in the right direction. “We’re starting somewhere, and that’s what counts,” she said. Already in Georgia and Ohio the rates of total deaths cause by car crashes with drivers under the influence have gone from 46% to 30% in Georgia and from 49% to 39% in Ohio.

Pushing Start Times Back While Pushing Students Forward

Olympia — Senate Bill 5217 was introduced yesterday by Senators Andersen-Bicknell and Sanders. “This bill addresses the issue of sleep deprivation in teens and will lead to healthier teens and higher attendance rates,” said Sen. Sanders. This bill will push back the start time of high schools to 9:0 am giving students a few more hours of sleep and a healthier life style. This will reduce the tardiness rate and help increase first period attendance. Though some students are early risers, the majority of teens struggle to be alert and awake for their first early morning class. Would we rather have children skipping first period or being awake and lively in the same class just an hour or two later? In Kentucky they have shifted all school start times and they have found their students’ grades are better and their attendance is up. They have also found there are less early morning crashes from half-awake teens on the road. We want to take a clue from Kentucky and help save our teens.



Senate Tackles Animal Abandonment and Overbreeding.

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Isabella Hoffman and Caitlin Pennington introduced Senate Bill 5432, which addresses the issue of animal overpopulation and abandonment leading to animal euthanasia in shelters. “The bill is a good one because it puts a limit on how many animals can be bred yearly. Because of that limit, there will also be less animals abandoned,” Sen. Pennington said. SB

5432 will limit and fine breeders for "overbreeding" and also fine animal owners for abandoning. The limit for breeders will be one litter per dog per year. The fine for abandonment will be \$15 and the overbreeding fine will be \$100.



Firearm Background Check Safety Act

Olympia – Yesterday Representatives Reganne Hoirup and Jake Kiesel introduced House Bill 1199 which addresses the issue of public safety. “This bill is a good one because it will prevent the sale of firearms sold to persons with a background involving criminal activity.” Research reports have shown that from 2002 to 2005, over 400 guns legally purchased at gun shows from licensed dealers in the city of Richmond, Virginia were later found to have an involvement with criminal activity. America has an overwhelming abundance of easily obtainable firearms. This bill will benefit the people by making them feel safer in their homes and in the public,” said Rep. Hoirup. Past ATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives) gun show investigations show that people, such as convicted felons, buy firearms at gun shows. This endangers ourselves, our children, and our community.



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.

