



The Weekly Page

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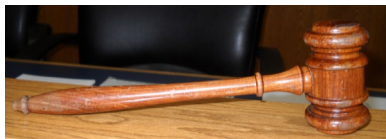
Pages Learn About Legislature



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



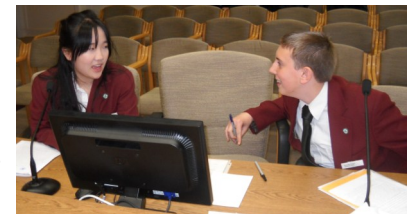
During the first three days of their week, pages worked individually or in small groups to write bills designed to address issues

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, elderly drivers, abortion, and dog safety in vehicles. 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 raise the bar for student-athletes

Olympia – Senate Bill 5111 was introduced yesterday by Senators Charlene Kwon and Benjamin Byers. “This bill addresses the issue of high school sports eligibility and will



promote equality in athletic competitions,” said Sen. Kwon. The bill aims to close the gap in academic eligibility standards between schools that follow the minimum WIAA guidelines and those that set the bar higher. This gap has given schools with lower academic standards a competitive advantage by allowing star athletes with lower GPAs to play. The bill will require the WIAA and all Washington schools to enforce a minimum GPA of 2.0 with no failing grades allowed in order to participate in games. “There is no cost to the schools or the state for this change, and all student-athletes will benefit. Our kids are students first and athletes next. We want them well prepared for the world after high school—either college or a job. This change will help,” said Sen. Byers.

Cutoff brings bills closer to session end

Wednesday was the cutoff deadline for all bills from the opposite chambers. Those bills that require concurrence or are necessary to implement the budget will be considered for the rest of the session. On the floors of the House of Representatives and Senate, pages got a first-hand look at how parliamentary procedure is used by lawmakers. 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 all week, delivering documents, listening to their legislators express their views and watching the voting process. House and Senate members have only a few more days to pass legislation and send bills in their final form to the Governor for his signature by the session's end on April 28.

Legislators execute death penalty



Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Benjamin Crowell, James Itaya, and Austin Li introduced House Bill 1500, which addresses the issue of death penalty costs.

“The bill is a good one because it will save the state millions of dollars,” said Rep. Li. Studies have shown that death penalty cases cost up to \$2 million. Keeping a criminal in prison for the rest of his life cost less than one million dollars, according to the legislator. This bill proposes to replace the death penalty with a sentence of life without parole. “Imagine how much money the state could have saved over the last 10-20 years if the eight inmates on death row had been given life without parole,” said Rep. Itaya. Eighteen states and the District of Columbia have eliminated the death penalty statute, and these lawmakers want Washington to join them.

Proposed law requires seatbelts for dogs

Olympia – House Bill 1117 was introduced yesterday by Representatives John Joy and Patrick Hoover. “This bill addresses the issue of canine safety in vehicles and will protect our beloved pets,” said Rep. Hoover. In one crash, a vehicle crossed over the center line and collided head on with another vehicle. The driver of the car was critically injured, while both dogs, which were unsecured, died in the crash. The proposed bill would require any dog being transported in a vehicle to be restrained by a type of protective device, such as a travel kennel. Violators



would receive a \$150 fine for each unsecured dog. “This law would also decrease the rate of accidents being caused by canines who climb on the driver or jump from the back seat to the front, distracting the driver,” said Rep. Joy.

Teen sleep patterns conflict with early school start times



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Erik Stecker, James Juntti and Jack Sbragia introduced Senate Bill 5678, which addresses the issue of sleep deprivation in teenagers.

“The bill is a good one because it will improve the health and academic success of our high school students,” said Sen. Juntti. Research shows that 85 percent of teens get less than the recommended 8.5 hours of sleep per night. Fatigue can cause depression, increased tardies and absences, lower grades, and decreased reaction times while driving, according to the lawmakers. SB 5678 will require public high schools to start no earlier than 8:45 a.m. “When the Minneapolis School District changed the start times from 7:15 to 8:40 a.m., they discovered that enrollment rates, daytime alertness, and attendance had improved. I think we can make that happen here,” said Sen. Sbragia.

Senate bill promotes energy conservation in schools

Olympia – Senate Bill 6543 was introduced yesterday by Senators Anya Sergiojan and Abby Smith. “This bill addresses the issue of energy consumption in public schools and will save school districts money on electric bills,” said Sen. Sergiojan. According to the lawmakers, artificial lighting accounts for 26 percent of all electricity used in schools. Heating and cooling systems represent over 50 percent of energy used in schools. “In 2005, schools spent nearly \$75 per student on gas bills and \$130 per student for electricity,” said Sen. Smith. The bill promotes such energy saving strategies as using sensors to turn off the lights when a room is not in use and replacing normal toilets with dual flush toilets. “States like Oregon and New York are already seeing the benefits of energy regulation, saving the taxpayers lots of money,” said Sen. Sergiojan.



Bridging the gap between Washington and Oregon



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Sean Duarte and Rob Horenstein introduced Senate Bill 6593,

which addresses the issue of replacing the Columbia River bridge between Vancouver, Washington and Portland, Oregon. “The bill is a good one because it will improve the quality of transportation between the two states,” said Sen. Duarte. A recent report showed that on average one collision per day occurs on this bridge. During bridge lifts, crashes increase by three to four times because drivers do not expect traffic to suddenly stop. “Depending on the time of day, it can take hours for traffic to recover from traffic backups,” said Sen. Horenstein. If this bill becomes law, construction for a new replacement bridge will be authorized. The new bridge must include a pathway that is ADA compliant, four motor vehicle lanes each way, one bus lane each way, and an extension of the light rail service from Portland to Clark College in Vancouver. The height of the bridge must accommodate all ship traffic from up river.

Easier access to abortion sought for women in poverty

Olympia – House Bill 2043 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Falen Wilkes, Jessica Dashkel, and Ngoc



Nguyen. “This bill addresses the issue of abortion availability and will ensure that all women have access to the procedure,” said Rep. Wilkes. Nationally, 42 percent of all women undergoing abortions live in poverty. One third of the women who receive abortions have no health insurance. “The average abortion costs \$470, a cost that the main users can barely afford,” said Rep. Dashkel. This bill requires clinics that already provide abortions and receive government funding to offer low-cost

abortions to women who have no insurance and are living below the poverty line.

License plates of DUI violators get marked

Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Micah Smith, Nichole McVicar, and Kaylee Sheller introduced House Bill 1621, which addresses the issue of drunk drivers. “The bill is a good one because it



will keep our citizens safe,” said Rep. Sheller. In 2010, 37 percent of all traffic accident fatalities in the state involved an alcohol-impaired driver. “The recent Seattle grandparents killed by a drunk driver that had several previous DUIs is a sad reminder of how serious this crime is,” said Rep. McVicar. This bill requires all counties to set up surprise sobriety check points throughout the year and mandates special symbols on DUI offenders’ license plates. In bars, bouncers will require customer to breathe into breathalizers before leaving to get into their cars.

House restricts elderly drivers with prior accident records

Olympia – House Bill 2468 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Brianna Milarch, Madalyn



Plumage, and Eva Johnson. “This bill addresses the issue of elderly drivers and will better ensure safe roadways and highways,” said Rep. Johnson. These drivers have a 37 percent higher accident rate than younger drivers. “A large portion of these accidents are caused by limitations brought with age, such as impaired vision, hearing loss and medications affecting the ability to drive,” said Rep. Milarch. This bill proposes that any driver over the age of 65 who has caused an accident in the previous year be classified as an unsafe driver. This would require them to take a physical driving test to renew their license. After two failed tests, the drivers license would be revoked.

Teens don't have to choose between school and sleep any longer



Olympia – Senate Bill 7000 was introduced yesterday by Senators Lauren Trivison, Austin Ziprick, and Lydia Winslow. “This bill addresses the issue of teen sleep deprivation and will change the start times for high school students,” said Sen. Ziprick. Scientific research shows that teens naturally go to sleep and wake up later than children and adults. With current early start times, teachers report high absent rates for the first hour of classes. This bill will move the starting time of public schools to at least an hour later so that teens can get a full night of rest. “This will improve the academic quality and overall health of students. Other states have implemented similar ideas and had great results, so why not our home state of Washington?” said Sen. Winslow.

Legislature defines the beginning of life



Olympia – Senate Bill 5747 was introduced yesterday by Senators Michael Isaksen and Nick Brown. “This bill addresses the issue of abortion and will prevent the procedure after the detection of a heartbeat,” said Sen. Isaksen. While fetal heartbeats can be detected at six weeks, 88 percent of abortions happen at the 12th week, according to the senators. This bill requires doctors to perform an ultrasound in order to ensure that a heartbeat is not heard before performing an abortion. “Any doctor who does the procedure after hearing a heartbeat could be charged with murder,” said Sen. Brown.

Olympia – Senate Bill 5747 was introduced yesterday by Senators Michael Isaksen and Nick Brown. “This bill addresses the

Athletes score with better grades

Olympia – House Bill 2469 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Allie Radniecki and Dillon Hubble.



“This bill addresses the issue of high school eligibility standards for athletes and will create competitions that are more fair,” said Rep. Radniecki. All school districts do not have the same eligibility standards for athletes, creating an unfair advantage for some teams. Out of 125 schools surveyed, 94 schools allow athletes to play with a 1.0 GPA. If a student-athlete is below standard in one of the classes then they must show improvement otherwise they will be put on probation and not able to play in games until their grades are back up to standard. “This bill will not cost much money because it is the student’s responsibility to get the help they need either by asking a teacher for help or studying more often. If we are able to get more students GPA’s up then college recruiters will be more likely to offer athletes scholarships so they can play in college,” said Rep. Hubble.

House takes aim at gun violence

Olympia – House Bill 3450 was introduced yesterday by Representative Angel Lloyd. “This bill addresses the issue of gun violence and will result in a safer community,” said Rep. Lloyd. Since 1982 there have been at least 62 mass shootings across the country. An example of this is that in Aurora, Colorado, a man went into a movie theater and killed and injured 70 people. This bill will require more background checks on people who buy guns.



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.

Legislature puts early school start times to bed

Olympia – House Bill 3210 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Chandler Robles, Aiden Teodoro and Andrew McLane.



“This bill addresses the issue of teen sleep deprivation and will improve the health and academic success of our youth,” said Rep. Teodoro. Studies show that high school students need an average of 8.5 to 9.5 hours of sleep per night, but 85 percent get less than that. The bill requires public high school start times no earlier than 9:30 a.m. “When the Minneapolis Public Schools moved start times for seven of its schools, there was an increase in attendance, alertness and grades,” said Rep. Robles.

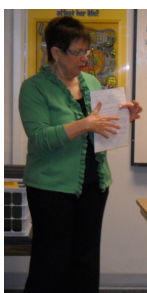
Guest speakers visit Page School



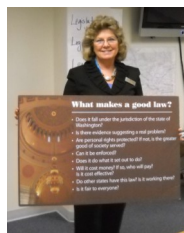
Ted Sturdevant, Executive Director of Legislative Affairs & Policy for Gov. Inslee; Joby Shimomura, Senior Adviser for Gov. Inslee; Rep. Steve Bergquist (D-Renton) from the 11th district; and House interns

Ian Kinder-Pyle and Zephyr Forest joined the pages during classes on Wednesday. All guests shared insightful information about their jobs. Pages were able to ask questions and share their own views in response to the speakers’ comments.

Teachers passionate about civic 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.



Watch us live at TVW.org

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

