



# The Weekly Page

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 7

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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 society 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

Pages worked individually or in small groups to write bills designed to address issues which were relevant to them and the state. Criteria for making a legislative solution work was discussed before students selected issues to research and develop. Then they used bill templates on class computers to formulate official-looking documents in preparation for a mock committee hearing on Thursday. Some topics for policy bills hunting regulations, drunk driving laws, death penalty, DNA testing, wind farms. Pages read their bills and “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.

### New car feature to discourage drunk driving

Olympia – House Bill 3753 was introduced yesterday by Representative Cameron Winterer. “This bill addresses the issue of drunk driving and will require Washington State car dealerships to install an alcohol ignition interlock system in all new cars sold,” said Rep. Winterer. This bill is aimed at the recent increase in alcohol-related traffic fatalities. On average, 300 people die in traffic accidents related to alcohol abuse every year in the state.

“Anyone trying to start a car will have to breathe into the device before the ignition will kick in. If he or she is intoxicated, the car will not start,” said Rep. Winterer. He hopes that these steps will improve safety and will reduce the danger of drunk drivers on the road.



### Senate blocks young hunters' barrels

Olympia – Senate Bill 5151 was introduced yesterday by Senators Liam Lloyd and Rachel Miller. “This bill addresses the issue of hunting accidents and will prevent unsupervised youths from accidentally shooting people,” said Sen. Lloyd. The bill is a response to a tragic hunting accident in which an unsupervised 14-year-old shot and killed a hiker, mistaking her for a bear. The bill, if passed, will prohibit those under the age of 18 from hunting with firearms unless supervised by an adult 25 years or older.



### House wants to reducing recidivism with restorative justice

Olympia – House Bill 3000 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Joe Rothlin and Chris Reilly. “This bill addresses the issue of recidivism in the prison system and will create an additional option for our justice system,” said Rep. Rothlin. Research shows that 70 percent of the criminals in the U.S. are



repeat offenders. “Going to prison doesn’t help a lot of criminals. In fact, many become even better criminals when they are put together with the worst offenders,” said Rep. Reilly. This bill will create a new option for some criminals called “restorative justice.” This option encour-

ages offenders to take responsibility for their actions and to repair the harm they’ve done—by apologizing, returning stolen money, or doing community service. In some states, nine out of 10 complete their agreement and only 10 percent of them end up committing another crime. “This has worked well in other states, and we think our state should give it a try,” said Rep. Rothlin.

### Homeless to get a roof over their heads

Olympia – House Bill 3737 was introduced yesterday by Representative Rose Gitelman. “This bill addresses the issue of homelessness and will help provide housing for many who can’t afford it,” said Rep. Gitelman. According to a report by the

National Center on Family Homelessness, more than 2,400 children are homeless in Washington State. The average income for a single mother who receives public assistance in the state is less than \$550. “That just isn’t enough to live on,” said Rep. Gitelman. This bill will provide subsidized apartments for homeless people by imposing an annual \$10 fee to all property taxes. “In this way, those who have homes will be helping those who don’t.”



### Senators see opportunity for higher achievement

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators LeeAndra Wheelock and Aabbee Wheelock introduced Senate Bill 5427, which addresses the length of the academic school year.



“The bill is a good one because it will increase student performance in school and will ensure

their future success,” said Sen. A. Wheelock. This bill will create year-round schools. Our students attend school fewer days than any other country in the world, according to the senators. “We are falling behind in our academic achievement compared to other nations, and in this competitive economy, we cannot afford to not be able to compete,” said Sen. L. Wheelock.

### Energy use too high in public schools

Olympia – Senate Bill 7888 was introduced yesterday by Senators Amy Turnquist and Kelsey Turner. “This bill addresses the

issue of energy consumption in our public schools,” said Sen. Turnquist. Schools are large consumers of energy. Statistics show that America’s schools spend more than \$7.5 billion annually on energy, which is more than they



spend on textbooks and computers combined. This bill will educate students and teachers on reducing energy consumption during the school year. The senators hope to develop better conservation habits in students and teachers.

## Bill aims to prevent hunting tragedies

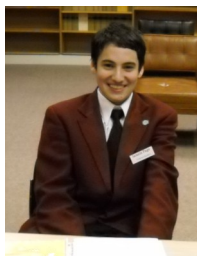


Olympia – House Bill 1016 was introduced yesterday by Representatives David St. Germain and Stephen Hubbard. “This bill addresses the issue of hiking and hunting safety and will create a better

environment where the two groups can coexist during hunting season,” said Rep. St. Germain. The legislation creates a minimum hunting age of 18 for solo hunters and requires younger hunters to have adult supervision while hunting. “In the past couple of years we’ve had a hiker killed by a 14-year-old hunter who mistook her for a bear and another Tacoma resident shot by an elk hunter in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest,” said Rep. Hubbard. “This new law will allow our states' hikers to hike safely, and our hunters to hunt responsibly.”

## Secondhand deaths are preventable

Olympia – Senate Bill 6713 was introduced yesterday by Representative Vlad Suslikov. “This bill addresses the issue of deaths caused by secondhand smoke,” said Sen. Suslikov. There are an average of 40,000 deaths each year in the US alone caused by secondhand smoke. If this bill becomes a law then special zones will be constructed in highly populated areas where smokers will have to go if they want to smoke. These areas will be away from children and nonsmoking adults so that they will not be harmed.



## Senators hit the sweet spot on helping unhealthy kids

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Emily Orne, Meaghan Oakes, and Athena Schlyer introduced Senate Bill 7654, which ad-



addresses the issue of childhood obesity. “The bill is a good one because it will lower the number of children who are at risk for obesity-related health problems and will supply a foundation for healthy living,” said Sen. Orne. This bill is meant to stop childhood obesity in its tracks by putting healthier food

programs in all Washington State public schools and providing healthier activities in all the schools, as well. “Once the bill is passed, the millions of dollars spent on adult obesity health care costs will no longer be an issue since the future adults of Washington State will have been taught healthier lifestyle choices,” said Sen. Oakes.

## Puff, puff, puff that cigarette...no more!

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Jennifer Treadway and Emily Walters introduced Senate Bill 5021, which addresses the issue



of cigarette smoking. “The bill is a good one because it will decrease the negative effects on smokers and non-smokers alike said Sen. Walters. The bill will restriction tobacco companies by forcing them to remove all harmful chemicals used in manufacturing ciga-

rettes. An estimated 400,000 people die every year as a result of smoking. “We can’t outlaw smoking because people are going to do it, no matter what. Our main goal is just to take the risk and danger out of the habit,” said Sen. Treadway.

## House proposes stiffer DUI laws

Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Alayna Loveall and Margaret McDonald introduced House Bill 1234, which addresses the issue of drunk driving.

“The bill is a good one because it will decrease fatalities and promote safe driving,” said Rep. McDonald. If this bill becomes law, those drivers who have been convicted of DUI more than twice in a year will have to install an alcohol ignition interlock device in their car. In 2006 more than 250 lives were taken in the state as a result of people driving under the influence of alcohol. “We can’t let this trend continue without trying to do something about it,” said Rep. Loveall.



## Reps propose outdoor safety bill

Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Patrick Brumbach and Matthew Shaul introduced House Bill 2014, which addresses the issue of hiker and hunter safety. “The bill is a good one because it will increase the safety of both groups,” said Rep. Brumbach. The bill promotes the safety of hikers by recommending bright colored clothing on all public lands and trails. Signage will be posted in those areas as reminders. The bill also urges hunters under the age of 12 to be accompanied by an experienced adult hunter.



## House calls for legalization of pot

Olympia – House Bill 1420 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Lars Kundu and Nate Wright. “This bill addresses



the issue of illegal drugs and will legalize the possession, use, and distribution of marijuana,” said Rep. Kundu. “The bill makes a lot of sense, especially now with our severely strapped state budget,” said Rep. Wright. Legalizing and regulating the drug will save an estimated

\$16 million and create one million dollars in new revenue, according to analysts. “Of that one million dollars, \$590,000 would be earmarked for the Washington State Criminal Justice Treatment Program to increase support of our underfunded drug treatment and drug prevention services,” said Rep. Kundu.

## Hunters and hikers safer with new law

Olympia – House Bill 3333 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Angelique Sohapp and Rilke Rutenbeck. “This bill addresses the issue of a minimum age for hunters and will reduce accidents in our forests,” said Rep. Sohapp. Currently, the state has no minimum age to get a hunting license. If this bill becomes law, hunters must be over the age of 16. Anyone young will have to be accompanied by an experienced adult hunter. Hikers must also wear a visible fluorescent-colored bracelet to make them visible to hunters when they are hiking on trails that are in hunting areas.



This bill is a response to a recent hunting accident in which a 14-year-old hunter killed a hiker, thinking she was a bear. “We can’t let another tragedy like this occur again,” said Rep. Rutenbeck.

## Thumbs up for reducing crime

Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Timothy Kranick and Ben Solem introduced House Bill 1000, which addresses the issue of violent crime. “The bill is a good one because it reduces crime, does not cost the government a penny in this budget crisis and values individual rights,” said Rep. Kranick. The bill removes the current fee of \$55.25 when obtaining a concealed pistol permit. Numerous studies show that when there are more firearms in the hands of law abiding citizens, there are fewer crimes committed and there is also a greater chance of crimes being stopped before the criminals get away. “When more people do not have to pay a fee to get a permit, there will be more people getting them. When this happens, people up to no-good will think twice about committing crimes, and the rate should begin to drop,” said Rep. Solem.



## Lauwers and Felker challenge capital punishment

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Caelan Lauwers and Dix Felker introduced Senate Bill 7778, which addresses the issue of capital punishment. “The bill is a good one because it will prevent the execution of innocent people,” Sen. Lauwers. This bill will abolish capital punishment and prevent the sad cases of people like Washington State’s Benjamin Harris who was on death row for nine years before being found innocent. “Fortunately we haven’t executed anyone who was innocent. But it is just a matter of time before we have a case like Cameron Todd Willingham who was executed in Texas a year before evidence found him not guilty of the charges,” said Sen. Felker.



## Reps repeal medical marijuana law

Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Jake Blakeslee and Taylor Overmiller introduced House Bill 3999, which addresses the issue of medical marijuana. “The bill is a good one because it will provide better health for all the citizens in Washington and keep us in compliance with federal drug laws,” said Rep. Overmiller. The use of marijuana is illegal in Washington, but medical marijuana is not. “Marijuana can ruin individuals, families and entire neighborhoods. Medical marijuana can ease the pain of patients but some patients misuse it,” said Rep. Blakeslee.



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## Senator calls for more windfarms

Olympia – Senate Bill 6021 was introduced yesterday by Senator Jonathan Taylor-Kantz. “This bill addresses the issue of the environment and will increase the amount of clean energy in our state,” said Sen. Taylor-Kantz. Man-made activity is changing the global climate resulting in severe negative consequences. The average annual temperature increased 1.5 degrees in the Pacific Northwest between 1920 and 2003. Sea surface temperatures are projected to rise 2.7 degrees by the 2040s. “Although this doesn’t seem significant, if it continues we will have big problem. It could cause the extinction of many marine species in the PNW,” said Sen. Taylor-Kantz. If this bill becomes law, the legislature will create more wind farms, which would provide five percent more clean energy for the state.



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## House bill clears the air for minors

Olympia – House Bill 3874 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Karly Clendenen and Shannon Van Duine. “This bill addresses the issue of second hand smoke and will ban smoking in cars when minors are passengers,” said Rep. Clendenen. This will be a secondary offense for six months and then become a primary offense. “This should give smokers a chance to change their habits before there are consequences,” said Rep. Van Duine. When pulled over, violators will be issued a \$150 fine. If the smoker is not the driver, then the driver will receive a \$75



fine, since the driver is responsible for making sure all passengers are safe and following the rules of the road.

## New driving tests for elderly

Olympia – House Bill 1001 was introduced yesterday by Representative Conor Devitt. “This bill addresses the issue of elderly drivers and will keep our roads safer,” said Rep. Devitt. From 1990 to 1997 death rates involving senior citizens at the wheel went up by 14 percent. “Accident rates for drivers over the age of 65 are higher than any group other than teens,” said Rep. Devitt. If the bill becomes law, Washington State citizens over the age of 70 will have to take a road and vision test every five years. Those who fail after two tries will have their license revoked for one year and must take a driving safety course before trying again.



## House passes illegal alien bill

Olympia – House Bill 2500 was introduced yesterday by Representative Kurt Moore. “This bill addresses the issue of illegal immigrants and will free up the number of jobs taken by illegal aliens for Washington citizens,” said Rep. Moore. Of the nearly 277,000 illegal aliens residing in Washington State, an estimated 31 percent take advantage of state or federal welfare programs. With the passage of this bill, the legislature will order all workers to carry their social security cards at work. The Washington State Patrol will routinely check workers’ cards and employers found hiring illegal aliens will be fined up to \$1,000. “Once the illegal immigrants are fired, legal workers can take those jobs. This should save money for the state, which pays unemployment to citizens who can’t find jobs,” said Rep. Moore.



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### DNA testing helps solve crimes faster

Olympia – House Bill 2884 was introduced yesterday by Representative Rachael Redjou. “This bill addresses the issue of unsolved crimes and will allow DNA testing of anyone arrested for a sex crime or violent crime,” said Rep. Redjou. This bill would require the suspect to give a DNA sample without a warrant. Then the DNA sample would be run through an unsolved crimes data base. If no matches are found, the sample would be destroyed. If there is a match, the person can be charged with the unsolved crime, as well. “This would help police solve crimes faster then ever and allow peace and closure to the injured families,” said Rep. Redjou.



### Tax deduction to improve economic health of state

Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Clarice Hunter and Corrie Morgan introduced House Bill 2971, which addresses the issue of taxation. “The bill is a good one because it will cut unnecessary taxes, promote a healthier economy, and attract new businesses which would bring in extra income for the state,” Rep. Hunter says. “Washington State has a \$2.8 billion deficit, and many of those involved in our government are getting ready to increase taxes by millions of dollars,” said Rep. Morgan. However, the legislators feel that more taxes will discourage consumers from investing in more products. "Lowering taxes and deleting wasteful government programs will help boost the economy, giving the people a sense of hope in a brighter future, and will eventually increase revenue enough to



erase our state's debt," said Rep. Morgan. Both Representatives are firmly optimistic that lower tax rates indicate better years ahead for the citizens of Washington State.

### Bill to end hunger in Washington

Olympia – Yesterday, Senator Shawna Dowlen introduced Senate Bill 5678, which addresses the issue of hunger in Washington state. “The bill is a good one because it will make sure that all people in Washington state have enough to eat,” said Sen. Dowlen. This bill will limit spending on entertainment and technology by government officials and put that money into buying food for the hunger.



### Should juveniles do adult time?

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Cameron Seib and Ethan Dufault introduced Senate Bill 5888, which addresses the issue of juvenile offenders tried as adults. “The bill is a good one because it prevents young people at risk from becoming hardened criminals later in life,” said Sen. Dufault. This bill sets an absolute minimum age of 16 for a juvenile to be tried as an adult; and if any juvenile defender between the ages of 16 and 18 is tried in court, the prosecutor will be required to thoroughly examine the case. The evidence must show that the juvenile is not restricted by mental disabilities and that the adult punishment will affectively treat the juvenile's problem. “A juvenile justice expert has said that juveniles being tried as adults cannot be held liable for their crimes, because their actions are not the result of a violent personality, but rather low mental capacity. This is not something that an extended sentence in a corrective facility can help,” said Sen. Seib.



**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.



## New teen drivers liberated

Olympia – Senate Bill 7777 was introduced yesterday by Senators Molly Bordeaux and Tori Ballantyne. “This bill addresses the issue of unfair driving restrictions on capable 16-year-olds,” said Sen. Bordeaux. This bill will allow capable teen drivers to carpool with their friends and neighbors, rather than having to obey the 6-months “no passengers” restriction in the current limited drivers license law. After receiving a license, the person will be able to take a free written test to determine whether or not the teen has to wait six months before being able to carpool with non-related persons. To pass this test the person must achieve a score of no less than 90 percent. “Some new drivers are better drivers than adults and should not be prevented from driving their friends places just because some other new drivers get in accidents,” said Sen. Ballantyne.

## High school athletic eligibility tightened

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Caleb Dawson, Joshua Dawson, and Jeremy Dickens introduced Senate Bill 5430, which addresses the issue of academic eligibility for high school athletes. “The bill is a good one because it will implement a higher standard in school sports,” Sen. Dickens. Currently, some high school athletes have been allowed to participate in sports despite whether they were on course to graduate. In the committee hearing, Sen. Joshua Dawson explained, “This bill would demand that if a student out for a sport had any failing grades, he or she would be put on the bench list. By doing so, it will reestablish education as the primary responsibility of secondary schools.”

## 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.

## Guest speakers visit Page School

Sen. Mike Carrell (R-28th); Paula Rehwaldt, legislative assistant to Rep. Eddy; Allison Krutsinger, legislative assistant to Rep. Kagi; and Peter Goldmark, public lands commissioner, joined the pages during classes on Wednesday.

The speakers talked about what led them to their current positions and shared insightful information about their jobs. Pages were able to interact with these guests by asking questions and sharing their own views in response to the speaker’s questions.

