



Capitol Update

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News

Washington Learns Endorses Closing UW Per Student Funding Gap

Many State Legislators Already Assured Election

Olympia News and Notes

Washington Learns Endorses Closing UW Per Student Funding Gap

At a meeting of the Washington Learns Steering Committee at the Washington Mutual Cedarbrook Conference Center on October 9, Governor Gregoire unveiled a proposal for establishing a statewide tuition policy that if adopted, would close the University's \$3000 to \$4000 per student funding gap with other global challenge peer institutions within the next decade.

The plan calls for the establishment of a 10-year funding goal for all public colleges and universities that combines revenue from both state appropriations and tuition. The target funding level for public colleges and universities would be at the 60th percentile of similar institutions in the Global Challenge States (GCS). Comparison groups within those states would be developed for the UW, Washington State University, the four year comprehensive institutions and the community and technical colleges.

In order to insure predictability and affordability for students and families, undergraduate tuition increases would be capped at seven percent, which is the state's historical average. With the seven percent limit on tuition, the Washington Learns plan calls for the state to make-up the additional investments needed to achieve the 60th percentile of competitive funding by the end of ten years. If the state were to contribute even greater amounts, tuition would not have to increase by as much as seven percent in some years.

The plan also calls for negotiated performance agreements with each baccalaureate institution and the two year college system to insure that increased funding will be accompanied by specific, measurable outcomes such as degree production in high demand fields and student retention rates.

As part of it's 2007-09 biennial budget submittal, the University has submitted draft legislation that calls for closing the UW's per student funding gap to the 50th percentile within six years through a yet to be determined combination of state appropriations and tuition increases. The Governor's Washington Learns proposal is consistent with that plan calling for modest undergraduate tuition increases combined with higher levels of state funding to close the funding gap. The Governor's plan sets a higher funding benchmark (60th percentile vs. 50th percentile), but establishes a longer time frame to close the gap (10 years vs. six years) than the original UW proposal.

The final Washington Learns report will be released at a special event on Monday, November 13 at the Bell Harbor Conference Center in Seattle.

Many State Legislators Already Assured Election

According to the latest issue of "In the House" (the monthly magazine for employees and members of the state House of Representatives), 32 candidates for election to the House and seven candidates for the Senate already know for certain that they will be elected in November to a new term. That's because they are running unopposed in the November general election.

House members who have won their primary election and face no general election opponent include Al O'Brien (D-1st district), Timm Ormsby (D-3rd district), Larry Crouse (R-4th district), Glenn Anderson and Jay Rodne (R's-5th district), Shirley Hankins and Larry Haler (R's-8th district), David Buri (R-9th district); Chris Strow (R-10th district), Zack Hudgins and Bob Hasegawa (D's-11th district), Mike Armstrong and Cary Condotta (R's-12th district); Bill Hinkle and Judy Warnick (R's-13th district), Gary Alexander (R-20th district), Mary Helen Roberts and Brian Sullivan (D's-21st district), Brendan Williams (D-22nd district), Lynn Kessler (D-24th district), Steve Conway and Steve Kirby (D's-29th district), Dave Upthegrove (D-33rd district), Eileen Cody (D-34th district), Helen Sommers and Mary Lou Dickerson (D's-36th district), Sharon Tomiko Santos (D-37th district), Mike Sells (D-38th district), Kirk Pearson (R-39th district), Jeff Morris (D-40th district), and Phyllis Kenney and Jim McIntire (D's-46th district).

Senators who have won their primary election and face no general election opponent include Jerome Delvin (R-8th district), Paull Shin (D-21st district), Rosa Franklin (D-29th district), Erik Poulsen (D-34th district), Jeanne Kohl-Welles (D-36th district), Adam Kline (D-37th district), and Jean Berkey (D-38th district).

The remainder of House and Senate contested seats will be decided at the state's general election on November 7.

Olympia News and Notes

Senator Mark Doumit (D-Cathlamet) will leave the Senate on November 1 to become Executive Director of the Washington Forest Protection Association. Doumit has represented the 19th district (Pacific, Wahkiakum, Skamania, Grays Harbor counties) for more than 10 years as both a senator and state representative. He is currently the Vice Chair of the Senate Ways and Means committee and played a key role in crafting the last two operating budgets. Doumit replaces Bill Wilkerson, former state revenue director, who is retiring after serving the Forest Protection Association for more than a decade. **Brian Hatfield**, a former state representative from the 19th district who currently works in the Lieutenant Governor's Office is a candidate to be appointed to fill Doumit's seat.

The September 19 primary election decided two key state judicial races. Chief **Justice Gerry Alexander** and **Justice Tom Chambers** were re-elected to new six year terms on the state's highest court. Alexander received a strong challenge from John Groen in one of the state's most expensive court races in history. **Justice Susan Owens** faces a November 7 run-off in her race with former state senator **Steve Johnson**.

Senators and staff have begun moving back into the **John A. Cherberg Building** now that the \$24 million remodeling project has been virtually completed. The 1937 building was vacated last year to undergo a complete renovation and earthquake upgrade. The first floor of the building will continue to house Senate committee hearing rooms, while the upper floors will provide offices for Senators as well as committee and caucus staffers. The two modular buildings which have housed the Senate for the past 18 months have been sold and will be dismantled prior to the 2007 legislative session.

State officials have quietly abandoned the state's newest tourism promotion slogan "**Say WA.**" The slogan was dropped after about half a year at the recommendation of the Tourism Advisory Council amid market research showing it had failed in its purpose of getting readers to go to the tourism web site. Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development officials indicate that for the time being the theme of "endless discoveries for the independent spirit" will be used in a tourism promotion campaign next year, but a new slogan has yet to be chosen.

Chris Alejano, a UW doctoral candidate in College of Education, Education Leadership and Policy Studies and a member of the Governor's Washington Learns Higher Education Advisory Committee has accepted a temporary research analyst position with the Office of Program Research in Olympia. Chris will work for the House Children and Family Services committee on early learning issues.