



Weekly Legislative Update

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This was the final week for policy committees in the Senate and House to consider legislation originating in their own chambers. Standing committees met throughout the day and into the evenings to hear and pass legislation. A variety of University officials were in Olympia during the week making presentations or testifying on a number of important measures.

On Monday January 30, the House Capital Budget Committee held a work session on "63-20" financing mechanisms. State Treasurer Mike Murphy appeared to present the findings of his recent report on the topic. UW Senior Associate Treasurer Doug Breckel made a presentation to the committee on how the University uses 63-20 financings as part of its overall debt management and capital financing programs.

That evening, the House State Government Operations and Accountability Committee held a public hearing on HB 2724 which would significantly restrict the sale of property by public agencies including the University to private entities. UW Director of Real Estate Jeanette Henderson testified against the bill on behalf of the University along with representatives from Washington State University and Western Washington University. The bill did not pass by the committee deadline.

On Tuesday January 31, Dr. Gabriel Aeppli, the Director of the University of London Centre for Nanotechnology paid a visit to Olympia for meetings with Governor Christine Gregoire and more than half a dozen key legislative leaders. Dr. Aeppli was accompanied by UW President Mark Emmert. The UW is actively recruiting Dr. Aeppli and has a \$4.5 million supplemental capital budget request to remodel space on campus for a new nanotechnology laboratory.

That same evening, The Olympian newspaper held a community forum on higher education in the Columbia Room of the state capitol. The forum was moderated by Olympian publisher John Winn Miller and was broadcast live on TVW. Five presidents were featured on the forum panel including UW President Mark Emmert, WSU President Lane Rawlins, Evergreen State College President Les Purce, President of Saint Martin's University Joseph Astolfi and South Puget Sound Community College President Ken Minnaert. More than 50 south sound residents braved a windy rainstorm to hear each president speak about the future challenges for higher education in Washington and then answer questions from the audience and from the internet from viewers watching the statewide broadcast.

Wednesday, February 1 was ASUW Lobby Day in Olympia and more than a hundred students dressed in purple "Bring It to Olympia" t-shirts descended on the state capitol campus to encourage lawmakers to support student concerns and the needs of the University. Secretary of State Sam Reed, Rep. Hans Dunshee (UW alum) and Rep. Ed Murray met with students in the afternoon.

On Thursday February 2, the House Higher Education and Workforce Education Committee held a public hearing on HB 2123 (Murray) which would require the UW and other schools to establish rules for off campus behavior of students. ASUW President Lee Dunbar and GPSS legislative representative Nick Peyton testified with other students against the measure, asking committee members to postpone action until a new work group, recently established by President Emmert, can take a fresh look at issues in the University Park community. UW Police Chief Vicky Stormo and Assistant Vice President for Regional Affairs Theresa Doherty testified on behalf of the UW administration which is also opposed to the bill.

Later in the meeting, the committee held a brief public hearing on HB 1434 by Rep. Fred Jarrett which would establish a strategic direction for higher education in Washington State. UW Provost Phyllis Wise testified on the bill which is supported by the University.

On Friday February 3rd, six Evans School of Public Affairs students spent the day in Olympia sitting in on floor sessions for the House and Senate and meetings of the House Transportation and Appropriations Committees. At lunch in the Capitol cafeteria, they talked with Representative Ed Murray, Chair of the Transportation Committee, and two Evans alumni who were in Olympia to testify at the Appropriations Committee Hearing. Two students went to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) office, where they were eagerly greeted by Legislative Auditor and Evans alum, Ruta Fanning. She introduced Keenan Konopaski, also an Evans alum, and quickly did a briefing on the work in her office. Another student spent part of the day visiting with staff in the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to discuss her Evans School degree project.

Preview of Week Five Activities

Senate and House fiscal committee meetings will take center stage early in the week as they scramble to finish their committee work prior to their February 7 deadline. On Wednesday February 8, both chambers will move exclusively to floor action for a week as all legislation (except bills needed to implement the budget) must pass their respective chambers by 5:00 p.m. on Valentine's Day.

This week, legislative fiscal committee chairs and staff will also continue working on their chambers respective supplemental operating, capital and transportation budget proposals. The Senate is scheduled to release their budget proposals on Wednesday February 15. It is possible that House budget proposals could be released the following week.

Bills of Interest to the University

Regulating Off Campus Student Housing – SB 6135 (Jacobsen)

Requires all four year higher education institution to develop and implement an off-campus housing quality assessment program.

University Position: Concerns about broad nature of housing inspection program and ability to inspect private housing stock.

Status: The bill did not pass by the committee deadline.

Health Technology Assessment -- HB 2575 (Cody) and SB 6306 (Keiser)

Establishes an evidence-based health technology assessment program.

University Position: Support.

Status: HB 2575 passed House Health Care Committee. Public hearing scheduled in House Appropriations Committee on February 3. SB 6306 did not pass Senate Health and Long Term Care Committee by deadline.

Graduate Fellowships in Math and Science -- HB 2347 (Morris)

Establishes a new graduate fellowship trust fund program for the sciences to attract and retain top quality graduate students in the science fields.

University Position: Support.

Status: The bill did not pass by the committee deadline.

Increasing Tuition Waivers for Veterans -- HB 2233 (Kristiansen)

Mandates that 10 percent of all tuition waivers granted by four year and two year higher education institutions be granted to veterans.

University Position: Support substitute bill.

Status: Substitute bill passed House Higher Education and Workforce Education Committee February 2. The substitute bill drops the percentage mandate and simply requires the University to provide waivers to eligible veterans.

Requiring Disclosure of Outsourcing -- HB 3160 (Hudgins)

Requires new reporting requirements for state agencies which contract with overseas firms or entities.

University Position: Neutral

Status: Substitute bill passed House Commerce and Labor Committee on February 2.

Establishing Technology Priorities for Institutions of Higher Education – SHB 2817 (Sells) and SSB 6697 (Berkey).

Establishes state objectives for access, enrollment, delivery and degree achievements in fields of engineering, technology, biotechnology and other science fields.

University Position: Support but prefer Senate version.

Status: SHB 2817 passed House Higher Education and Workforce Education Committee on February 2. SSB 6697 passed Senate Early Learning, K-12 and Higher Education Committee on February 3.

Modifying Provisions of the Model Toxics Control Act – SB 6474 (Regala)

Exempts state and local governments from liability under the Model Toxics Control Act when ownership is based solely on easement, street or right of way interest.

University Position: Oppose due to concerns about limitation of liability related to City of Tacoma and possible contamination of property on campus property.

Status: The bill did not pass by the committee deadline.

Revising Terms of Appointment of Student Regents and Trustees -- HB 2857 (Kenney) and SB 6567 (McAuliffe)

Modifies the one year term of office for student regents and trustees so that the term begins on July 1 instead of June 1.

University Position: Support.

Status: SB 6567 passed to Senate Rules Committee for second reading. HB 2857 passed to House Rules Committee for second reading.

Expanding Access to Higher Education in Everett/Snohomish County Using the University Center Model – HB 3113 (Sells)

Establishes a university center at Everett Community College and provides \$1.5 million in funding for the school to contact with four year institutions to provide baccalaureate education on the campus.

University Position: Neutral

Status: Substitute bill passed House Higher Education and Workforce Education Committee on January 31 and referred to House Appropriations Committee.

Regulating the Sale of Public Lands – HB 2724 (Hasegawa)

Prohibits public agencies from selling real property to private parties unless certain conditions are met.

University Position: Opposed

Status: The bill did not pass by the committee deadline.

Requiring the Adoption of Rules Regulating Off-Campus Conduct of Students – SB 2123 (Murray)

Requires colleges and universities to adopt rules regulating the off-campus behavior of students.

University Position: Opposed

Status: Public hearing in House Higher Education and Workforce Education Committee held February 2. The bill did not pass by the committee deadline.

Concerning Cost Savings on Course Materials – SSB 6699 (Pridemore) and SHB 3087 (Ormsby)

Requires universities in collaboration with affiliated bookstores and students and faculty to adopt rules requiring bookstores to permit students to purchase unbundled course materials where possible.

University Position: Support (with some clarifying changes)

Status: SSB 6699 passed to Senate Rules Committee for second reading. SHB 3087 passed to House Rules Committee for second reading.