

**Western Washington University Associated Students  
Legislative Affairs Council  
Wednesday, March 4, 2015, VU 567**

**Present:** Sarah Kohout (ASVP for Governmental Affairs), Heather Heffelmire (Legislative Liaison), Kendra Thomas (Local Liaison), Cody Simrell, Belina Seare, Sam Goldblatt, Nora Selander, McKenzie Dent, Adam Schaefer, Haley Newhouse

**Absent:** Mayra Guizar, Luciane DeAlmeida  
**Advisor:** Lisa Rosenberg, Assistant Director of Student Activities  
**Secretary:** Lily Jaquith, Board Assistant for Representation Committees  
**Guest:**

## **MOTIONS**

**LAC-15-W-15** Approve the Federal Agenda as amended.

**Sarah Kohout, Chair of Legislative Affairs Council, called the meeting to order at 5:01pm**

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

### **II. Additions and Changes to the Agenda**

### **III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

### **IV. Public Forum**

### **V. REPORTS**

#### **A. VP for Governmental Affairs**

Kohout said on Monday they had 13 students go down to Olympia. They met with a lot of staff members. She's been prepping people for USSA LegCon, which is coming up, as well as the federal lobby trip which she is going on with Zach Dugovich, AS VP for Student Life and Annika Wolters, AS President. The AS is hiring right now, go to [as.wvu.edu/personnel](http://as.wvu.edu/personnel). Governor Jay Inslee came on Monday, he talked to some STEM students, environmental lobby day students and students about tuition. It was very organically. He talked a lot about scholarships. He put a tuition freeze with mechanisms for funding it in his budget. They talked about decreasing tuition but he didn't think it was possible this year, but he did say that in a post-industrial society tuition should be free. Sam Goldblatt said he said something about fully funding carver, but she didn't think he did. Kohout said no, he didn't. Adam Schaefer asked if Western has a plan to pay for the 16 million that Gov. Inslee hasn't funded. Kohout said they would rather not do that.

#### **B. Legislative Liaison**

Heather Heffelmire, Legislative Liaison, said HB1428 passed in the house, it would extend voter registration deadlines. It's really awesome. There will be some good movement on that. A lot of people were vocal on getting it passed. Some comments came from Senator Jim Honeyford last week, ugly, racist comments. He was referring to people of color as colored people and saying they commit more crime. When he tried to explain himself he used the

phrase “the negro,” obviously that’s really problematic. Mayra Guizar, Western Votes! Rep, has taken the lead on getting some letter writing done and an in-person action going.

Regardless of whether or not someone is a person of color, this should really enrage them and make everyone really mad that someone in office that they’re paying and represents them and has the ability to make decisions for them holds such racist views and is really racist and uses outdated and hurtful terms. It would be great if this group could take action as well.

#### C. Local Liaison

Kendra Thomas, Local Liaison, said last week she was on the transportation advisory committee, they passed their master plan. There will be a final vote for rental registration on Monday. *Cody Simrell enters.*

#### D. Western Votes!

Kohout said they had their last meeting they talked about the Inslee visit and Sen. Honeyford’s comments. They also talked about leadership development and positions for next year.

### VI. Information Items

#### A. Revenue Coalition

Heffelmire said this is proposal to officially join the revenue coalition. They’re a group of organizations working to overturn the archaic tax policy in Washington. Washington is 52/50 states in the taxes system. They understand tuition has gone up, but it’s never really connected to the tax policy. She wants to get on campus and get students fired up about it. That’s something she’s become really passionate about and she feels like ASWWU should officially join them. This isn’t something that has to pass immediately. She hopes to talk about it spring quarter too. She really wants to push change in Washington tax system. She knows she gave them a lot of information, so with that she’d love is a conversation and how they’re feeling about the revenue coalition. Adam Schaefer asked if the link is their website. Heffelmire said yes. Lisa Rosenberg, Assistant Director for Student Activities, asked if she is imagining that her position, legislative liaison, would be the one to continue to represent ASWWU. Heffelmire said yes, it would be likely that future legislative liaisons would participate. They’re really not active outside of session. If anything it’s a symbolic gesture. Kohout asked what becoming an official member looks like. Heffelmire said she just has to talk to one of the leaders. It’s like when you endorse a candidate on a website.

### VII. Action Items

#### A. For Profit Colleges Federal Agenda Proposal

The committee edited the paragraph on For Profit Colleges Paragraph to read:

“The ASWWU recognizes that for-profit colleges are engaging in manipulative and deceptive activities in order to maximize profits and student enrollment. Many for-profit schools utilize aggressive marketing and recruiting tactics, provide programs of questionable value, and often cost far more than comparable programs offered at public schools. These colleges, which are actually private companies, receive billions in federal student aid and tax subsidies. According to an investigation by the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, ninety-six percent of for-profit students take out student loans while just forty-eight percent of 4-year public school students take out loans. Fifty-four percent of students attending for-profit colleges eventually drop out leaving students in debt without the means to pay back loans. Students who attend for-profit schools are more likely to experience unemployment after leaving school. According to a National Center for Education Statistics study, twenty-three percent of students who attended for-profit schools in 2008-9 were unemployed and seeking work. The ASWWU advocates for:

- The passage of S 396 and HR 747 to establish a committee to provide federal oversight of for-profit colleges
- Ending deceptive practices during the recruitment process, with transparency regarding retention rate statistics and after graduation job prospects
- Ending federal tax subsidies to for-profit colleges”

**B. State of Emergency Federal Agenda Proposal**

The committee edited the State of Emergency Federal Agenda paragraph to read:

“ASWWU recognizes that all people should feel safe and supported the within institutions that directly affect them. People of color and people of marginalized identities are faced with obstacles within institutions which contribute to the overall disenfranchisement of these said demographics. Currently, voting agencies can prevent people from voting by establishing Voter ID Laws People who are convicted of criminal offense are not able to vote in Federal elections. Many campuses currently do not have resources and strong advocacy for students who hold marginalized identities. Public schools in the United States are segregated by race and poverty and it is clear that minority students are underrepresented in public and private nonprofit colleges. ASWWU advocates for:

The support of the Voter Empowerment Act: H.R 12

- Authorizes automated voter registration of certain individuals and establishes other initiatives to promote voter registration, such as same day registration and voter registration of individuals under 18 years of age
- Amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) which establish requirements for states to promote access to voter registration and voting for individuals with disabilities.
- Give convicted felon’s the opportunity to vote, unless they are currently serving a sentence, which prescribes the enforcement of this right by public or private civil action.

The réintroduction of the End Racial Profiling Act (H.R. 2851 / S. 1038)

- Requires federal law enforcement agencies to maintain policies and procedures that work to eliminate racial profiling and to cease existing practices that permit racial profiling.
- Requires state or local governmental entities or state, local, or tribal law enforcement agencies that apply for grants under the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program and the Cops on the Beat Program to certify that they maintain adequate policies and procedures for eliminating racial profiling and have eliminated any existing practices that permit or encourage racial profiling.
- Authorizes the Attorney General to award grants and contracts for the collection of data relating to racial profiling and for the development of best practices and systems to eliminate racial profiling. Requires the Attorney General to issue regulations for the collection and compilation of data on racial profiling and for the implementation of this Act.”

**C. Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act Federal Agenda Proposal**

The committee edited the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act Federal Agenda paragraph to read:

Higher Education is not affordable or accessible for students. With tuition prices skyrocketing and the amount of student debt surpassing 1.2 trillion dollars, something needs to be done if

we as a country want to thrive. The Higher Education Act encompasses all federal policies relating to higher education and is renewed every 6 years. When the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act is being discussed it gives students and higher education stakeholders an opportunity to make positive changes of what we'd like to see in the legislation. ASWWU advocates for:

The passing of the Pell Grant Protection Act (S. 2194) which includes:

- Year Round Pell Grant
- Enforcing the Pell Grant as part of the mandatory spending program
- Automatically increasing the Pell Grant on a yearly basis depending on the rate of inflation

The passing of the Financial Aid Simplification and Transparency Act (S. 108) which includes:

- Simplifying the FASFA form to make it more accessible for students to apply for federal student aid.
- Streamlining federal aid programs to have one grant, the Pell Grant, one undergraduate loan, one graduate loan, and one parent loan.

The passing of the Repay Act (S. 85) which includes:

- Setting a student's annual repayment obligation under the program at 10% of the borrower's discretionary income that is less than \$25,000, adjusted for inflation. If the borrower's income is greater than \$25,000 it is 15%.
- Makes public service employees eligible for the public service employee loan forgiveness program.

The passing of the All-Year ACCESS Act (H.R 242) which would

- Reallocate Student Debt Profits to pay for changes to the Pell Grants.

Maintain the current Perkins Loan by

- Continuing it to be a campus based program with a low interest rate and a forgiveness option."

*Schaefer leaves.*

#### ***MO TION LA C-15- W- By Thomas***

Moves to approve the federal agenda as amended

Second: Seare

Vote: 8-0-0

Action: Passed

### **VIII. Discussion Items**

#### **VIII. Other Business**

Kohout said the meeting time next quarter will likely be Thursdays at 4 p.m.

#### **IX. Next Meeting Date**

March 11,2015

#### **X. Adjourn**

*The Meeting was adjourned at 6:19*