

**Western Washington University Associated Students
Legislative Affairs Council Meeting**

Monday, January 30, 2012

VU567

Present: Uis Maute-Gibson (AS VP Governmental Affairs, Chair), Patrick Stickney (Vice Chair), Ean Olsen (Student Senate Representative), Katherine Barnard, Chris Brown, Ben Crowther, Jared McCardle, Carmen Winquist,

Absent: Kevin Majkut (advisor), Joe Meyer (Legislative Liaison) [in Olympia], Chris Savage, Liona Yau-Luu

Secretary: Katie Savinski

MOTIONS

L-12-W-03 Approve the minutes of Monday, January 23, 2012 *Passed*

L-12-W-04 Approve the Marriage Equality Resolution as read. *Passed*

L-12-W-05 Oppose House Bill 2345 concerning “the [creation] of a higher education registration priority for eligible veterans and national guard members” with a low priority. *Passed*

L-12-W-06 Support Senate Bill 6088 “Strengthening the review of the legislature’s goals for tax preferences by requiring that every new tax preference provide an expiration date and statement of legislative intent” with high priority. *Passed*

L-12-W-07 Oppose Senate Bill 6322 “allowing nonprofit institutions recognized by the state of Washington to be eligible to participate in the state need grant program.” *Passed*

Iris Maute-Gibson, Chair for Legislative Affairs Council, called the meeting to order at 4:03p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. REVISIONS TO AGENDA

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION L-12-W-03 by Olsen

Seconded by Stickney

Approval of the minutes of Monday, January 23, 2011

Vote: 8 - 0 - 0 Action: Passed

IV. REPORTS

A. AS VP for Governmental Affairs

Maute-Gibson reported that she has been discussing budget and financial aid with administrators. She announced that Elect-Her is being held this weekend. This is an all day, gender-targeted workshop. She said that she will have the e-sign form sent to the committee for participation sign-up.

B. AS Legislative Liaison

See Meyer’s Bill Report.

C. Western Votes

Stickney said that the phone banking operation was last week and it went well. Many people participated.

D. Student Senate

McCardle reported that the senate is working on several things, including the senate reform.

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. Marriage Equality

Crowther spoke on behalf of the resolution he drafted in favor of supporting marriage equality.

He explained that students with same-sex parents run into complicated financial issues, either not

receiving financial aid where they need it, or are over compensated because the student can only be claimed by one parent income. McCardle complemented Crowther on making that point. Maute-Gibson stated that supporting this resolution as a committee hold more weight that supporting it as an individual, and that should be considered.

MOTION L-12-W-04 by Stickney

Seconded by Brown

Approve the Marriage Equality Resolution as read.

Vote: 8 - 0 - 0 Action: Passed

B. Other Bills

Maute-Gibson reported that many of the bills discussed at the last Legislative Affairs Council (LAC) meeting are no longer under consideration. The committee first decided to take a stance on House Bill 2345, the bill regarding veteran priority registration. Maute-Gibson stated that the administration agreed that this bill would not solve the problem at hand. Brown said he wanted to oppose the bill. Crowther dittoed. Barnard asked if this bill could be working on to include the elements that would help to fix the disconnect occurring between veterans and higher education. Maute-Gibson said in this instance an amendment would be cutting it too close to the deadlines, but to keep that idea in mind for the future. Winqvist agreed with opposing the bill. Stickney spoke in opposition, but wanted to consider making this a “soft recommendation.” Crowther agreed with Stickney’s suggestion and also spoke in favor of making this a low priority issue in opposition. He wanted to ensure the community in that “soft recommendation” that the committee is still supportive of veterans, but that this is not the bill that will fix the right things. Olsen agreed. He explained that off of what Mr. Knappenberger had expressed at the last LAC meeting on behalf of veteran needs, this would not fix the problems that need to be resolved. Barnard agreed with Brown’s support of a new bill next session that takes into consideration the changes that do need to be made; prevention of veterans being dropped from the universities.

MOTION L-12-W-05 by McCardle

Seconded by Olsen

Oppose House Bill 2345 concerning “the [creation] of a higher education registration priority for eligible veterans and national guard members” with a low priority.

Vote: 8 - 0 - 0 Action: Passed

Stickney moved the discussion to SB 6088. He suggested that the committee prioritize this. Maute-Gibson said that the WSA has not worked on this bill. Maute-Gibson said that the committee is not allowed to take a stance on a bill that citizens are voting on. Stickney said that this bill would add an expiration date and statement of legislative intent on all new tax preferences. Crowther supported this.

MOTION L-12-W-06 by Stickney

Seconded by Crowther

To support Senate Bill 6088 “Strengthening the review of the legislature's goals for tax preferences by requiring that every new tax preference provide an expiration date and statement of legislative intent” with high priority.

Vote: 8 - 0 - 0 Action: Passed

Barnard regarded SB 6322 “allowing nonprofit institutions recognized by the state of Washington to be eligible to participate in the state need grant program.” Maute-Gibson said that this bill will probably come up next week. Barnard said that she disagreed with the state need grant being potentially given to out-of-state students. Maute-Gibson clarified for Crowther that the tuition at Washington Governors University is much less than Western Washington University’s.

McCardle asked what the student population was. Maute-Gibson said that information was not taken into consideration. Stickney researched to find that roughly 30,000 students are taking classes through the Western Governors University. Crowther said that as much as we oppose it, he wants to support it and allowing the state-need grant to be available to students there. Maute-Gibson spoke in favor of opposing the bill because it acts as a “consumer protection agency.” Stickney said he still wanted to oppose this bill because of the amount of students in universities who are not being serviced by the state-need grant and should be. Barnard agreed with both Stickney and Crowther. Crowther said that he does not believe in denying the state need grant to a student who chose to obtain their education in a different way than he did. McCardle said he would not be comfortable voting in favor of this bill without an amendment regarding out-of-state recipients. Barnard asked for clarification if Western Governors University was a public university. Maute-Gibson explained that a vote last year, which the LAC did not support, made it so. Crowther said that if this bill were for funding of the operation of the program he would be opposed to it, but since it is going directly to students who need funding for their education, he still agreed with the bill. He said that said that the separation of out-of-state students should be worked on in future sessions. Winquist said that she agreed with Crowther, but the bill in its current form including out-of-state students should not be passed in support. McCardle agreed. Olsen said that he believed an online education is sometimes the only way for non-traditional students to access their education. However, he also did not approve of the inclusion of out-of-state students. He stated that in order to get Washington Governor’s out of the public university system, he believe that the committee should stick to their initial stance of last year an oppose this bill. Crowther explained that community colleges are not the same as universities, and just like those students taking classes through Western Governor’s University, he did not want to impose his personal preference on education on students who don’t have the same choice. Barnard reiterated that the committee should re-evaluate if an amendment is made to only involve Washington residents.

MOTION L-12-W-07 by Brown

Seconded by Olsen

Oppose Senate Bill 6322 “allowing nonprofit institutions recognized by the state of Washington to be eligible to participate in the state need grant program.”

Vote: 7 - 1 - 0 Action: Passed

VI. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

A. WSA Statewide Day of Association

Maute-Gibson announced that the WSA Statewide Day of Association is coming up. This event involved students lobbying on behalf of the WSA legislative agenda. She asked if the committee would like to see more participation through our own lobbying efforts or if we should prioritize joining with the WSA on theirs. Stickney supported joining with WSA. McCardle said that it is important to show the consolidation between Washington state public universities. Maute-Gibson stated that anyone wanting to lobby with WSA is more than welcome to go. She also specified that this was a one day event. Crowther clarified that the QRC may not be lobbying anymore because of the movement in the senate vote. Maute-Gibson said that the WSA lobby day would most likely be focused completely on funding higher education with a focus on work study.

X. NEXT MEETING DATE: February 6, 2012 4:00pm VU 567

XI. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED BY ACCLAMATION AT 05:15P.M.