

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

Friday, January 18, 2013

BH104

Present: Patrick Stickney (AS YP Governmental Affairs, Chair), Amy Stavig, Andrew Taylor, Ben Crowther (Legislative Liaison), Joseph Levy, Neil Christenson. *Absent.* Evan Fowler, Graham Marmion, Nathan Haugen, and Tom Durham

Advisor: Kevin Majkut

Secretary: Kaylee Galloway

Guest: Victor Celis and Carly Roberts

MOTIONS

LAC-13-W-05 Support the Council of Presidents' proposal to provide \$225 million in additional funding for higher education. *Passed*

Patrick Stickney, Chair of Legislative Affairs Council, called the meeting to order at 6:21 pm

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ADDITIONS AND CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

IV. PUBLIC FORUM

V. REPORTS

VI. INFORMATION ITEMS

VH. ACTION ITEMS

A. 50/50 by 2020 and the Council of Presidents' Proposal

Stickney said the purpose of this meeting is to talk about 50/50 by 2020. Stickney said that the LAC is an advisory committee. Crowther said that there is broad support for the Council of Presidents' proposal. He said that the difficulty will be with the Senate. He said that everyone seems to support it. Crowther spoke to Melanie Mayock from GPSS who agreed that the main item to focus on is revenue. He said that the goal is to talk about how revenue has decreased over time. He said that liaisons want to talk about how much revenue it would take to get the funding back up. Crowther said that a lot of the \$225 million is going towards a faculty raise. He said that we have to determine if students can afford a raise in tuition in turn for increasing faculty salary by very little. He said that he has not been able to meet with many people, but met with Sen. Mullet and Sen. Buys. He said that a lot of the student groups are going back to their campuses to see where they stand. Stickney said that Eileen Pollet spoke to her father, Rep. Gerry Pollet, who is against the plan because the funding would be allocated more towards University of Washington. Crowther said that Sen. Chase called the \$225million a distortion and that she does not support the plan. He mentioned that most moderates support the plan. He said that liberals are frustrated by it for the same reasons students are and that conservatives are not in favor of new revenue. Crowther said that some individuals claim that revenue has increased, but in reality, revenue has only increased because of the increases in tuition. He said that some legislators are not going to want to find additional funding for higher education and that they are going to want to take from other programs. Christenson wondered if the liberals would eventually vote in favor of the proposal. Crowther said that he did not know as the time because he has not talked to enough people. Taylor said that Western should not worry about Sen. Chase. He said that we should

probably support this proposal because it will be a good floor. Christenson said that LAC should support the plan. Taylor said that it would be to advocate for the passage of \$225 million towards higher education. Roberts noted that Washington Student Association has not taken a stance and asked if any other campuses have taken a stance. Crowther said that Washington State University and University of Washington undergrad have both taken stances in support of the plan. Crowther said that getting a tuition reduction would be monumental. Christenson dittoed. Stickney said that students might be frustrated if students are saying tuition freeze when they could be supporting a tuition reduction. Crowther said that we cannot use an uninformed student as the model because they would not know of the situation. He said that not increasing tuition for two years would be a big victory. Stickney said that a bill is being proposed regarding tuition setting authority and staying with the universities. He referenced bill 1048, section 3. Christenson said that in two years, there will be an election and a better chance of having a friendlier legislature. He said that there might be a senate majority that is "elected". He said that students will have a better chance in two years to advocate for tuition reduction. He said there is no chance of students getting a tuition reduction and therefore it would be a waste of resources. Christenson believed that a tuition freeze would be a tremendous. He said that we don't want to sound like whiney students. Levy said that we do not sound like whiney students when we ask for lower tuition. He said that it would be better to ask for more. Stickney noted the influence and impact of organizing. He said supporting 50/50 by 2020 would not inspire students' passion and that students are the ones who need to call legislators and organize the advocacy efforts. He said that tuition reduction is a strategy to help organize. Stickney worried that 50/50 by 2020 will be negotiated down. He said that we are not connecting with the students emotionally. He said that students can do better than the 50/50 by 2020 proposal. Stavig that she was explaining to someone as that ideally students would get a tuition reduction or a freeze with an additional \$225 million in funding. She said that it would be more plausible to go for the tuition freeze and ask for more money than it would be to ask for tuition reduction. She wondered if Western could advocate for tuition reduction, but then also support the tuition freeze. She said that LAC could support the tuition freeze as a secondary plan, but then say that tuition reduction is ideal. Stickney said that LAC can do that by asking for more now, and not supporting the Council of Presidents' proposal right off the bat. Crowther noted that this issue is not the only battle to fight. He said that students are fighting for multiple issues. He said that he is trying to balance both the Washington Student Association and Western's legislative agenda. He said that liaisons are working on the DREAM Act, Revenue, and Western Governors University accountability (which may need to be back burned). Crowther said that there are so many topics to be advocating for and that Western needs to use his time wisely. Christenson dittoed. Crowther said that it would be better if Western advocated for something that is politically feasible. He said that a tuition freeze would be a celebration. He said that for an uninformed student, they would celebrate for a tuition freeze over a tuition increase. Crowther mentioned that the radical flank effect will not work. He said that this happens when radicals take radical positions. He said that by asking for more, Western taking a risk. Crowther said there is no binding effect with whatever the choice is. Stickney said that organizing is an important effect and that it is related to Crowther down in Olympia. He said that the only way to get people involved is by advocating for something they are passionate for. He said that Western is more likely to get student support if the affordability of higher education and tuition reduction are advocated for. He said that Western should not have to be co-opted by the Council of Presidents and that students shouldn't have to wait for another election. He said that Western has to stop compromising and focus on student needs. Christenson said that students have been asking for tuition reductions for years and have been ignored. He said that students have a chance to stop the upward trend by ensuring tuition freezes. He said that he spoke to another student and she seemed to be in favor of this plan. He said that stopping tuition increases is an essential first step towards reducing the tuition in the long run. He said that LAC should not be the radical flank. He said that individuals should organize and get people to advocate, but that LAC needs to be more moderate. Christenson thought the effect of a united front between the

students and administration on the legislature should not be ignored. He said that this plan is the best that we can do for this year. He said that students need to consider legislative realities. He thought that this is the best possible plan and that LAC should pursue it to save Crowther's time. Stickney said that previously, LAC has supported no cuts. Crowther said that it is not LAC's job to promise students the stars. He said that tuition reduction cannot be promised. He said the agenda is already impressive and that if issues like the DREAM Act do not already motivate students, then he doesn't know what to say. He said that if the agenda was created based on issues to motivate students to get organized, then it would look very different. Crowther said that this is not how LAC approached the legislative agenda. He said that stances taken are based on what is in the best interests of the students, what can get done, and how students can best advocate and use their time and resources wisely. He said the answer to that is pushing the \$225 million proposal. Crowther said Western Votes should be the group that works on organizing, not LAC and not him as a lobbyist. He said that if Western Votes or the students coming down to Olympia for Viking Lobby Day want to take a more radical position, then they can, but he said that it is not his job to try to worry about organizing and that he shouldn't be advocating for something just because it will make organizing easier. Crowther said that he has a problem with being personally tasked with taking the tuition reduction stance because he thought it would delegitimize him and that it is not a good use of this time. He said that it would be best for him to advocate for the \$225 million plan. He said that a tuition freeze has not been brought to the table in decades. He said that pushing more than a tuition freeze is a waste of his time. Christenson worried about asking for too much too soon and getting ignored. He moved to call to question. Stickney said point of information that it is in the LAC charge and charter to empower student participation and civic engagement.

MOTION LAC-13-W-05 by Christenson

Support the Council of Presidents' proposal to provide \$225 million in additional funding for higher education.
Second: Taylor Vote: 3-2-0 Action: Passed

VIII. NEXT MEETING DATE

Monday, January 28, 2013

IX. ADJOURN

The Meeting was adjourned at 7:10pm