TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: President Sabah Randhawa

DATE: October 10, 2019

SUBJECT: Discussion with Senator Emily Randall, Chair of the Senate Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee

PURPOSE: Discussion Item

Purpose of Submittal:

State Senator Emily Randall (D-Bremerton) will be joining the Board for a discussion about the upcoming 2020 legislative session, Western on the Peninsulas, and other policy issues related to higher education.

Background:

Biography

Sen. Emily Randall was elected to the state Senate in November 2018 to represent the 26th legislative district, which encompasses the southern portion of the Kitsap Peninsula, including Bremerton, Port Orchard and Gig Harbor. Senator Randall is the chair of the Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee and the vice chair of the Senate Health & Long Term Care Committee. She also serves on the Senate Transportation Committee.

Senator Randall was born and raised on the Kitsap Peninsula in a hardworking union family. As a community organizer and advocate for health care and education, she is focused on putting the people of the 26th District first. Growing up in Port Orchard, Emily learned the value of education from her parents and her teachers. Her dad worked at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and her mom started a career as a para-educator when Emily was in high school.

As the first in her family to attend a four-year college, she knows how important it is to make the path to higher education more accessible. She is dedicated to using her position on the Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee to prioritize affordable college tuition, apprenticeship and job training programs to prepare students for living-wage jobs at local businesses. During the 2019 legislative session, Senator Randall sponsored SB 5800, which establishes pilot programs at certain public baccalaureates and college districts to assist students experiencing homelessness and students who were in the foster care system when they graduated high school. WWU was selected as one of the pilot institutions.

Since graduating from Wellesley College, Emily has dedicated herself to expanding education opportunities and access to affordable health care for women, children and LGBTQ folks around the country. This cause is personal for her: Emily’s sister Olivia was born with severe developmental and physical disabilities, and it was their family’s access to Medicaid that made it possible for Olivia to live a happy life in their family home for 19 years. Emily believes that all families should have access to the health care they need to keep their families together, and no one should be at risk of
bankruptcy because of their health care needs. She is proud to serve her community in the state Senate and to put people first.

**Strategic Discussion Topics and Questions:**

1. Thank you for your leadership to pass the Workforce Education and Investment Act (HB 2158) during the 2019 Legislative Session. The historic investments in financial aid will significantly improve access to higher education for current and future Western students, as well as students across the state.

2. As chair of the Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee, what are your legislative priorities for higher education during the 2020 session and beyond?

3. As an elected official from the Kitsap Peninsula, what do you view as the primary challenges and opportunities for expanding access to higher education to residents of the Peninsulas?