

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY ITEM SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: President Sabah Randhawa by Steve Swan, V.P. for University Relations and Community Development

DATE: February 10, 2017

SUBJECT: **Olympia Update**

PURPOSE: Discussion Item

Purpose of Submittal:

Becca Kenna-Schenk, Director of Government Relations, will give an update on the 2017 legislative session.

Supporting Information:

State Government Relations

The 2017 Legislative Session began on January 9th and the first several weeks have been busy for Western, with several meetings with legislators about the University's legislative priorities, tracking and testifying on proposed legislation with impact to Western, and committee work sessions. Work sessions have covered topics such as Washington State medical schools, a historical review of state tuition, an overview of a report from the Campus Sexual Violence Prevention Task Force, presentations from colleges and universities about their legislative priorities and an update from the Council of Presidents including a discussion of the sector-wide [Washington Competes agenda](#).

Many WWU students traveled to Olympia for Western Lobby Day during MLK Day on January 16. Western students packed the capitol campus and discussed their priorities in more than 100 meetings with legislators and Governor Inslee during the annual event organized by the Associated Students.

On January 24, President Randhawa joined presidents from other public baccalaureate institutions in the Senate Ways and Means Committee for a work session about higher education budget issues. The occasion marked the first time in recent years where presidents from universities throughout the state jointly participated in a legislative committee, and the meeting highlighted accomplishments from each of the six public baccalaureate institutions.

The 2017 Legislative Session is scheduled to end on April 23rd although 30-Day Special Sessions are likely to be convened to provide the Legislature with sufficient time to develop the state's 2-year biennial budgets. The first legislative budget proposal from the House and Senate will be released in late-March.