TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: President Sabah Randhawa on behalf of Becca Kenna-Schenk, Executive Director of Government Relations

DATE: December 13, 2019

SUBJECT: Legislative Update

PURPOSE: Information Item

Purpose of Submittal:

Summary of WWU’s recent government relations activities.

Supporting Information:

2020 Legislative Session
The 60-day 2020 legislative session is scheduled to begin on January 13, 2020 and end on March 13, 2020. The University’s key priorities include an operating budget request to provide tuition support to students attending Western on the Peninsulas and the passage of HB 1755, which would authorize Western, along with Central Washington University and Eastern Washington University, to offer applied doctorate degrees in education (EdDs). The WWU Office of Government Relations is working to advance these priorities by coordinating meetings between state legislators and President Randhawa and meeting with legislative and Governor’s Office staff.

Elected officials on campus
Several elected officials have visited WWU’s campus this fall. On October 9-10, the Washington State Supreme Court came to WWU as part of the “Traveling Court” program. The Court held oral arguments in the Wilson Library Reading Room, and the nine justices engaged with students, faculty and staff during panel discussions, classroom visits and a luncheon with over 70 WWU students interested in the legal profession. Governor Jay Inslee visited campus in early November to meet with students in an Energy 101 class to discuss climate policy. Congressman Rick Larsen was on campus recently to tour chemistry and engineering labs. Attorney General Bob Ferguson was also on campus recently to speak about the State’s litigation against Trump Administration policies and his office’s consumer protection efforts related to student loan debt. Several state legislators have also been on campus this fall to meet with students, faculty and administrators.

Munro Seminar for Civic Education
The annual Ralph Munro Seminar for Civic Education took place on October 22-23. The theme this year was “Education Policy from K through College.” The seminar featured a keynote presentation entitled “Rehumanizing and Re-professionalizing Teaching” by Dr. Maria Salazar from the University of Denver, as well as panel discussions on the topics of the future of higher education and equity and inclusion in K-12 education.