



WRAP-UP

The Newsletter of the West Virginia Legislature

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Legislative Internships Forge Connections, Build Experiences

BY MALLORY MILES

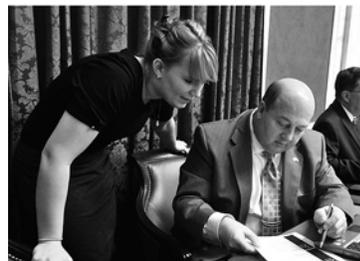
Each day the Capitol is filled with lawmakers and staff but a select group of individuals work behind the scenes. During each session, students from a variety of universities and colleges in West Virginia get an inside look into politics and legislative procedures by working as interns at the Legislature.

The West Virginia Legislature is comprised of 100 delegates and 34 senators elected to act as a voice for their constituents. These legislators meet in formal session for 60 days consecutively during the year. During this time, the Legislature is busier than ever with a continual flow of information, increased citizen participation and daily lawmaking activity.

During regular session, an extra set of hands are needed in all arenas of the Legislature. Interns are used to address the increased volume of activity by assisting members of the Legislature and staff through daily tasks and lawmaking responsibilities.

The West Virginia Legislature Internship Program is comprised of three internship and two fellowship programs.

The Walter Rollins Scholars and Robert W. Burk Jr., Internship programs consist of graduate students that assist lawmakers serving in leadership positions of the Senate and House of Delegates. These programs allow interns to participate in the lawmaking process by researching current issues, preparing for floor deliberations and monitoring legislation from its introduction to implementation.



MARTIN VALENT & MAX HUNT WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

Education Outside the Classroom

Interns shadow legislative officials and staff gaining hands-on experience by partaking in the daily activities of the Legislature.

Frasure-Singleton interns are undergraduate students assigned to work with a senator or delegate for one week during the 60-day regular session. These interns get a crash course in the legislative process by attending committee meetings and public hearings, sitting in on daily floor sessions and aiding members with daily legislative duties.

The Legislative Information Journalism Internship program provides journalism students interested in the field of government relations with professional field experience. Interns uphold a high journalistic responsibility by collaborating with multiple senators and delegates on weekly columns while corresponding with constituents and members of the media. Additionally, journalism interns

actively participate in the publication of the Legislature's weekly newsletter by writing feature articles and bill summaries, as well as, updating information on the legislative Web site.

The Lewis McManus Fellowship is a competitive internship program offered to one second year full-time graduate student pursuing the Master of Public Administration or Political Science through West Virginia University or Marshall University. The program enables interns to gain knowledge of the policy making process while grasping the understanding of what it takes to fulfill a career as a public servant.



In the Senate

As of 4:00 p.m., Wednesday, February 2, 2011, the 22nd day of the 80th Legislature's 1st Regular Session, 399 bills have been introduced in the Senate. Of these, 12 passed the Senate and have been sent to the House for its consideration. To date, one bill has completed legislative action. The bills passed by the Senate were:

Senate Bill 63 would allow the state Board of Pharmacy to recommend to the Legislature on the first day of each regular legislative session, which substances should be added to, deleted, or rescheduled from the schedules of controlled substances. The state Board of Pharmacy would also have the authority between regular legislative sessions, on an emergency basis, to add to or delete from the schedules of controlled substances or reschedule such substances based upon the recommendations and approval of the federal Food and Drug Administration.

Senate Bill 71 would create the misde-

meanor offense for child neglect by a parent, guardian or custodian, which creates a substantial risk of bodily injury.

Senate Bill 80 would create exceptions excusing women who are breast feeding from jury duty upon request, and require reasonable accommodations for breast-feeding juror upon request if she chooses to serve.

Senate Bill 93 would provide that any person under the age of 18 who attempts to escape from the custody of the Division of Juvenile Services would be guilty of a delinquent act and subject to the jurisdiction of the circuit court of the county in which the escape occurred.

Senate Bill 184 would provide that disposition of the remains of a deceased military service member who dies while serving in the United States Armed Forces would be governed by the directives in the United States Department of Defense Record of Emergency Data Form executed by the service member.

Senate Bill 192 would protect consumers from price gouging and unfair pricing practices during and shortly after a state of emergency has been declared.

Senate Bill 200 would change the names of state institutions of higher learning. It would correctly name West Liberty State University as West Liberty University.

Senate Bill 213 would address the issue of cyberbullying by amending and clarifying the applicable laws to create appropriate penalties for the misuse of computers and mobile phones, personal digital assistants and other electronic devices to harass, abuse or threaten other persons. It would include enhanced felony penalties for convictions of third or subsequent offenses.

Senate Bill 216 would expand the definition of "imminent danger to the physical well-being of the child" with regard to child abuse and neglect to include alcohol and substance abuse on the part of one or both parents.

Senate Bill 261 would provide for a special primary and general election to fill a vacancy in the office of Governor. The special primary election would be held on June 20, 2011 and the special general election would be held on October 4, 2011.

Senate Bill 342 would appropriate \$8 million for the purpose of financing the special elections to fill a vacancy in the office of Governor.

A Sampling of Bills Introduced In the Senate

Senate Bill 330 would create "FACTS for Higher Education" by establishing fair, accountable, credible, transparent, and systematic mechanisms to determine classification status and compensation for classified employees in public higher education organizations.

Senate Bill 336 would create the West Virginia Energy Efficient Buildings Program that would concentrate on energy demand-side management in private and public buildings. The bill would also create the West Virginia Energy Efficient Buildings Public Sector Grant Fund and the West Virginia Energy Efficient Buildings Private Sector Loan Revolving Fund and establish the criteria for grants and loans made from those funds.

Senate Bill 362 would increase the excise tax on cigarettes by \$1.00 per pack; The bill would increase the excise tax on all other tobacco products from seven percent of their wholesale prices to 50 percent. The bill would also establish a special revenue account and designates where the additional revenues are to be transferred, with half the proceeds going to certain health related issues and the other half going to the General Revenue Fund.

Senate Bill 364 would provide that unlawful protest activities that disturb or disrupt a funeral or burial service are

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In the House

As of 4:00 p.m., on Wednesday, February 2nd, 2011, the 22nd day of the 80th Legislature's 1st Regular Session, 994 bills have been introduced. Of those, 16 passed this week and have been sent to the Senate for further consideration. The bills passed by the House this week include:

House Bill 2400 would grant licensed real estate appraisers access to commercial or residential review documents obtained for sole purpose of determining comparable market value of property.

House Bill 2451 would preserve to members of a deceased victim's immediate family the opportunity to present an impact statement to a court in misdemeanor matters when death occurs during the commission of a crime.

House Bill 2505 would add synthetic cannabinoids and hallucinogens and stimulants referred to in many ways including "fake cocaine", "synthetic cocaine" and "bath salts" to Schedule 1 of the controlled substance monitoring list.

House Bill 2517 would allow Correctional Industries to directly purchase workers' compensation coverage for inmates rather than having the private employer purchase such coverage. Correctional Industries has the authority under current law to enter into contracts with private employers to manufacture a product and would essentially be a sub-contractor.

House Bill 2520 would amend current law so that this section applies to someone who has not reached the age of 24 at the time the offense was committed which the offender is being sentenced for be assigned to the custody of the Division of Corrections.

House Bill 2522 would establish an independent dispute resolution process for nursing homes. It would establish complaint hearing procedures, an independent dispute resolution process for nursing homes, clarify the informal and formal review process and clarify the judicial review process.

House Bill 2525 would prohibit the practice of social work without a license and also establishes license requirements. The bill further outlines terms, sets disciplinary action, provides composition for the Board of Social Work and other concerns relating to social work.

House Bill 2539 would authorize West Virginia State Police to only use the Marshall University Forensic Science Center as the state designated laboratory for DNA typing, testing and research in support of CODIS and forensic DNA testing.

House Bill 2550 would provide for the adoption and enactment of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. It would remove barriers placed on children of military parents with regards to enrollment, transfer of records, among other hurdles.

House Bill 2551 would make comprehensive revision to the state's trust laws by substantially enacting the Uniform Trust Code and integrating it into existing West Virginia trust statutes.

House Bill 2648 would increase the faculty senate allotment for classroom teachers

and librarians from \$50 to \$100, to be spent on academic materials, supplies or equipment to enhance instruction.

House Bill 2697 would update the record-keeping requirements of municipalities. Municipalities are no longer required to keep records in "well-bound" books.

House Bill 2742 would revoke certain death benefits by divorce. It automatically changes the beneficiary of any death benefit in cases where a person has failed to remove his or her ex-spouse as a beneficiary.

House Bill 2818 would increase the allowable expense under the Crime Victims Award Program that may be paid for the clean up of real property damage by a methamphetamine laboratory from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

House Bill 2845 would create senior resident lifetime hunting, fishing and trapping license that will cost \$25. Those who are 65 before January 1, 2012 are grandfathered in.

House Bill 2853 would provide for a special primary election on May 14th, 2011 and a general election on September 13th, 2011 to fill a vacancy in the office of Governor.

West Virginia Legislature's Web site

The online **West Virginia Code** has been enhanced to show bills that have become law (under the chapter of the code affected) but have yet to be incorporated in the online version. <http://www.legis.state.wv.us/WVCODE/Code.cfm>

Bill Tracking has been improved to allow users the ability to prioritize bills and add personal notes. Users can also now sort and view their bills by multiple criteria. http://www.legis.state.wv.us/billstatus_personalized/persbills_login.cfm

The legislative blog **Today in the Legislature** is a daily synopsis of legislative floor activities, complete with photos and daily committee meeting schedules. http://www.legis.state.wv.us/daily_sum/today.cfm

Visit the **Legislature's Homepage**: <http://www.legis.state.wv.us>

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INTERNSHIP - from Pg. 1

The Judith A. Herndon Fellowship allows undergraduate students to assist a legislator from either the Senate or House of Delegates during the regular session. The program allows participants to have a hands-on experience of the legislative process while developing an understanding of legislative research, bill drafting and the functionality of committees.

Within each program offered at the Legislature, interns gain invaluable experience on the legislative process while enhancing their education and making valued contacts for future job opportunities. Often times, interns in these programs earn an advantage over competitors for choice positions.

When you look inside the walls of the State Capitol you will not only find lob-

byists, lawmakers and staff, but you will also be able to see into the future of West Virginia as the young men and women of these internships aspire to be the next generation of political leaders.

To learn more about the internship opportunities that are offered, visit the Legislature's Web site at www.legis.state.wv.us and click on the educational link. 



WEST VIRGINIA
LEGISLATURE LIVE

Follow all official proceedings, including Floor Sessions and committee meetings, of the House and Senate:

<http://www.legis.state.wv.us/live.cfm>

IN THE SENATE - from Pg. 2

crimes against the peace. The bill would provide misdemeanor criminal penalties.

Senate Bill 367 would require voting for at least five consecutive days during the period of early voting at locations designated in addition to the county courthouse or courthouse annex for early voting.

Senate Bill 372 would specify that a minimum share of coalbed methane severance tax revenue be distributed to producing counties in an amount at least equal to the share received by non-producing counties. The bill would also amend the code to direct the severance tax revenues for coalbed methane producing and nonproducing counties to be distributed to the county economic development authorities in lieu of the infrastructure fund.