

UNDER the DOME



JANUARY 26, 2015

Welcome

Under the Dome is a weekly update on actions and activities of the West Virginia Legislature, provided for West Virginia University faculty and staff by WVU's Office of State, Corporate and Local Relations.

Week one

The first full week of the session saw House and Senate committees getting organized, members getting acquainted with staff and laying the groundwork for the work ahead. Consistent with statements made prior to the session, the first full week saw many bills introduced focusing on the topics of improving the business climate of the state, energy issues, legal reform and education.

Resolutions call for economic analysis

Both the Senate and the House adopted resolutions mandating that any new bill introduced that has the potential to impact the state's economy should be evaluated on that potential impact. Senate Resolution 1 and House Resolution 1 both allow for the presiding officer of each body to request an economic analysis from one of West Virginia's higher education institutions.

House and Senate pass repeal of Alternative and Renewable Energy Portfolio Act

The Energy committees in both the Senate and the House have been elevated to major committee status this year. Both Energy committees went straight to work this week on a bill to repeal West Virginia's Alternative and Renewable Energy Portfolio Act. The House passed HB 2001 and the Senate passed SB 1, making these the first bills to pass out of each body for this legislative session. A compromise version of the legislation is expected to pass the full legislature soon.

WVU alums and Nuru International founder honored

Senate Resolution 10 was offered by Senators Palumbo, Plymale and Beach honoring Preston County native Jake Harriman, founder and CEO of Nuru International. Harriman attended WVU before he joined the United States Naval Academy. He, along with other West Virginia University alumni, were recognized for the help they have given Nuru International and its influential work in the fight against extreme poverty throughout the world. A copy of this resolution can be found at: www.legis.state.wv.us/bill_status/Resolution_History.cfm?year=2015&sessiontype=RS&input4=10&billtype=r&houseorig=s&btype=res.

Topics of interest

Other issues of note this week include joint/several liability, comparative fault and deliberate intent reform.

Coming up next week

WVU will be represented at the annual Higher Education Day and Innovation and Entrepreneurship Days.

For more information about WVU's legislative activities, including photos, facts and resources, visit staterelations.wvu.edu/.

If you are interested in meeting with a legislator or presenting information to a House or Senate committee, please contact Sarah Smith, WVU's associate vice president for state, corporate and local relations. Email: ssmith13@mail.wvu.edu; phone: 304-400-4963.