

The State legislative site is now updated!

Here are the relevant pages to use:
Washington State Legislature (main page)
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/wsladm/default.htm>

Especially relevant pages
Find out who represents you - District Finder - use this page to determine member legislative districts (these are the new redistricted districts)!!!
<http://dfind.leg.wa.gov/dfinder.cfm>

JCPP
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/jcpp>

HOUSE MEMBERS
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/house/hadm/name/htm>

SENATE MEMBERS
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/senate/members/default.htm>

CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/common/maps/congdist.htm>

HOUSE COMMITTEE MEMBERS
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/house/opr/stcommpg.htm>

SENATE COMMITTEE MEMBERS
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/rosters/senate/scommitteemembersbycommittee.html>

BILL INFORMATION
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/wsladm/bills.cfm>

LAWS AND AGENCY RULES
<http://slc.leg.wa.gov/default.htm>

CALENDARS & LEG. MEETING SCHEDULES
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/wsladm.calendar.cfm>

A \$ saving tip from Chapter 21

Costco has some of the lowest prescription drug prices in the United States. Did you know you do NOT have to be a Costco member to fill a prescription at any of their pharmacies? This has been verified with their corporate headquarters. As a general rule, you cannot buy any over-the-counter products at the pharmacy, but that is not uniformly enforced. Costco does not accept Medicaid prescriptions.

Don't be fooled by a Trojan Horse!

What's in a name? When the pharmaceutical industry speaks these days, Americans may not be able to recognize its voice. That's because the industry uses "front groups" to send its message and confuse an unsuspecting public.

So, as the prescription drug war heats up, be careful that you don't draw conclusions based on an organization's name. The United Seniors Association, the Seniors' Coalition and 60 Plus Association all sound as if they would have the interest of senior citizens in mind and speak on their behalf. The stark truth is that the pharmaceutical industry is a formidable financial force behind all three organizations, which are based in Virginia.

Last year, the state Legislature's efforts to pass a prescription drug bill were derailed by a disinformation campaign using groups like these to confuse seniors, lawmakers and advocates. Find out who really is speaking when you hear from an organization whose name might sound good, but you don't recognize.



Retired Public Employees Council of Washington

April 2003 www.rpecwa.org Toll-Free: 1-800-562-6097 Direct: 360-352-8262

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President's Message

from George Masten

Improving pension governance for the benefit of our members is RPEC's number one priority. We have been working closely with the Washington Federation of State Employees, LEOFF 1 retired fire fighters, and the State Patrol both active and retired, following the executive board's direction to either improve or kill SHB 1204, which is the JCPP bill creating a select committee on pension policy. This bill passed the House 74-24 on March 17, despite intense lobbying by our organizations against it. Thank you to those who responded to the legislative alerts and sent messages or made calls. And thanks to the Senior Lobby, which sent a letter supporting our position.

Our executive director, lobbyist and I have held almost 30 meetings with individual legislators. We had commitments from a number of House members from both parties to introduce or support our amendments to improve SHB 1204 by establishing fiduciary responsibility and creating a balanced committee. House leadership dealt swiftly and aggressively with any members who showed signs of supporting us, and no amendments were allowed to be introduced on the floor, nor were any introduced or voted on in the Appropriations Committee.

We have a busy meeting schedule coming up with Senators, who now will consider the fate of the House governance bill. The Senate version, SB 5099, did not come out of the Ways and Means Committee, and is technically dead at this point. On March 25, the Legislative Committee participated in a Lobby Day organized by our coalition, to meet with Senators and educate them on governance. Our goal remains to improve or kill the bill for this session.

I can't overstate the importance of your participation when we issue a legislative alert asking for e-mails or phone messages to legislators. If you don't let lawmakers know this issue is important to you, why should they believe us? We're only as strong as you make us. Please don't let us — and ultimately yourself — down.

Executive Director's Report

from Cassandra de la Rosa

Prescription Drug Costs – Whose bill is better?

RPEC, AARP and the Senior Lobby support E2SHB 1214, as the better bill to make prescription drugs accessible and more affordable for people in Washington. Here is a summary of the two bills as each passed its chamber of origin. Differences between the two must be negotiated before any program goes into effect. Legislative Alerts will be issued on both bills when the timing is appropriate.

Meanwhile, if you hear that Glaxo Smith-Kline, a major drug company, is supporting this bill, it's true. But don't be too quick to pat them on the back. At the same time they're supporting a preferred drug list and purchasing consortium, they're threatening to cut off supplies of their products to Canadian pharmacists who fill prescriptions for Americans.

Executive Director's Report - Cont'd. next page

OUR STRENGTH IS YOUR SECURITY!

