

SENATOR JUDY WARNICK

13TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT - WASHINGTON STATE

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Warnick Bill curbing tax dollars on union activities passes committee

OLYMPIA... Sen. Judy Warnick's legislation to curb the use of public funds for non-public purposes, [Senate Bill 5602](#), moved out of the [Senate Commerce & Labor Committee](#) Wednesday. The bill prohibits public employers from having employment contracts that require public resources to support private activities, such as a collective bargaining representative.

"This bill is about transparency and fairness for the employers, employees and ultimately the public," said [Warnick, R- Moses Lake](#). "It isn't fair that the taxpayers must pay for the salary of a person that does not necessarily have their best interests in mind, especially when unions are already collecting significant dues from members to advance their goals."

A [recent article points](#) out that despite collecting nearly a million dollars in dues annually to fund union activities, the Yakima Education Association requires local taxpayers to fund the majority of the union president's salary who has 100 percent release time to work on union activities.

"The case in Yakima is somewhat unique, although there was a similar issue with the police union in Seattle." Warnick said. "I want to be sure that we create a clear distinction in how public funds are used. The Washington State Constitution addresses the gifting of public funds and I believe the drafters of our constitution were pretty plain in their intent to prohibit this practice.

The bill addresses a specific issue where union representatives are given no work duties, only representing the unions at taxpayer expense, known as "release time."

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