

**SURVEY OF PUBLIC OPINION**  
**E-COMMENTS PILOT PROGRAM**

**Comment on this bill**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **E-COMMENTS PILOT PROGRAM**

This report contains the tabulated results of the 1,639 responses to the e-comments survey that was sent to the public users of the pilot program. The big news is that 98.7% of you said you would like to see the program continued in some form or another.

Reading the individual verbatim responses about what we can do to make improvements to the system has been very enlightening. There are over 900 of these responses in Appendix B and they are extremely useful.

This page seeks to explain the philosophy behind the design of the e-comments program (why there is a need for the system, why not to expect replies by your legislators, why the comments of those posting are not visible to everyone, etc) and to address some of the improvements that you said you'd like to have—some of which are already part of the website but which you may not know about.

#### **#1    Legislator replies to comments**

Many of you want a reply to your comments. Even among the 83% of you who saw the notification that comments left through this system would not get a reply, fully a quarter of you indicated you would like one anyway.

The legislature receives over 50,000 e-mails a year. If you send your comments via an e-mail, someone (the member or Legislative Assistant) has to open the e-mail, see what it is about, decide if a response is expected, prepare a response, and file the e-mail somewhere. We are trying to avoid having to add staff to handle the ever increasing volume of e-mail while making sure your comments reach and are read by your legislators.

The e-comments program was designed to take your comments that didn't require a response and put them in a database that members could pull and read as needed for specific bills. If you really had a bill comment that you wanted a response to, you would still be able to send it by regular e-mail.

In short, we'd like to convert many of the comments you would normally send by e-mail to the e-comments system so they are easy to handle, easy to consolidate by topic and easy to read.

## **#2 Be able to see comments**

Many of you expressed a wish to be able to access and see all or some of the comments others have made. This is a feature that is typical of blogs and the responses typically spiral out of control unless they are moderated. We don't want to have to add staff to moderate the comments. Even if you could see, but not directly respond to the comments, we would like to have your comments uncolored by what someone else has said. This is a communication between you and your legislator. We may add a blog or forum at some future date but not as part of this service.

Some of you indicated a desire to see statistical data (# of pros and cons) on specific bills. While this may be possible, we are not sure what value this would have. This is no means an unbiased scientific survey. It more accurately reflects the passion one side or the other may have about the bill or the amount of participation an organization can muster from their members.

## **#3 Other Issues/Comments**

### **Who actually saw the comments?**

There has been some confusion as to who actually got to see the comments. All the comments could be seen by the legislators and their staff. However, we collected information that identified which legislative district you are in and your comment was flagged with that district number. So even though any member could see any comment, a member could elect to just look at the comments from their own district if they wanted to.

**More awareness of the service-** This is a hard one. We did send out a press release to all the major media outlets and to all the lobbyists and organizations that typically deal with the legislature. If we continue the program we will need to look at what else we can do (maybe public service announcements).

**Easier navigation.** Some of you expressed a wish for easier navigation—a list of bills that are up for a vote, an alert when a new bill is added to a specific topic, an easier way to find bills, and easier way to sign up, etc. We will be looking at all these things if we continue. You should know that many of these features already exist on the web site.

## Alerts

The legislature's website is already capable of sending you alerts when bills on a certain topic are introduced, when bills are scheduled for public hearings and when bills you are interested in are advanced through the legislative process. The **bill tracking system** lets you organize and track the just the bills that are of interest to you, the **GovDelivery system** notifies you of scheduled committee hearings and changes to committee agendas. You can also sign up with this system to receive members' e-newsletters and notification of scheduled town hall meetings. **RSS newsfeeds** provide you notification when the bills you are tracking advance through the legislative process or when new bills are introduced with specific topics. There are tutorials on these services on our web site. Just click the links above.

## Searchability

A number of you indicated you'd like to be able to search for bill by keywords or other means. The legislature's website already allows you to do so. In addition, you can search for bills by topic, by sponsor, by agency requests, and by RCW cross references. There is also a tutorial on how to do this at the following link:

[Searching for Bills](#)

## **Summary of Findings**

The E-Comments Pilot Program ran from January 25, 2013, through the end of the regular session (April 28). During that time we collected 9,881 comments from 5,793 users on 1,090 bills.

Of the 1639 people who responded to the follow-up survey, 98.7% indicated that they want the program to continue, and 78% rated it very valuable or the next highest rating.

The survey did indicate that even among the 83% who understood that they would not be getting a response from the system, about one-quarter indicated that they would have liked a response. It is unclear if they meant just a response that their message was received and read by a member or staff or whether they expected a response by the members as to their positions on the bills in question.

Of those who responded to the survey, about 85% were 40 years of age or older.

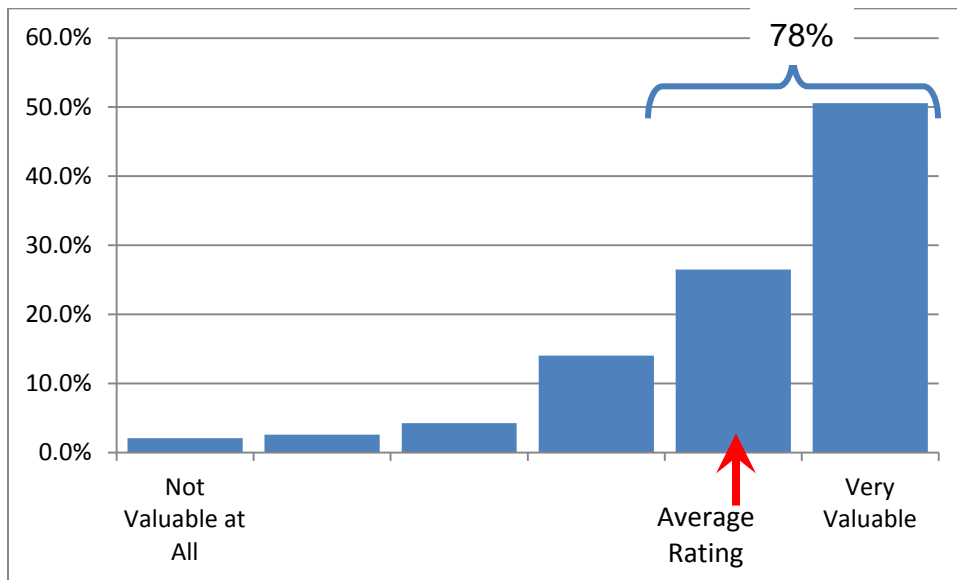
The detailed responses to the survey questions can be found in the following pages.

Do you think the Legislature should continue to pursue a web-based option similar to the e-Comments pilot program for collecting public feedback?

<b>Yes</b>	<b>1,617</b>	<b>98.7%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1.3%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,639</b>	

Overall, how valuable do you think this service is as a way to voice your opinion on current legislation?

<b>Not Valuable at all</b>					<b>Very Valuable</b>
<b>34</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>829</b>
<b>2.1%</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>14.0%</b>	<b>26.5%</b>	<b>50.6%</b>



How did you first find out about the e-Comments feature on our web site?

<b>Saw it while on the website</b>	<b>1035</b>	<b>63.1%</b>
<b>Heard about it from a friend</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>12.8%</b>
<b>Heard about it from advocacy group/organization/employer</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>12.5%</b>
<b>Heard about it in the news</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>2.7%</b>
<b>Someone sent me an E-Mail</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1.7%</b>
<b>From a Legislator</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1.5%</b>
<b>Through Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0.9%</b>
<b>Saw it while surfing the web</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0.8%</b>
<b>Don't Remember</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>4.0%</b>
	<b>1639</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Was it made clear to you that this service was only designed to collect feedback on current legislation and that you would not be receiving a response from your legislator?

<b>Yes</b>	<b>1,374</b>	<b>83.8%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>16.2%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,639</b>	

(Among those stating it was clear that they wouldn't get a response...)

Did you want or expect a response to your comments from your legislator or their staff?

<b>Yes</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>25.7%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>62.0%</b>
<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>12.30%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1374</b>	

Comments submitted were only available to legislative members and their staff. Who do you think should be able to see the comments?

<b>Just legislative members and staff</b>	<b>823</b>	<b>50.2%</b>
<b>Everybody should be able to read all the comments</b>	<b>712</b>	<b>43.4%</b>
<b>Let commenter have option to decide if his/her own comment can be seen</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1.5%</b>
<b>All Should See but with no personal information</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0.8%</b>
<b>Governor as well as Members &amp; Staff</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0.4%</b>
<b>Committees As Well as Leg &amp; Staff</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0.4%</b>
<b>All Should See - but Only Moderated Comments</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0.4%</b>
<b>Don't Know/Care</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1.6%</b>
<b>Other (please specify)*</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1.2%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,639</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*\* See verbatim responses to this question in Appendix A*

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest? (*See verbatim responses in Appendix B*)

<b>Don't Know/No Suggestions</b>	<b>170</b>
<b>Responses From Members</b>	<b>107</b>
Would like a response	37
Some form of feedback	26
Option for a response	22
Expect a response	6
No Canned Response	5
Nice to get a response	5
Other	4
No response expected	2
<b>Like the Service</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>Awareness/Advertising</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Visibility of Comments to Public</b>	<b>87</b>



<b>Functionality</b>	<b>85</b>
Hard to use	16
Sign-in	12
Be able to edit comments	12
Verify User	11
Miscellaneous	10
Higher Word Count	9
Make service more visible	8
User Friendly	7
<b>Other Services</b>	<b>68</b>
Alerts	21
Miscellaneous	19
Status Reports	14
Search Feature	8
Polls	6
<b>Receipt Confirmation</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Value of the Service</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>General Comments</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Which Member Should See Comments</b>	<b>51</b>
Committees	23
Want to be able to chose	8
Who does see the comments	7
All members	7
Sponsor	3
My Members	2
Staff	1
<b>Other Comments About the Service</b>	<b>30</b>

Which category below includes your age?

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<b>Under 18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.13%</b>
<b>18-29</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>4.64%</b>
<b>30-39</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>9.79%</b>
<b>40-49</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>16.50%</b>
<b>50-59</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>30.18%</b>
<b>60 or older</b>	<b>618</b>	<b>38.77%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,594</b>	

# Appendix A

## Verbatim Responses

### Who do you think should be able to see the comments?

#### All Should See

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- Anybody that has an account and given feedback should be able to see the comments.
- Anyone involved
- Contextual. If comments are needed to demonstrate constituents' support, then, sure, let them be widely available. Otherwise, I think they'd be white noise to anyone besides my reps.
- Everybody should be able to read all the comments and they should become a part of the bills record.
- Everybody, but requires log-in and account verified as a "real" person checked against drivers license, voter registration, DOB, etc. No anonymous comments or accounts.
- Everyone - it's part of the public record!!!
- Everyone should be able to read but not reply directly to the comments of others.
- Everyone, and people should be able to comment on comments. More like a forum. I also think, when appropriate, a staff member could respond to or clarify a comment. Open dialog is become a norm in communications. I also think you should have a share function on legislation, like tweet, facebook and linkedin. This would require someone to moderate, maybe a report this comment box toot
- I would like a pro/con summary of e-Comments listed in the official bill reports.
- If not personal then it does not matter
- It would be helpful to get feedback about what the responses are
- It would be nice if comments could be made available to those that are interested.
- It would be nice to see a summary with the number of pro-con from commentators
- It's a public record and should be subject to disclosure
- Legislative members and staff certainly but statistics for all
- Legislators and staff should see the comments, but a depiction of positive and negative results (a graph perhaps) should be publically available.
- Legislators, staff and those who have logged on to comment.
- Legislature and staff during session followed by public access after session
- Our government needs to be more transparent. If we are going to portray this technology as a way for our elected officials to be more connected to the public, then this cannot be a one-way street. the public needs to know if their input is being considered
- People should be able to read comments on legislation before public hearings on them.
- Perhaps a summary of the comments; 'did the legislator follow the will of his constituents?' should be part of the record.
- Possibly other people commenting on the same bill. and legislators
- The availability of comments should be the same as testimony presented during public committee hearings.
- Those who comment on the same bill would be informed by being able to see what others have said about that bill.
- Those who participate might be interested, I would

# Appendix A

## Verbatim Responses

### Who do you think should be able to see the comments?

- All Should See Only Moderated Comments
- Comments reviewed by a moderator should be visible to everyone.
- Everyone as long as the data didn't contain PII.
- Everyone should be able to read all the comments that are written in a civilized manner
- I'm not opposed to everyone seeing them but would not want people commenting on comments like a "thread"
- Only comments without profanity or personal attacks should be available for anyone to read.
- Posted on a Blog and monitored, for all to see

#### **All Should See-No Personal Information**

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- Comments should be available to everyone, but personal identifying information should be redacted to prevent harassment
- Everybody, if the commenting person's name is not shown commenting.
- Everyone but not with personal information included
- Everyone can read comments if identity is kept private
- Everyone minus personal commenter info..no name etc.
- Everyone who take this survey should be able to see comments without identities shown
- Everyone, assuming all comments are anonymous. It should be like comments on a news article
- Everyone, but leaving out personal information of the person sending comments, EXCEPT the legislative staff should be able to see my personal information for response
- Everyone, if anonymous or personal information protected
- If WITHOUT NAMES, then why not everyone?
- Public transparency. But cd keep writers name coded
- The comments can be public. Only the legislators should be able to see who sent the comment.

#### **Committee staff in addition to legislators and their staffs**

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- Comments on legislation should be available to legislatures, staff, and especially as public record comments during committee hearings on proposals.
- Committee staff
- Entire committees
- Everyone including members of relevant committees in both houses
- Members of the committee where the legislation is being heard
- Relevant committee members to the issue being heard
- Specific Committee Members Addressing the Bills

#### **Don't Know/Don't Care**

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- Not Sure
- Don't know

# Appendix A

## Verbatim Responses

### Who do you think should be able to see the comments?

- Don't Know not sure
- Hmm. That's interesting, Ideally it would be great to see all of them, but then it would be open to trolls and nasty comments.
- I am not sure. If it is open to the public, that may be a privacy issue. However, it is important that general public opinion be known as well. We need to do what best allows representatives to represent their constituents.
- I believe my comments were published by the Seattle Times. So this policy wasn't followed in my case. There are pros and cons to both policies, but I think the same policy should be applied to everyone.
- I don't care
- I don't have an opinion
- I don't know. I think it may be most helpful if is just for the legislative staff. But other comments may persuade someone that his or her comment is not on point.
- I don't think it matters. The idea is to communicate the comment to the legislator.
- I really don't care
- IDK; it may be more useful as public comments vs. yet-another-email-form-page but the public option risks becoming a spam/flame vector.
- I'm honestly not sure, but I would lean more towards the legislative members and staff.
- It does not matter to me, I expect no privacy when conversing with government.
- No opinion. I am simply happy to be able to submit comments without writing a full letter.
- Not sure - I don't remember what I said!
- Not sure how to answer this question
- Not sure.
- Not sure. I like the idea of the people knowing what others have to say on an issue. Like a "temperature gauge".
- Not sure...what I really want is honest commentary, NOT the usual canned replies that "I'll keep your thoughts in mind" and you have no idea of where the legislator stands.
- There are benefits to both. anonymous input is best when regulated by public commentary. legislators may be less or more accepting of a persons comment when they know the name of the contributor.
- Unsure
- Unsure on this. Anonymous political speech is vital to free society but transparency is also important. Maybe you should make it optional to the commenter.

#### **Governor in addition to legislators and their staffs**

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- All Legislators, all legislative staff members, Governor Inslee or whoever in 3 yrs from now and the general public.
- Appropriate committee members, Governor
- Governor

# Appendix A

## Verbatim Responses

### Who do you think should be able to see the comments?

- I think it would be useful for the Governor's staff to have access, too, particularly when a bill has budget implications. But primarily, legislative members and staff are key. I would discourage making the comments public as I think it would create a negative tone similar to what is seen on letters to the editor which can promote false information and bigotry.
- I think the Governor and all affected Departments should see the comments.
- Just making sure the governor sees the results, too.

#### **Legislative members, staff, and governor**

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- Members and Staff Only
- All legislative members and staff
- I don't think you need to post them all, but they would need to be easily available under a public records request
- I would leave it to the legislators judgment
- Legislative members and staff only - otherwise it becomes a forum for obnoxious passive-aggressive internet folks attacking one another
- Should be treated as a letter, fax or phone call
- When I inquired about e-comments, I was informed that the comments just went to the bill's primary sponsor. I think it should at least go to all the sponsors of the bill or all legislative members and staff.
- You should allow commentators to choose which committee their comments are forwarded to. For instance, even if my legislators are not on the Ways and Means I may still wish my comments forwarded to them.

#### **Optional-Let Commenter decide**

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- Both should be an option
- Commenters should choose whether comments are public.
- Depends on problem some things need to be private
- Everybody, but at the commenter's discretion (i.e. they have to opt in to having it viewed by everybody instead of legislative members/staff)
- Give a choice
- Have a choice to make it public record or not. you should mention your retention period
- I don't think the comments should be published online and searchable by commenter's name, but I think the collection of comments should be available to the media.
- I guess it depends on your objective. It would probably be monopolized by an annoying few. However if you grouped the results by five categories in percentages for the outcome, and report findings to participants, this may help maintain interest.. I think
- I never understood what this was, or how it was to be used. I think it would be useful for the person commenting to choose who can see the comment, since sometimes it could add to discussion and other times it may include personal information.
- I should have a choice to make my comment available to my legislators and/or everybody.
- I think people should be able to choose whether their comments are public or not

# Appendix A

## Verbatim Responses

### Who do you think should be able to see the comments?

- Leave that choice to the commenter each time.
- Make it optional if you want comments limited to leg members and staff or to everyone. You should also consider when the comments are available to everyone that the commenter's name be optional
- Options for each of the above groups
- People should be able if they make their comments public or private
- People should be able to decide whether or not they want their comments public
- Should be a choice whether to read them or not.
- Should ask per comment.
- Should give a choice to the commenter whether it is public or not.
- Should have option to let everyone see or just leg. depending on issue.
- Should be optional
- This setting should be specified when submitting a comment, with legislators-only as the default.
- Users should be able to optionally make their comments public so everyone can read them
- We should be able to choose if we want more than the legislative members and staff to read comments.
- We should have the option to allow our comments to be made public. If we don't want this, then it is great that only legislators and their staff can read it. Some people, however, want their opinion to be made available for all to read. We should have that option.

#### Other

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- A general pro vs con report would be appreciated
- Anonymous messages tend to be more snarky but I can also see a need for privacy.
- Anyone who can make decisions on the issues
- Automatic feedback would have been nice
- Comments should be available but should not be in such a format that in-fighting and name calling between commentators/constituents is possible. Comments should not be included on the basic comment page, but rather on a separate page. I think public access to comments might bring more people into the process, which would be good.
- Define everybody.
- Either way is fine with me. as long as legislators get them
- I only used it once because I found it could not send comments to legislators from other districts (committee chairs, leadership, etc.)
- I received a call from media asking about my comments. Found that curious.
- I think some comments that are inappropriate should be deleted.
- I think that on certain comments the legislator finds helpful or insightful on both sides of the debates they should respond or their staff with a more "Human" response than a generic feel to notes and letters. Please note I would like to suggest to not use social media as it does more harm than good for anyone's debate.
- I would like capability to cc: others.

## Appendix A

### Verbatim Responses

Who do you think should be able to see the comments?

- Ineffective based on legislature's behavior
- Legislative members and staff as well as any potential partner organizations involved in the particular piece of legislation.
- News media
- Points presented in a comment could bring diverse perspectives, maybe we could learn to see and respect opposite opinions, and perhaps we could built bridges of understanding;but I'm not sure what will be the best form of forum.
- Service is not valuable unless it provides either an option to submit written testimony, or we actually know whether or not legislative members are actually viewing the comments. Doesn't need feedback, but it would be nice to see that "x" legislator viewed
- Since there were no replies i have no idea if my legislator even saw the comments or if only his staff read them.
- The people it involves and effects.



## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

### Responses From Members

#### Would like a response

A response; one that's genuine - not a form. Suggestions of what I can do in the future to increase attention, passing, etc.
A way to get responses would be nice but maybe there are other ways already. I like being able to use several ways to communicate and or collect data.
Ability to get responses back.
After I filled out my comments, I started getting the newsletters from my legislators. ( I filled out the comments feedback two or three times for different issues. So I that's when the legislators' email newsletters started arriving in my inbox. I didn't sign up for their newsletters. I want a thoughtful response or an acknowledgement, not a newsletter from a legislator who couldn't send a response about the issue I commented on in my feedback. It would help to know to whom the feedback comments are being forwarded to at the time they are being submitted. Honestly, I think this service is a good idea, but I don't think legislators change their minds because of feedback. And that's a sad comment about legislators. They do not really represent their constituents. If they did, they would reply back to comments. (I think I left my contact information when I commented. I'm not positive though.) I am a state employee. Thank you.
Commenting without a response from legislators is useless. Even a boilerplate response from a human would be better than no response at all.
Considering that I have heard more requests for my input regarding the e-Comments service than I ever did for the Bills that I commented on (which is to say, that I did not. hear back. at all. regarding the Bills) I'd say that if someone requests a follow-up (which I did) that someone follow up.
Get response from legislators.
Give a response by elected representatives.
Have the Legislators get back to their constituents..
I believe that legislators should attempt to respond to pertinent comments/questions. I did receive feedback from one of my representatives and I valued his response greatly.
I love the idea of easily providing input to the legislature. Receiving a response would greatly improve the program. To have a "one on one" discussion with someone is invaluable. Overall, for citizens to be able to communicate this way is wonderful. Otherwise, how many people would take the time to make a phone call or write a letter. But, without a response, how do they know they are being listened to?
I think it's a good way to provide feedback because it can be done directly from the website. I thought I would be ok not receiving a response, but it turns out that I like knowing that my legislator received my comment, and even more, I like knowing my legislator's opinion. For me, email is probably a better option, but this could be valuable to others.
I think there should be a response to some comments- particularly ones that raise important points or that ask questions. I don't think all comments require a response, but I think it would make people feel more inclined to voice opinions if they felt like they were being heard.
I would hope that this would lead legislators to respond to the feedback they get. I appreciated getting a call from XXXXX on the things he had done. My other legislator and Senator do not respond...We are on opposing sides of most issues, but that does not mean I need to be ignored!

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

I would like representatives to respond to participating constituents with an email expressing the reason for their position on the issues being polled.
I would like to see whom actually reads the data and responses from such individuals.
In writing my e-comment, I was aware I would not be receiving a reply - I just hoped someone would see my comment and reply anyway. Of course, no one replied. It is EXTREMELY difficult to get anyone in our government to listen to what we regular people have to say so I believe the e-comments need to be monitored so that responses could be provided when requested.
It would be nice to get response back from my legislative representative when I use this service. Without a response it feels as if my comments are being ignored. I don't know if that is or isn't the case but it comes across that way. If I was to have written a letter or called my representative I probably would have received a response which I appreciate. In any event I like the convenience of this service as it allows me to voice my opinion pretty easily on topics that I think are important. So I support this program.
I've never contacted a representative until recent times and this method makes it much easier for me. I did get a reply on my email and appreciated it. Just try to make it as user friendly as possible, especially for us older folks that have much experience in the real world.
legislative representatives to respond
Legislators don't have time to respond to all comments during the legislative session, I understand that. But some did respond to me with (probably) prepared statements on relevant positions and I appreciated those. Where a commenter asks specific questions, I believe the legislator should answer that question, as soon as it is possible.
Legislators should provide feedback to questions/comments
Make it interactive, so that representatives fully answer.
Make it known to all registered voters. Release data to media and lobbyists Respond back to commenter from legislators or their staff.
Maybe if I make writing comments to the legislature it might be nice to sometimes get a response. Also: Since I am a strong Democrat and I am represented by a Republican Rep. it would be nice to know how they voted using a simple reply instead of having to contact the Rep.
No suggestions at this time, other than maybe a response from legislator or staff
Non - but again, if legislators have the time and are willing, responses would be great!
Perhaps a bit more interactive with limits.
Replies
Response to comments or questions.
Responses from our representative
responses would certainly be nice!
responses.
With regard to Question 2, I think it is very valuable ASSUMING it is actually read and taken into account by those creating the legislation. In regard to Question 4, I did not EXPECT a response, but would of course love to get one...or follow up question or clarification or whatever. In regard to Question 5, I seriously considered saying that everyone should be able to read them, but that would likely create more of an posting blog with one person responding to another's post and I think it more useful to have each individual provide their input and let the legislators/staffers draw their own conclusions on each posts individual merit.
Works great, but would like a response from the legislators.

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

Would like to receive comment back from legislatures regarding, if any effect that comments made had in their decision for the issue at hand.
Yes to answer number 4 to ensure that the peoples voices are not just heard and disposed of. A way to let the public know that thier comments are listend to what the elected official intends to do in response.

### Some form of feedback

better feedback, direct access to senators.
Definitely would like some feedback of some type
Feedback from committee members considering the bills in which I am writing about, as well as feedback from my own house representatives and state senators.
feedback from my legislators re the initial survey results.
Feedback from the legislator or staff would be an improvement. It should be transparent if electronic comments are weighted or treated differently be legislators and staff compared to comments that are received via e-mail, phone, or letter.
feedback from those the opinions were sent to would be nice....
Feedback! Besides your vote how are we to know you understand our comments/questions/statements to you? I wish to have a dialog PRIOR to you voting. I don't want to feel like I am just part of a poll.
Have a mechanism for legislative staff to compile comments and give feedback to those who have taken the time to comment. Feedback doesn't have to be immediate, but the legislator should have a position on the ligation.
Have comments be accessible to the public, have legislators reply either privately or on a public forum so that we can have an ongoing dialogue with them.
I can't remember enough to give specific input as to "changes", but it should be well promoted to the public, simple to use, not costly to administrate, seen as a valuable source of feedback to Legislators, and if possible some communication sent back to those who use the service. I would not want a new department of state employees set up to run this service.
I did not utilize the service enough to give constructive feedback. Perhaps more outreach about how the service works, and occasional reminders to those registered so they don't forget to utilize service. Perhaps if there was more opportunity for an exchange with legislators/staff, you would get more interest in the service. Without feedback, people are left unaware if their voice was heard or not. This may prompt people to revert back to more direct means of communicating with their legislator.
I do think a collective response could be made to comments which are similar in content so that constituents would know the legislator's opinions on issues.
I suggest to offer a folow up wiith results connected to comments.
I think the comments should be followed up on and citizens should be asked why they commented the way they did. Why are they concerned about specific legislation and what they expect to happen.
I thought this service was terrific, giving people a simple way to comment. If this service is made permanent, the public should be notified. Another thought, if someone comments on legislation, perhaps a return e-mail to commenters on the final decision.
I would have appreciated some feedback from legislators and comments made by other respondants.

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

I would like feedback at the end of the survey on the comments received and how they impacted the legislators decisions.
I would like to have feedback on the issues from my legislators and those on the committee hearing the bill.
I would like to know who received the email, and I would like feedback. Otherwise, it feels as though my comments just disappeared into the ether.
Legislatures feed back would be nice
More opportunity to comment and, of course, the feedback to know if the comments help anyone or are even actually considered.
Perhaps a response could be made if there are many similar comments if individual replies aren't possible. Responses should address the commenter's concerns and not just reasons for the legislator's stance. Care must be taken to prevent "robo" comments generated from a mailing list.
Response, possibly showing legislatures leanings on the subject, and number of email comments received on the general subject.
The service would be improved if Legislators could reply to comments. This could be done in a format common to a forum.
There needs to be a feedback loop of some sort, even if it is only an email back of all the agregate responses. I contact representatives directly for specific issues that I want feedback on, so I am not asking for that.
write in comments & possibly some feed back

### Option for a response

A link to be able to request a response might be nice.
Add a field requesting feedback from legislators, add way to track the progress of the bill through email notification, including committee hearing times.
Although I think answers are not needed sometimes I just though of this and for some of the legislators an answer would be nice if requested as I wonder if some don't even look at their emails but have aides delete those they don't want to hear from on subjects that don't agree with their stance.asking for an answer would be a very nice option if included.
Clarify that it is just an overall survey. Allow comments to go directly to certain legislators. Allow request for reply/response from them.
Found the system was down a couple of times I tried to use it, and had no way to tell who to call to make sure the problem was known. It would be nice to include a "response wanted" option -- several times I needed to send the same message multiple ways to get to both my legislators and to the committee hearing the bill -- which didn't always overlap. I don't think all comments need to be available, but it would be nice to have some sort of summary along the lines of that which is sometimes available on public testimony.
I believe there should be an option for your legislator or the committee chair comment back to you.
I would like an option for feedback
Include a link to leave an extended message to legislators if a reply is desired

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

It would be nice to have the option of having your legislator contact you regarding your comments. There could be a box that you check IF you want to be contacted. Most people would only leave comments, but it is sometimes difficult to communicate directly with your elected officials. This could be a way of getting to discuss (through e-mail) the issues with them, and find out what they are thinking, and let them know what WE are thinking.
Make it available on every bill; add request for response from legislator option. Really appreciated this option this year!
Maybe the option for a response if I choice.
More interactive. Feels like a one way street. I don't expect to receive responses, but I would prefer to know that was an option.
Need space for requesting replies from legislators so we know they are being seen by someone other than just staff.
Offer opportunity to obtain a response from legislator
OPTION (only) to request response from a specific legislator
Perhaps an option to receive a reply if it is requested. Also an option to have a comment available to everyone or just legislators.
Provide option for legislators to respond to comments.
PUBLIC RECORD OF COMMENTS WITHOUT NAMES PUBLISHED, BUT LEGISLATORS CAN CONTACT YOU IF YOU CHOOSE TO ALLOW IT TO BE SHOWN.
Regarding question #4 - sometimes I would appreciate an response, but it is not necessary every time.
Should have option to choose if want a response from legislator or not.
Specific questions where specific feedback is requested/required.
You could provide a check option for those who would like a response to their comments - if it is not checked by default, then it is more likely a person choosing that option really does want feedback.

### Expect a response

1.) This survey should of came sooner. 2.) A synopsis of what I commented on would be good. 3.) I was expecting a response from someone, not a survey. 4.) What good is participating in the e-Comments if I know I'm not going to receive a response. 5.) e-Comments invokes the feeling that it's an easier way ignore people than by email.
Comments should be responded to by legislators and posted as a blog for everyone to see.
Ensure that legislators do respond to the feedback presented. I realize this may get more traffic than traditional channels (postal mail or direct conversation), however that does not negate the importance or validity of the feedback being submitted. It should receive the same due consideration.
If this service is truly used so that our legislators "listen" to the public, then we are owed a response. NOT an automated response where it is obvious legislators are obviously using software that searches for key words and sends an auto-response email. I have had a few personal responses to numerous emails I have actually sent to most of our State's legislators and politicians with minimal response. Some of them just give a generic innocuous response, very disappointing.
Legislators should respond to questions/comments
Mandatory feedback

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

### No Canned Response

Didn't like getting a formulaic response that didn't really apply directly to my question.
I can't be specific because I am not a techie. But I do know that we are in an age of information overload and feedback should be useful and informative on both sides. All of us hate canned replies...what a waste of time. But honest answers that reflect a stance or existing opinion would be helpful. Do we live in an "honest" time frame? Probably not and that is what is discouraging. As constituents, we want to be heard and not waste our time. As legislators, they are overworked with too many bills to consider and cannot spend enough time in research. Maybe you all can research <a href="http://www.consentchronicle.org">www.consentchronicle.org</a> and find a way to make that type of communication work at the state level, unlike their national level???
Sometimes I do get feedback from comments. However, my feeling is that if a legislature/representative is going to send a "canned" response I don't want it. When I feel that is what I'm getting, I just delete. I want a personal response or none at all.
To the program, nothing yet. To the response from legislators I would like a real answer to the questions asked. Not the usual political mumble jumble they ALL seem to answer with. When asked what can I do, tell me, not what they are doing. Thank You
When Representatives did respond, the responses were always generic. I did not see any consideration whatsoever given to my statements.

### Nice to get a response

I did receive a call back, so the service worked for me.
I did receive a response and greatly appreciated the contact from my legislator and update
My legislator's did get back with me. Impressive!
Question #4 was hard to answer correctly, I did not expect a answer but was nice to get contacted. Also If I was to get contacted about a subject it would be nice if you were a little more informed about the bill I was referring to. The service itself was fine Thank you Michael W. Kirby
While I admit I can't recall whether I was to expect a reply back, I did in fact receive a reply on several of my comments from one legislator. The reply was very thorough and it was clear that they and/or their staff had taken the time to consider my comments, research the issues, and provide a response. I do believe it would be helpful to receive information back from the legislator(s).

### Other

A little more clarity on the fact that responses will not be given.
I did receive one email stating that one of my comments was not made public. They gave a reason, but I think that it was incorrect and that it should have been public. I believe it was because they disagreed on my position on the subject. So I thought they were bias by not letting the Legislatives view it.
Implementing response from legislator or staff with clear signature as to who actually read the comment. In other words, if staffers are the only people reading commentary that should be clear. A legislators signature MUST NOT be included if the legislator has not actually read the commentary.

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

Make it clear as to whether individuals should also contact their legislators through other means, or if e-comments are sufficient.

No response expected

I didn't expect a response but got one from my legislator. I love this modern, streamline way of communicating.

I Didn't Expect feedback and I understand how difficult it would be to give it to everybody, but it would be nice.. I feel this is an excellent tool. However, it might inadvertently target a specific demographic and political party. This state has a problem with strongly popularizing the democratic views and we are constantly bombarded with big city ideals. Computerizing anything will only promote that even further. This will need to be adjusted to hear all sides equally and fairly. Us small town folk are tired of cities we have no relationship with changing our way of life without us having a fair chance of defending ourselves.

Like the Service

A very good idea. Anything to reconnect people to government and democracy. Having input helps people understand the process better, because it fosters participation. Good for democracy.

Any improvement of communication that breaks down the barriers to discuss issues with our elected officials would be an improvement.

Anything that actually solicits feedback from the public that is being served is of value. It would alleviate much of the complaining that we are not being heard. There is an epidemic of disconnect between our legislators and their constituents.

Appreciate the opportunity to comment on issues of the day.

By the way, I really did receive a reply from my representative in the State House. I know of no improvements that I can think of. I think that the service is a very good idea.

Clean and simple works, don't make it complicated, just fine as is

Continue

Continue to work at making this tool as easy to find and use as possible. I have encouraged as many people as possible to use this service to help legislators get a clear view of stakeholder views on key issues.

Do this more than once----and especially when there is an additional session involved---since the really "vital" issues tend to be moved to additional sessions

Excellent tool in allowing folks to reach their Legislative Representatives in a quick and efficient manner. Keep up the good work and keep as is.

Finally, my comments will reach ALL legislators, not just MY representatives. This is a wonderful tool so that Legislators receive input from everyone they represent! That can only help them work collaboratively. Keep up the good work!

fine as it is-thank you for providing it

For a first time trial, I think it worked wonderfully.

for my first experience it seemed fine as it is. I was excited to have an opportunity to have my voice heard.

Good idea! Thanks

Good start. Keep the channels open



## Appendix B

### Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

<p>Great method for providing input and so important to have an easy way for our voices to be heard.</p>
<p>I appreciated the simple design and interface. IF the primary goal is to improve communication with constieutients, then this tool serves that purpose. Consider Twitter as another vehicle to open communication channels.</p>
<p>I have only limited experience with this process, but it does seem a step into the 21st century for the State.</p>
<p>I haven't used it enough to give any suggestions. So much better than calling though..</p>
<p>I hope the system can be maintained.</p>
<p>I hope you continue it and allow the comments to be seen by the public</p>
<p>I kind of forgot about it, and wouldn't have known how to get back to it (not sure how I got to it the first time). But I think it's a good thing, and would try to use it again.</p>
<p>I like having the opportunity to express, but do so periodically on my own anyway. If the cost of this service is not great I would like it to continue as the specific questions asked help me to understand current issues better and also help me better understand my legislator.</p>
<p>I like how it is.</p>
<p>I like it the way it works now. Thank you!</p>
<p>I like it!</p>
<p>I like its simplicity.</p>
<p>I like the idea of full disclosure to anyone looking for information on bills and legislation on the website.</p>
<p>I like the service. It's an easy way to express our opinions to our legislators</p>
<p>I like this option as is.</p>
<p>I liked the idea of being able to submit my comments to my legislative representatives and hope that you will continue to allow us to do that. I want to be sure that they are read.</p>
<p>I really want this feature returned to the site. At the beginning of the special session I looked for the comment section and was let down that it was gone. This is a great feature to let my reps know what I think. If I want a response from them on an issue I can email them personally.</p>
<p>I think it perfect the way it is.</p>
<p>I think it works fine the way it is.</p>
<p>I think it works fine, as is.</p>
<p>I think it works pretty well as it stands.</p>
<p>I think the service was helpful and the directions for its use clear. It's an easy way to communicate.</p>
<p>I think this is a great way to express our opinions and have connection with our Legislators. I have heard back from my Legislator but I do not remember if there was anything that said that I would or wouldn't. There has to be a peaceful way to get voices heard...I think this is a great start.</p>
<p>I thought it was a good service. Helped me be more informed</p>
<p>i thought it was a great way to help get more citizens involved</p>
<p>I thought it was excellent.</p>
<p>I thought it was great in its current form.</p>
<p>I thought it was very easy to use and straight-forward. Being able to express your reasoning behind being in favor or opposed to a measure is great.</p>
<p>I thought it worked fine.</p>



## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

I thought it worked very well, very user friendly. It was a very welcomed opportunity to comment on pending legislation. I hope it is continued
I used the sight only once and found it user friendly. There is no changes to recommend at this time.
I was delighted to see it, and to use it. Thank you!!! Participatory democracy - what a concept!
I was disappointed to learn that after I had signed up for the program, that it was in fact not operational and was only a test. I hope you launch it as soon as possible. I would enjoy participating in the future. I think it is a good idea.
IMHO, this system is absolutely PERFECT. NO changes or improvements are needed, so please do not "fix" anything because it is not broken. ;o) Also, THANK YOU for providing this quick and easy way for We the People to communicate with our legislators, even though (sadly) they do not agree with our views. ;+(
It has been some time since I have used the service on the website. I remember it being pretty decent for a "pilot". Without having the feature fresh in my memory making suggestions for its improvement may not be entirely accurate. It is a good idea all the same. Keep up the good work!
It is fine the way it is, taking into account my previous comments.
It seemed fine and I can't think of anything that would improve it.
It seemed like a pretty easy process. I felt more compelled to offer my comments via this avenue.
It seems to be working just fine the way it is...
It was a great start.
It was a great way for me to communicate with my reps. I was excited that it was so convenient and easy to do. Our elected officials do not hear from a large part of the population because of the inconvenience of doing so. This could change that.
It was my first experience and I was pleased with the way it was.
It worked well--I appreciate the ease of use to make comments and I hope it's also useful to the legislators.
It worries me that government could abuse this in the future. Nothing should ever replace direct verbal comments, but this should remain available as an option for those that work during the day.
It's a great program keep it going! (I could only answer the previous page: I knew that only my legislator & staff could read my comments and think it should be that way.)
Just keep it!! It was really great to be able to comment on bills this way.
Just keep the lines of communication open.
keep going, more ideas will come
Keep it focused on comments; don't let politicians start using it for campaigning or "educating."
Keep it going
keep it going - it's difficult for folks to go to olympia and give direct feedback - things like this are a positive direction for us.
Keep the communication going forward!! I hope this helps the process and gets the opinions of more voters: not just a few who work the system.
Keep the site user friendly.
Looking good so far but keep the software up to date and easily accessible no matter what search engine someone might be using
looks good as is.
Much better than snail mail.

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

No changes needed. It was easy to use and a quick way to voice your opinion on certain bills in the legislature.
No changes. The site was easy to navigate.
No suggestions. I liked it and thought it was easy to use.
None - the service was very easy to use, and I think it's an efficient way for people to log their concerns.
None at this time. I'm grateful just to be able to easily voice my opinion on legislative issues.
None that I can think of. The site is pretty awesome.
None, it was easy to use.
None, it was quite satisfactory
None, you're off to a good start.
none. I appreciate this service and also the fact that my legislators are VERY responsive when I write directly to them.
None. I thought it was great.
none. it was easy enough.
None. It was very convenient.
None. it worked well and I'm grateful for the ease of feedback.
Nothing comes to mind. I found it easy to use and preferred it over the legislative hotline.
nothing. it was easy to use and user-friendly.
Nothing. This is a nice feature.
Please continue this service. It is a valuable way for citizens to be heard on legislation being considered.
Please keep it!
Right now, I can't think of anything. I thought it was great that I could make one set of comments and they went to everyone involved, rather than me having to send a separate email to each and every legislator as I've had to do in the past.
seemed pretty useful the way it was...user-friendly...keep it that way for older folks who may not be too tech-savvy! Thank you.
Seemed to work fine...easy to follow...apparently my comments were viewed.
Seemed to work just fine.
Seems fine as it is!
The only change I would make is to make it permanent. The only caveat would be that it is like feedback. Only the ones who are passionate about a certain issue will respond.
This is an excellent way of relaying comments and suggestions in a quick, concise format.
This is an excellent and efficient way to get opinions from registered voters to the elected officials and should be expanded and utilized to its fullest.
this is my 1st survey on this site, so I'm really not up on all the in 's and out's of the survey business. But I think any feedback that gets to a legislator is a good thing.
This is one easy way to make my concerns/support known.
very easy to use thank you
Worked great
Works great the way it is. Easy to use.

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

### Awareness/Advertising

advertise it more
advertise it more - make it more available!
Advertise that it exists.
AWARENESS
Better public exposure to the service. I found it by accident. Let people know its there.
Broader availability notices on any of the State of Washington Government web pages.
Contact public earlier in the legislative season.
Continuance. And publication of the availability of the service.
Create more visibility of the availability.
Do whatever is necessary to promote this throughout the entire state and encourage (with incentives, perhaps)
Easier access and more advertising for this option.
Email reminders that the service is available.
Expand it immediately to include as many voters (of all political parties and independent voters) as possible. This will require better advertising.
expand to be comprehensive and more solicitous of the public....we need greater transparency of all bills and more input not simply leave it to legislators
Facebook reaches so many, why not make this known there as well.
Find ways to let more of the public know about it.
Get on facebook
Get the word out. If you really want to know what your constituents think you need to do everything you can to make sure that everyone knows about this option. And then, of course, you need to consider the feedback that you receive when you make your decisions. You are elected to represent us - tools such as this help you to know how we feel. I hope that is important to you.
Give it more publicity. I don't recall seeing it mentioned as an option for communication more than once.
Greater publicity
higher public awareness of this service, including being promoted by lawmakers.
I can't remember enough to give specific input as to "changes", but it should be well promoted to the public, simple to use, not costly to administrate, seen as a valuable source of feedback to Legislators, and if possible some communication sent back to those who use the service. I would not want a new department of state employees set up to run this service.
I did not utilize the service enough to give constructive feedback. Perhaps more outreach about how the service works, and occasional reminders to those registered so they don't forget to utilize service. Perhaps if there was more opportunity for an exchange with legislators/staff, you would get more interest in the service. Without feedback, people are left unaware if their voice was heard or not. This may prompt people to revert back to more direct means of communicating with their legislator.

## Appendix B

### Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

I don't recall the specific actions required to provide comments through the service, but I don't remember it being cumbersome. I would recommend promoting it in emails/newsletters from legislators and in other forums such as public meetings and the voter's guide.
I don't think many people know about it...
I forgot all about it so it obviously needs more promotion.
I greatly appreciate the ability to comment on current legislation, especially bills that affect agriculture. This is a valuable tool for the citizens of Washington State, and I applaud the legislature for providing this service, and the ability to view the voting through the provided video. My only suggestion is that it would be beneficial to perhaps provide public service announcements throughout the state to inform more people about the service. Thank You Very Much, Jeff Upton
I like it the way it is. Just increase public awareness of it. Also, I worry that the average person does not have the knowledge and experience required to find relevant bills on the website. If people can't find the bills, they can't comment on them. I know there are already sections of the website intended to educate people precisely so they can become more involved, but those are too hard to find! You really can make this easier and less intimidating for people who don't remember their high school Civics class.
I only found it by accident. It needs to be more visible. I would like a simple word/subject search to find what I am looking for.
I promoted it to the organization I work for. It should be promoted widely to the public.
I see no need for changes in this service. The only thing I can suggest is to try and get the word out to more people that this service is available. I just happened to be talking to a friend about a certain bill and he mentioned it to me.
I think people should be made more aware of this feature, and also we would like to know how these comments help the legislators and how these comments are being utilized.
I would like to see this service publicized more, along with more publicity about how citizens can view information about bills currently before the legislature.
I'd completely forgotten about it, so having some reminders of some sort might be good, or somehow raising public awareness of the feature. I think it could be a very valuable tool for getting people more interested in the specific issues that might affect them. Some form of response could be good, perhaps providing a space for legislators to respond to/acknowledge comments.
In my honest Opinion, I think the concept of making it easier for the average Washington State Voter to have an easier access to legislation removing that 3rd wall is a good idea as I do feel that the Voter and the Legislation, Mayors, Governors, Just seem like they are too distant or uncaring to anyone that isn't inside Seattle. I do think giving folks in Eastern Washington and encouraging this would bring that State separation into a full co-operation. I get the same treatment as I live here in the Hood Canal area and I just feel that my opinion or many others opinions never gets heard. So if all at best is to simply employ this idea. Send out a flyer to every person in the state and our people over the ocean over the mountains and under the ocean, "Submariners, Military, Pilots, and Shipping" a Chance to be more of a cog in our society by encouragement of sending in opinions of state bills and potential laws and taxes. Further more broadening our states co-operation amongst the citizens outside of Seattle-Tacoma and the citizen elect. So just to cut the reading. *More e-comment encouragement via mail to physical addresses and schools. *More encouraged state voting and comments amongst service members and citizens abroad.
Just advertise its existence more widely.

## Appendix B

### Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

Just make it more public. Most of us love being able to "connect" on bills that we feel linked to in some way.
Just more publicity about it -- not many people seem to know about it in our rural area.
Just publicize it more.
Let everyone know they can do this! Look for more input and use it.
Let the public know through radio or TV ads.
long gap from first use to this q'aire. I kinda forgot about the experience. Maybe there should be more push to constituents (from legislators mostly) to comment on bills.
Make it available for more people. Bring more interest for people to participate
Make it known to all registered voters. Release data to media and lobbyists Respond back to commenter from legislators or their staff.
Make it more apparent that the e-Comments is available to the public.
Make it more obvious and encourage legislators to advertise it prominently so that participation is increased.
Make it more well known and used.
Make it more widely known
Make the service easier to find and share with others using email and social media
Make this service better known to more people, please!
Market this option extensively!
Marketing
Maybe advertise it more broadly, so more people know about it.
more advertising of the e-comment system
More advertising; I heard about it from my parents
More emphasis on outreach and education about this tool -- especially to marginalized populations. Think partnerships with public libraries, schools, churches, other client service providers, private businesses, coffee shops,, etc. Public engagement is critical to the democratic process -- but folks need to know the tool is available, and assured that it is anonymous.
More media /news references that the service exists and continues viable.
More people need to know about this option. Maybe it is noted in the Home page for the WA legislators, maybe a radio campaign or in the election voters pamphlet
More people should know about it.
More public awareness of how easy it is. Give the public some information as to how legislators give weight to comments and responses.
More publicity
More publicity to encourage more participation.
More publicity would be good. Get the word out that this is available.
More advertisement. For instance, the news outlets who report on legislative items should let people know about this tool. It can be a powerful tool if managed properly.
Much higher public visibility, especially in the lower end demographics so an equal voice could be heard. Having comments visible on each article would allow one to see things through others' eyes, as well as possibly highlight angles not considered in the initial review.

## Appendix B

### Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

Needs to be better known.
None, it was pretty functional to me. Maybe publicize it a little more next session.
Promote it ...it's not very widely known
Publicize it better (more).
publicize it more so more people know about it.
Publicize it more with PSAs or other public ways information is disseminated
Publicize its availability more broadly
Publicize the fact that folks can now make use of the e-Comment feature on the Internet. If I hadn't been forwarded the direct link from a friend, I would never have known that the e-Comment tool even existed, let alone it being a convenient method for me to send a pertinent message to my legislator on topical issues that are of great concern to me.
Publicize this feature aggressively. It's a lot easier than calling the legislative hot line, and I think many more people would use this online option.
Publish the position of legislators More publicity, TV and radio ads promoting site Display all comments or at least a yea or nae count
put it in pamphlets giving govt officials info publicity
Put link to it on legislature home page. Make sure it's existence is well advertised.
Send this web site to all registered voters so they will all know its available.
Shoot for an approach to attract younger voters. This appeal is extremely important to engage this age group. The rest of the age groups are not as inclined to use.
Some kind of reminder that the service exists. i forget about it and forget to use it.
Some way to make it better known to people so they can participate.
spread the word about it
The ability to use the service should be available in more places. It is frustrating to be in the middle of reviewing a bill and then discover that I want to make a comment only to discover that I have to back out of where I am in order to find the comment button.
The program needs more coverage, it was my understanding the Leg were not really understanding how to use the program
The service needs more publicity.
This website made it quick and convenient for my voice to be heard. I would like to see it continued next year. More people need to know about the website and I would suggest marketing the service to the public or even have politicians advertise it on their television and print ads.
Very few people are aware of e-comments and should be publicly tell Washington voters about it's existence.
Find a way to let people know this option is available - many more would likely use it.

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

### Visibility of Comments to the Public

[See All Comments](#)

Allow all to have free access to the results. This would stimulate the debate among constituents and allow us to see if the legislature is following what the majority want.
Allow everyone to read the comments.
Allow people to read other comments and make multiple comments on the bill.
Authors of comments should not be able to hide their identities (real name, city). One of the reasons comment boards at newspapers and other websites are so nasty is that people can spew filth behind a veil of secrecy. Comments on public policy and legislation should be public so folks are held accountable for their statements.
Being able to see other comments might be helpful.
Compile the comments and send to respondents
Everyone should be able to see it. My comment I'm sure was never read because I was not in support of socialism.
Full public disclosure of comments.
Have a web archive/forum of the messages.
Have comments be accessible to the public, have legislators reply either privately or on a public forum so that we can have an ongoing dialogue with them.
Having all feedback comments posted on the State's web page containing the link to the legislation.
I feel we should have COMPLETE transparency within our government so ALL opinions of the people, by the people, and for the people, should be available to the people.
I like it. I would make the comments public, but I would make it so you don't see the other comments until you have commented, and only allow a single comment. This would prevent a back-and-forth in the comment section from derailing the intent.
I think that all comments should be available to the public and legislators. Legislators must be held accountable to the voters that elect them, so we need to have transparency in the governing of our state. Regardless of party lines, all votes should be public.
I think this is a good idea to put public comments about bills on the legislative site. Changes I would suggest would be to make the comments publicly available. It could be somewhat of a forum for people to give their opinions about legislation.
I would like be able to see all comments on a legislation. However, if these comments are made public, I would hope that they could be made anonymously or otherwise without exposing any personal information. I would not use an e-comment system that publicly disclosed my identity in any way.
I would like to see what the legislatures opinions are and what the other comments that have been submitted are.
Improve ease of use. It should be as simple as commenting on an article on MSNBC or CNN. You should be able to search for bills and post your comments to them for everyone to see, anonymously of course

## Appendix B

### Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

It would be nice to see why this idea came to fruition? If it is meant to be a tool used by legislative staff to gauge support for a bill--comments should be available to the general public--I believe that many of us are not quite sure how legislators make their decisions and gauging that support from the public would be helpful.
Just the one to allow anyone to see comments. This is a valuable service.
Let everyone read the comments. Feedback would be a nice touch, Just to know that someone read your comment. I know that may not be practical with the number of comments received at times.
Make all comments available to everyone, except I feel uneasy with the whole world knowing my address -- can I simply be Ann Hurst from Kenmore?
Make all comments readable by anyone
Make all comments/commentors available for view.
make comments available to everyone, keep it all open so there would be no covering up of what is said. Also it would be nice for lawmakers to say why they would or would not take comments to make good changes to what laws they were considering. After all, they are supposedly working for us, even though most of them don't think so.
Make comments available to see.
Make comments for each bill visible to all website visitors. Presentation of all comments submitted will enable participants to understand views of all stakeholders affected and enable more articulate assessment of issues.
Make it a Blog I want to see if others are commenting
Make it known to all registered voters. Release data to media and lobbyists Respond back to commenter from legislators or their staff.
Make it more like a wiki where everyone can see all comments.
Make it totally transparent
Make sure that the program is TRANSPARENT - and NOT Obama's definition of transparent.
Make the responses (stripped of personal information) available and searchable by the general public.
Make them public record, and encourage legislators to respond to constituents.
more detail
More transparency, and more recognition of comments (reasonable, although all should be visible) via response or public discussion for those that truly merit them. That may sound pie-in-the-sky, but with appropriately educated individuals (social media savvy) scanning and tasked with responding to comments should be a fairly straightforward exercise.
open up the comments to public view
Opening the comments to public view.
people who make the time to comment want to be able to read other comments, and to have some kind of response, even a general one geared to "the public." public comment should always be available for the public's perusal!
post all comments received
Provide collective feedback and make suggestions, comments available for public viewing, and advertise!
Simply, allowing everyone to see the comments and any relevant summaries.



## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

Streamline the look and feel of the comment platform. Currently the "feel" is a little rushed. Second - for the purpose of transparency alone, all comments should be public.
Too many things disappear into cyberspace without any expectation of performance. The current system is nothing more than a feel good effort on the part of the legislature to the submitter, presuming the comment will be even read. That however is hollow. If the commenter never receives acknowledgement, then how do they even know the message was read? It further alienates the commenter by not allowing them to know if others have similar concerns. Or if the only ones the legislators are listening to are high priced paid lobbyists. This gives the commenter a false sense that comments sent through e-Commerce will be viewed and considered equal to testifying at a hearing. That simple fallacy stifles real public input and further allows only those groups with money access to our legislators. I indicated the program should be continued; and that it has no value as implemented. If you really intend to use this program effectively, the public needs to know the comments are important enough to warrant acknowledgement, response and openness. Otherwise it is a waste of time and resources and the false sense of involvement should be discontinued post haste. As implemented, I could never rely on this system as a replacement for the fact that in order to make my voice heard I still need to miss work and take the day off to travel to Olympia and hope to get three minutes to have my voice heard in a hearing.
Transparency. Make all the comments public.
Transparency-let us know what the legislators are seeing, too!
Would like to see other comments from other people. Would also like to see which legislatures sponsored the amendment. Would like to see this program expanded to all areas.

### Show Summaries/Statistics

1.) This survey should of came sooner. 2.) A synopsis of what I commented on would be good. 3.) I was expecting a response from someone, not a survey. 4.) What good is participating in the e-Comments if I know I'm not going to receive a response. 5.) e-Comments invokes the feeling that it's an easier way ignore people than by email.
A basic accompanying poll describing "for" or "against" a measure or bill would be helpful for assessment.
A counter that lets me know how many other people have commented on that particular bill.
A record should be kept of which reps read what comments and then published. That will speak volumes as to the usefulness of this program.
A report after session with public support or non-support of bills through the e-comment would be informative.
A summary of support or non-support comments.
An indicator of the trend of public opinion on legislation would be interesting.
at some point a report of the number of responses and categorized count of pro vs con would be helpful in rating by the public of whether the elected officials are actually listening.
category: level of support or opposition to legislation; why; alternatives - specifics
Displaying a graphic showing the percentage of comments for or against the bills.

## Appendix B

### Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

I really can't see much either way. seems that my representatives listen and have responded and contacted me, Senator XXX on the other hand looks at any type of comments as an attack. I would like to see positive and negative numbers on bills that are about to be voted on. Hold some of these people accountable to their voters.
I would like to have a way to find out if the legislators see or pay attention to the voices heard in this manner. It would be nice to have a graph or other output to visualize the resulting numbers of comments for and against.
I would like to see a report giving the numbers of comments received and whether they are either for or against the legislation and how the vote went.
I would like to see polls on the current bills. I would to see the public view on the proposed bill.
I'd like to know the exact number of people who submitted for or against any particular issue.
interesting to eesme sort of data as to te trends o te feedback that is received.
It would be interesting to see a categorization of the comments and maybe a summary posted.
It would be interesting to see how many emails a person recieved and what subjects they were on. Just a thought
It would be nice to know what the public consensus is on an issue (i.e. what percentage of people support or oppose a bill) and then I could use that information to judge the elected official based on their final vote on an issue.
Like it a lot. Helps voters feel like they have a voice, but with the comments private hopefully keeps them civil. I would like to see at least a running total of comments and whether they were for or against, if not the comments themselves. All public comments could lead to a popularity contest rather than constructive comments.
Maybe some tabulation and publication of results
Perhaps a summary of trends in comments. Again, back to the idea of taking the temperature of the people reading and commenting on an issue. It is nice to know what trends are out there (being communicated to our legislators). It also keeps our elected legislators in an accountability setting. We would have another layer of assurance that our legislators are truly following the interests of their constituents. The comment trends is another aid/tool.
Provide For or Against responses for all bills in the legislature and provide statistical information to the public re: public consensus.
There could be a feedback after we type in our comments on how many have submitted comments and how many were in support of or against the bill.
There should be more sharing of information.
To actually let the feedback be known...perhaps polls percentages to show what constituents are actually feeling about bills.
transparency. I expected to be able to see results of survey, automated ok, not efficient or necessary to have individualized personal response of staff.
Updating those who commented on what the results were.
Would be interested in some sort of feedback mechanism
Would be nice to see feedback, maybe with the Top 3 Complaints in category.
would like to know how many approved or disapproved of different bills

## Appendix B

### Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

#### Don't Show Comments

I can't think of anything. Making comments public would turn into a partisan posting fest that attracts the worst instincts, I believe. There are plenty of other places for those kinds of commenters to post. I like that this is a focused tool for legislators and their staff.

I only used the service once but I think it's a valuable tool. I would not make the comments available to everyone because that will only fuel the people who love to write extreme comments and trash others' comments and viewpoints. The anonymity of the web encourages that. Keeping the feedback to just the legislators and staff seems like the most useful way to gather it.

Service is good but I have a concern over abuse which is why I would not like the comments public otherwise you get people who only want attention and are not at all concerned about voicing their opinion

The concern with making e comments publicly visible is the same concern with any commentary section to a journal article or other public forum, and that is that the quality of comments will vary widely and comments could become rancorous even among people who are posting them, so perhaps I am wrong about making comments visible by everyone. Otherwise the system is quite user friendly and gives citizen's a sense of control they would not otherwise have.

With regard to Question 2, I think it is very valuable ASSUMING it is actually read and taken into account by those creating the legislation. In regard to Question 4, I did not EXPECT a response, but would of course love to get one...or follow up question or clarification or whatever. In regard to Question 5, I seriously considered saying that everyone should be able to read them, but that would likely create more of an posting blog with one person responding to another's post and I think it more useful to have each individual provide their input and let the legislators/staffers draw their own conclusions on each posts individual merit.

#### Update Frequency

More real time feedback

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

While the leg.wa.gov site did indicate the eComments program was a pilot program, neither staff or the website specifically warn/alter citizens that comments would only be distributed "every few weeks" or whenever IT staff felt they had enough time and/or comments. I promoted and relied on the eComments program extensively to citizens during our attempt to educate WA State Legislators and their staff members on both HB 1525 and SB 5118. I discovered through a legislative aide/staff mbr that comments were emailed every few weeks. State employees working on this pilot program know the importance of disclaimers and distributing information on a timely manner. The comments sent through this pilot program were crucial and we (the general public) were led to believe this "new and improved" method of "getting your voice heard" was the best and most efficient method of getting information to the legislators as quickly and as assuredly as the regular emails. As many of you well now, I worked very very hard to educate legislators and the general public on the importance of getting information, comments and opinions to their legislative representatives as quickly as possible. The comments should have been immediately forwarded to the legislators and/their staff immediately. Washington State Legislators are a group of 2 yr and 4 year elected "representatives" of the people have the power to make and change laws that affect our everyday lives and the remainder of our lives. For IT staff to have a ho-humm, bummer attitude about the frequency and reliability of getting vital information to legislators was and is unacceptable. Great concept, program failed citizens miserably this legislative session. Lori Jeske

With regard to frequency: much more often-perhaps once per week or once every other week or as knowledge of upcoming voting in the legislature is revealed!!!

### Make optional

Please see my response to question number 5. I believe that we should have the option to have our comments made public. The default should be private (only legislators and their staff), but we should be able to click a button to make our comments or support public.

### Functionality

#### Hard to use

Easier navigation; simplified process...
Easier to know case numbers.
hard to recall, i used the site weeks ago. but needed a staff person for help and she was great.
Improve ease of use. It should be as simple as commenting on an article on MSNBC or CNN. You should be able to search for bills and post your comments to them for everyone to see, anonymously of course
IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN A LOT EASIER! It would have been helpful to have a LINK connected to the bills currently being voted on and soon to be. It was VERY difficult to find the UPCOMING list of bills and then have ability to make comments. Typing a word or topic in the 'search' bar should have been more direct. It should NOT have been that difficult for this college grad to find what I needed to know and then post my thoughts and opions. Make it more simple. KISS!
It's been awhile since I used it but I had difficulty with it early on with some technical aspect. Sorry to be so vague, but first use was a pain.
Make it even more user friendly

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

Not sure. Easier navigation. Maybe auto alert wen new bills are written that can be activated by the user by each topic
Should be easier to use, easier to find information related to specific bills, easier to find on the web.
simplify
The form was confusing. Hope it doesn't cost too much.
The site is very cumbersome to use. It wasn't at all clear to me what I was commenting on, or who would read the comments. Also, I couldn't tell if my comments were anonymous or my name would be logged/displayed. While I have no problem with legislators and their staff seeing my name, I do object to the general public associating my comments and my name. I do not want to be hassled by someone who disagrees with me and looks up my address or phone number on the internet.
The web site was not easy to use. Spend time, money and energy making it as easy as possible to get the publics opinions.
There was a glitch getting registered. Wrote a few comments that didn't get through. Called and talked with a lady to check. She got me connected. Was able to make one comment before closed....
There were just too many bills to look at. I think there were like 60 pages! So I went through and started commenting, but I couldn't figure out how to bring up bills by category or any other way than reading through all of them. I wonder if it's possible to narrow it down to just bills that make it through committee...or some way to limit the list.
BIGGER TARGETS, to accommodate coordination deficits of people with disabilities would be helpful.

### Sign-in

Allow it to remember who your legislative reps are - maybe it already does that. Send you optional updates on the status of the leguslation.
As I recall, the login was difficult, so iron out those bugs. A quick reference list of all the bills I've commented on would be great for followup. I actually tried to go back and comment on the same bill a month later, and the system let me get all the way through before giving me an error. Wasted time, frustration. I love this idea so much, and hope you'll pursue it. Leaving comments is the way that many of us are now trained to interact with information. This system centralizes comments about particular legislation and is very valuable. Keep it up!
I believe e-Comments required a password which, of course, I promptly forgot. So I phoned legislative staff who suggested I phone a woman in California to retrieve it. I spoke to the e-Comments contact on the phone and she sent me an email. It'd be good to have an electronic system in place for password retrieval.
I found it a bit difficult to use. By the time I wanted to use it a second time I had forgotten the password, etc. It could be more user friendly.
It needs to work properly instead of telling you that your comments won't be submitted to legislators. It asks for personal information and repeated submissions.
make it easier to comment without having to register, some people like to be anonymous
Make it more obvious and easy to sign up and input comments. Need to provide list of Bills or items being put forth on the e-comments area. Person can then select item to comment on.
My comments that had to be pre-approved to be posted bothered me. In most cases I never knew if anyone saw them - - including me.

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

Reminders of how to access this feature post-registration.
The opportunity to log in when you enter the site. I would find something I wanted to comment on but I'd be directed around and through sign in and then couldn't always find the place I wanted to comment again. Also I'd like to KNOW which representatives read the posts. It would be nice if they could comment or even if there was a way to check back and see, for example, that everyone on the committee had read your comment or that no one had....
The value would purely depend on if the Legislators pay any attention to it. If they don't even actually look at it it is a waste of our money and should not be another governmental waste program. Surprisingly, these people actually vote on Bills without even reading them. That's BS! Using it was a pain because you put your comments in and then it asks you to log-in etc. The interface needs to be significantly improved such that you easily log in and then start making comments. If you want to make more comments on other Bill then you should be able to do that without anymore logging in. That aspect was confusing and unnecessarily difficult.
You could have the sign up page for an account turned into a widget that you place on the legislation page so you don't have to flip around from window to window the first time. The sign up process was a bit clunky. You could have an auto responder email that tells you 1 your comment was submitted correctly and 2 the list of legislators who technically received your comments via email etc. would be nice to know exactly who got your comments, even if it doesn't mean they read it. For example, I think I commented on a health care bill and I actually heard back from sen Mcauliffe's staff (my senator) even though she was not on the health committee

### Be able to edit comments

1) The ability to go back and see the comments you've submitted. 2) An external forum in which people can discuss the legislative bills, not on the bill's page itself. This would help to keep the topic focused and deter arguments.
A way to sign-in and edit your comments later in case what you submitted was an accident. It seems to me, that it would be easy for people to accidentally submit something they did not intend to.
After carefully sifting through the many education Bills being considered, I inadvertently typed in the wrong number when I commented and ended up commenting on the wrong bill. It was my fault obviously, but I have graduate degree and know how to use technology...so if it could happen to me, it can happen to others. Put a direct link to the e-Comments on the Bill Information page.
Allow me to amend my comments. At a low rate, e.g. once per week. Or each time the bill is edited.
Allow you to see, at least, what comments you had posted.
I have sent a incomplete suggestion with no way to correct it . A way to pull and correct or complete a comment at least one time up to 15 min after it is submitted would be good .
I only was this opportunity to comment one time. I would like to make comments more often.
I received an email from someone claiming to be from the company that ran the service stating that my information was incorrect in the system. Since they were soliciting information such as name and address, I declined to offer it to them. There should be a way to update your profile information yourself.
Need to be able to edit your comment. I made an error and could not correct it.

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

Some way to remind me what I commented on. I parse way too many electronic messages to recall everything I did, and every URL I've visited. Perhaps a history of their own comments that each person can access?
Would like the ability to return at a later time to view/add/modify comments.
You should allow an option to edit or change your submitted remark. You should be allowed to add further thoughts should they come to you.

### Verify User

I don't remember much about it, but we live in an age of social media. I'm in my 60s, and I use social media frequently to communicate with friends and family. I wouldn't recommend or suggest that you accept anonymous comments, but citizens should be able to stand up and make their voices heard, not just paid lobbyists or those concerned with an issue enough to drive to Olympia.
I think it was fine. I worry about people abusing the system though. So if you have a way to weed out trolls that are not from the state it would be fine. My understanding is that certain groups pay people to troll sites like this, so as long as you have a way to weed those folks out who have an agenda and don't live in this state I say keep it going.
I think the service is great, but I can also see how the service can be abused by some on more controversial bills. My suggestion is that the service be consolidated to just the computers at the legislative campus where folks can place e-comments to avoid spamming and malicious comments.
Make sure comment is allowed for only one person with a unique ID Auto email alert of proposed legislation to enable timely comment
Make sure one comment per person. They could edit their comment but not make multiple comments on a particular legislation. The idea is to avoid a vocal few giving the impression that they are the majority.
People should have to verify that they are valid residence of the state. Also that corporations and business entities would not be allowed to use the service to push their corporate or private agendas. The service would be usable only by individual citizens of the state to give input to the legislature or other departments of state government.
People that wish to participate should register. All comments should be signed (no anonymous comments) I believe that all registered members should be able to view comments.
Somehow the veracity of the survey must be secured. Don't want auto generated responses, etc. misinforming the legislature of the support a bill or position.
Technology and promotion that leads to only constituents being able to comment would make the system a better service.
The data collected must be legitimate, meaning a process must be maintained so duplicate responses not be counted. That way it is fair and accurate. No "ballot stacking", such as the way votes were counted in the Presidential election. Those numbers were "stacked" or fabricated. Stalin said, "It doesn't matter who gets the most votes, it only matters who is counting the votes". In this case, the responses.
To avoid legislators being flooded with legislation specific organized web comments from fake constituents, a system of verifying commenters as valid voters should be in place.



## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

### Miscellaneous

Be sure to have bill # & name show up on comment pg submitted
Bills only allowed one comment each - sometimes opinions or messaging change - would like to see new comments allowed after for eg 7 days
Could be more welcoming to show which legislators will receive specific comments; then again, keeping users 'blind' might encourage less partisan communication. I certainly suggest continuing the program.
It's not that easy to go from reading about the bill and who supports/ opposes and going to a separate page to input your opinions. Perhaps it would be easier to have the bill info on the same page for the feedback?
It's too difficult to find a specific bill. That needs to be fixed to make the process usable.
Knowing how to post. Example: How much info does the Legislature or Staffer read? Will my comments become ignored if I write too much. What would legislatures want to see in our comments? Like: short and sweat answers? Or in depth comments w/multiple points?
Larger text boxes, not necessarily more allowed words, just enough space to see and review what you have typed without having to scroll up and down.
Make the use of the comments clear. Use an auto-response to convey what to expect to the submitter. Disclose how contact information is used or shared. Thanks.
Not sure. Comment online, without any retained record in my home computer's Sent Messages file, did not allow me to track specific change(s) upon which to base later comments upon adverse amendments, except via lengthy detour back to specific bill language, so was not efficient for me, nor did it enable feedback to my (State) League of Women Voters organization about my legislative advocacy on priority issues. Simpler to address my legislators directly, especially when they are not on the committee currently addressing the bill.
The signup process was too long, the comments section too small (in terms of size of message).

### Higher Word Count

Allow for a great number of words.
Allow more room for longer comments. Open up the size of box for posting comments as to allow for a greater viewing area when posting comments.
Allow more words so more facts and rational can be presented.
Higher word count limit. Possibly questions that focus on particular functions of a bill....financial, public safety, cautionary tales of unintended consequences, friendly amendments, and categorize them first.
Longer space for comments. My original comment was about 200 words, but that was too much to be entered. e-Comments should not just be a mechanism for the public to "Like/Dislike" legislation, but should allow people to cite information or link to data. Yes, it is nice if the service gives you an idea if legislation is or isn't popular, but I if there isn't space for people to say WHY or HOW to change the bill, then the e-Comments are a half measure.
My only complaint was that the comments were too limited. With some bills, either for or against, people like to write down their logic or the Constitutional basis for their position.
Perhaps increase the allowed length of messages in order to provide parity with spoken testimony.



## Appendix B

### Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

Provide slightly more space for comments. Although, the 1,000 character limit (?) was useful in helping us craft very succinct message points for our stakeholders to send. It does not allow for a more detailed commentary on the policy though. I think it is really good to have a data collection system that allows legislators and staff to see comments per bill (versus only per constituent). I will continue to promote this feature (if still available) with my clients. (I am a public policy and advocacy consultant and do some lobbying). Also, this is the way that younger people engage and interact.

The comment field isn't long enough. In order to gather pertinent feedback that field should allow more public input. I think a web-based option is ONLY ONE OF MANY ways to gather feedback on current bills. Please pursue other and more connective ways to reach the population as a whole.

#### Make service more visible

easier to locate, I suppose. I also forgot my username and password after the first time I used it; I did not use it again.

It would be nice if it was easier to find. It would also be beneficial to get updates on new discussion topics.

Make it easier to find

Make it easier to find / use the E comment section. Today I tried to find the section again for submitting comments. Did you delete it? Where is it?

Make it easier to find.

Make it easier to find. List bills in a more searchable format. Employ a response from the representative when emails are sent. Have some type of follow-up after votes have occurred on legislature you comment on.

Making Bills and the e-Comments Public Survey more easily accessible for the people of the State to provide input on various legislation that affects us.

There were times I wanted to use it, but couldn't seem to find it again. Making it routinely available would be great.

#### User Friendly

I appreciate that it is much faster than creating an email to my delegation. It works well. I only wish I knew what effect it had!

I can't think of a thing. It's easy, fast, requires fairly concise input.

I don't remember specifically which issue I was commenting on, but I'm sure that I was impressed that it was so easy to leave a comment for my legislator. I don't have any suggestions

It was very easy to use. I appreciate being able to send in communications when it is convenient for me, often later at night. I don't think I needed a response other than a confirmation that my comments had been received.

Making it as user friendly as possible

Streamlined, easy, make it apparent and accessible from the website.

The bold print/font on these pages is MUCH easier to read!

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

### Other Services

#### Alerts

Appropriate emails to Washington state citizens about upcoming legislation along with an e-comment link should be sent to those that subscribe to e-comments.
Be able to select bills of interest and request email updates on those particular bills. Overall, the concept is great but OVERWHELMING. I spent a lot of time on the site having to sift through items I had no interest in. Perhaps a search engine could be designed that when the user enters a specific topic like say "alcohol" then a list of all bills regarding alcohol would appear. That would make your site more user friendly.
CURRENT SPECIFIC LAWS UNDER CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE SENT OUT TO BE PUBLIC SURVEYED!
E Alerts to help people know what and when is coming up for votes.
e-mail notification of legislation being introduced
Follow up alerts by e-mail in regards to how a legislator stands/voted on a particular measure and why.
Ha ha, of course, only let people that think like me give the correct opinion. Actually, I wouldn't mind to have it e-mailed to me that certain bills were pending, such as education, gun control, spending and other hot topics. Sometimes they are up for a look and they need more opinions from taxpayers in the work force instead of takers.
I commented on a specific house bill and it would be nice to receive updates on that specific house bill automatically.
I did not utilize the service enough to give constructive feedback. Perhaps more outreach about how the service works, and occasional reminders to those registered so they don't forget to utilize service. Perhaps if there was more opportunity for an exchange with legislators/staff, you would get more interest in the service. Without feedback, people are left unaware if their voice was heard or not. This may prompt people to revert back to more direct means of communicating with their legislator.
I receive regular emails from the National Congress describing current bills up for votes (or legisl.action) but only *after-the-fact results of my Senators and Rep.'s votes-- I would like to get a good description *before* the actions, with time to comment before my National reps vote--- and it would be even *more* important to get previews and opportunity to comment before my *State* reps vote as well!
I would love to have an email reminder of the legislation coming up. I would then research it and get back via this service with my opinions. I think this would be wonderfully democratic. I am sure many voters would participate in that way and this would give legislators an indication of voter feelings and thoughts.
I'd like to be able to set an alert for legislation so I could get automatic updates as it moves through the process including a vote tally. Also a more index like way to see all currently active legislation.
If possible It would be beneficial to have some kind of notification about the status of the bill.
Include a bill tracking subscription to allow inclusion in the full process.
Informing us via email as issues progress or are shelved
It might be nice to have an occasional email update listing new bills, or perhaps reminders of the agenda. It would broaden the discourse from single issue focus
n/a only using it once makes it difficult to judge..perhaps emailing regged users to notify of new things to view/comment on.

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

once you are in the system an e-mail update of pending legislation with links to the proposed bills as written. also a time /date schedule of hearings on said bills.
Perhaps a prompt to my email reminding me about issues and the fact that I can submit a comment fairly easily.
Weekly/periodic emails with a list of current legislation under consideration.
You need embrace push technologies. Allow me to sign up for legislation I'm interested in, for example, environmental laws. Send out polls as they come up, via email. Find out what the people want and do it.

### Miscellaneous

As I recall, the hot-line wrote down the caller's message. It might speed things up if the caller were asked to identify a particular bill and whether their Legislators and Governor should support or oppose it, or support or oppose an amendment.
Be able to answer legislator directly, not thru their e-mail address
Do a pilot study of the same service with the House
Have legislatures put this out themselves to their constituents in their areas on their mailing lists on more issues so they represent our views vs. what they guess the people are thinking overall. They should be using this tool more.
how legislators voted on particular bills.
I like being able to view all bills up for adoption, and would like to prioritize by Topic also..
I think the site could be more searchable. I would like to search for, say, legislation passed in 2011, or legislation passed out of the transportation committee. I hope that WA is making sure that all data is in machine readable format. I thought Governor Gregoire's "Transforming Washington's Budget" was brilliant and totally under promoted and under utilized idea. There are some wins for public opinion about government in there, and some that could have been turned into wins with a response to where similar ideas had been implemented. People spoke and things changed, how connected those two thing were is a separate issue, but a sincere case can be made that government reflects people's wishes and diverse opinions. There were alot of bad ideas, but the conversation remained pretty civil. The good thing about the forum is that it shows that citizens concerns are the same as legislators. I bet some of these ideas were discussed in legislature and did not get out of committee or pass, such as front license plates. If people knew they might feel that the legislature is representative of the citizenry. There needs to other ways to provide feedback than this, driving to Olympia, emailing or calling. What about the legislature creating an interactive map of the state that would let people click on their neighborhood or city and a menu, maybe with photos, would come down to say something like, improved highway x in 2003, provided matching funds to build Cascade Elementary, provided funds for flood control along such and such river, etc. People see the government as a black box. An interactive map might give them more appreciation for where their tax dollars go. And the east side and the west side would be able to see where the money goes, because you know everyone will be clicking to see how their area compares, with links on each to a public forum for commenting. <a href="http://www.transformwabudget.ideascale.com/a/ideafactory.do?id=9567&amp;mode=top&amp;discussionFilter=active">http://www.transformwabudget.ideascale.com/a/ideafactory.do?id=9567&amp;mode=top&amp;discussionFilter=active</a>
I would like to use it more so I need to have access to the bills being considered

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

I would love to see better estimates on revenue and expenses, The budgeting bills are completely opaque. The details are, no doubt, buried deeply in the background papers. It is really hard to make intelligent comments based upon material that is made available.
In the future, being able to conduct a conversation - similar to a reddit AMA on a piece of legislation would be amazing. This is a great first step though.
Integrating with a mobile app.
It would be great if there were a web based application, such as a survey on survey monkey to allow all registered voters to register their thoughts on how they'd like their legislators to vote on an issue.
More openness and easier access to legislators and staff. Published staff names, phones, emails. To frequently, we're faced with a blind email intake box. The legislators email is harder to find. A list of staff, staff responsibilities, etc. The Olympia campus is far too crowded with lobbyists these days. More and easier access to legislators is called for.
Request input from us on current issues that we express an interest in.
Use this service for educating the public about how laws are made and how citizens can influence the laws that are made for the good of all.
We need to see who proposed certain legislation. Create a web site that list all the legislation with a short explanation attached and a tab to read more about a bill.
When I access the Web site, I want to see a "Table of Contents" on the first Web page I see that lists the bills that each of my legislators are a) sponsoring, b) has already decided to vote "yes" or "no" on, and c) still studying and are undecided about how they will vote. On the next Web page, I want to read WHY my legislators are a) sponsoring a bill, b) intending to vote "yes" or "no" on a bill, and c) undecided about how to vote on the remaining bills (i.e., the strengths and weaknesses they see in each bill). Then, I want a link to the most up-to-date draft of each bill so I can read it and decide whether I agree with my legislators' analyses of the strengths and weaknesses.
Would like to see who the sponsors of legislation are.

### Status Reports

Crisp, non-partisan summaries of the legislation are very helpful, including a summary of the impact of passage or non-passage.
<b>FOLLOW UP ON THE BILLS PROGRESS AND FINAL OUTCOME</b>
I think a list of bills before the legislature daily or weekly sent as an email with a link to the e-comment site would make it far more effective. As it is the legislature sits in the ivory halls while we peasants work and toil day by day and ner' the two meet or hear one another. I enrolled filled out form and frankly have no idea how to get back to the site to send comments one way or the other. Unless one lives with computer on their lap who can keep up yet I desire to fully informed and to voice opinions easily for them as well as for myself.
I would like to see a status updates on the piece of Legislation that a person chooses to opine on be provided to that person.
Include follow-up status updates to bills that were commented on.
Information on important legislation being considered that explains the options and expected outcomes available with the survey. Thank you.

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

It's been awhile, but maybe a follow up email with a status report with a link to to particular bill. It's hard to keep track when someone is really busy but I don't want to be apathetic. Thanks!
Make it easier to know what bills are being considered and of course to be able to comment.
Persons commenting on a specific legislative bill should receive automated email updates on the status of that bill, where it's headed, where it's stuck, it was signed by the governor, etc.
Provide updates and feedback on how your legislators voted on the issue you are voicing your concern over. STOP co-mingling legislation together. It makes it too easy to give the legislators "an out". Vote on each important topic by itself.
Results of bills or legislative action results.
send back bill issues, amendments, and status as time goes on
Since I am on this list now, I would like to be put on a list to receive information about current Education bills so that I can comment on them. As a teacher, I am very busy and don't have time to investigate current bills. I only find out about them if the union or colleagues tell me about them.
would love to have a web-site available listing all proposed bills, their impact, and a link to my legislator to voice my opinion on the proposed bill

### Search Feature

A search feature to find the bill's code based on key words or topics.
Better search functions (using keywords) to find bills.
Email prompts for new bills in areas I select that I'm interested in based on keywords.
<p>I think the site could be more searchable. I would like to search for, say, legislation passed in 2011, or legislation passed out of the transportation committee. I hope that WA is making sure that all data is in machine readable format. I thought Governor Gregoire's "Transforming Washington's Budget" was brilliant and totally under promoted and under utilized idea. There are some wins for public opinion about government in there, and some that could have been turned into wins with a response to where similar ideas had been implemented. People spoke and things changed, how connected those two thing were is a separate issue, but a sincere case can be made that government reflects people's wishes and diverse opinions. There were alot of bad ideas, but the conversation remained pretty civil. The good thing about the forum is that it shows that citizens concerns are the same as legislators. I bet some of these ideas were discussed in legislature and did not get out of committee or pass, such as front license plates. If people knew they might feel that the legislature is representative of the citizenry. There needs to other ways to provide feedback than this, driving to Olympia, emailing or calling. What about the legislature creating an interactive map of the state that would let people click on their neighborhood or city and a menu, maybe with photos, would come down to say something like, improved highway x in 2003, provided matching funds to build Cascade Elementary, provided funds for flood control along such and such river, etc. People see the government as a black box. An interactive map might give them more appreciation for where their tax dollars go. And the east side and the west side would be able to see where the money goes, because you know everyone will be clicking to see how their area compares, with links on each to a public forum for commenting.</p> <p><a href="http://www.transformwabudget.ideascale.com/a/ideafactory.do?id=9567&amp;mode=top&amp;discussionFilter=active">http://www.transformwabudget.ideascale.com/a/ideafactory.do?id=9567&amp;mode=top&amp;discussionFilter=active</a></p>

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

Improve ease of use. It should be as simple as commenting on an article on MSNBC or CNN. You should be able to search for bills and post your comments to them for everyone to see, anonymously of course
It would be nice to be able to search for a bill by keywords.
Make it easier to find bills.
Make the bills readable and more easily searchable for comment. The comment system is fine the way it is.

### Polls

Citizen opinion should be gathered on all aspects of government that affect the citizens. The legislature represents the citizens but can they actually do so without broad citizen feedback on the decisions that are being made? Granted things are complicated and people generally do not have the time or interest to unravel complications, but I would like to try.
Expand questions to those most pertinent to the operation of our State, the State Government's opportunities for improvement in terms of: 1. Priorities 2. Financial management 3. Increase respect for land, air, water, wildlife, flora and law-abiding, tax-paying citizens 4. Increase commitment now to better energy choices. a. electrify vehicles (much cheaper to operate, radical reductions in: pollution, international strife, export deficits and many more clear benefits) b. invest, support and promote more in renewables beyond dams/hydro c. share more info to residents on better house/building design with respect to energy savings, increased function/comfort, reduced maintenance and much more. d. become a LEADER in much improved agricultural practices. e. be bold: initiate and promote the planting, harvesting, manufacturing, distribution and EXPORT of U.S. Washington Industrial Fiber/Oil/core Hemp for HUGE financial gains and greatly improved soils management. 5. These changes can be straight-forward and simple with obvious and enormous benefits to our State residents while putting MUCH more currency in our tax stream to use in ways that make sense and LED by education. Thank you. I hope someone reads this who cares about our State and it's people. It's my favored State and I want it to be much better in the ways suggested above.
I would like to have opinion polls.
Periodic polling of current legislation seems to be a good way of collecting real time feedback. Thanks
Send the survey's more often and use them as a means to learn what the public wants.
use it for public comments on everything the legislature does, feedback can only help!

### Receipt Confirmation

A confirmation that someone read the comments would be great.
a note to say the info was received and read -
Although I don't expect a detailed response, it would be gratifying to know the comment was delivered -- that is, someone read it.
An email letting you know that your comments have been submitted.
Anyway participants can be sure that legislators are in fact seeing these comments? No need to respond to every message, but collective responses would be helpful to convince participants that they're not wasting their time and effort.
Automated email receipt that your comments were received or even opened might be nice if it wasn't cost prohibitive.

## Appendix B

### Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

Better respond that our officials are reading and acknowledging our opinions.
confirmation comments were received or read.
Did the legislators take note of the comments? Did they find it valuable? or was it ignored? there was not any way for us to know if our comments and efforts were acknowledged.
Great plan. Commenters need feedback from rep. to know that comments were received.
How do we know if our comments are being read? Sending direct e-mails to our legislators seems much more personal and desirable.
I cannot tell whether my comments will actually be read by someone or not...I don't know how this can be remedied, however.
I didn't feel confident that the legislators would be reading my comments, Possibly because this was a pilot program, but also because I don't know if there is incentive. I ended up also sending e-mails to my reps and committee chairs on issues I cared about Character count maximum was too small, and I couldn't go into full detail about complex issues.
I do not know what the legislators might consider the most useful, but I am always happy to have some sort of acknowledgement or response. I realize there is not enough time to respond to everyone, especially during a legislative session. I think that the email address was hidden in this service; it is good to have a record of to whom you have written and that person's address. Most importantly, do the legislators and staff feel the service is useful and intimate enough with their constituents? Overall, I do not remember much about the experience.
I needed to get comments to them quickly. Nice to have a delivered button, so it is not dropped into the spam folder. Thanks
I think it would be good to get general feedback from legislators suggesting that they do read the feedback and take it into consideration. It's just a little worrying that it might be a pipe to nowhere!
I would appreciate receiving a note or reply that confirm my comments were received.
I would be curious to know whether the comments were actually read and by whom. It may have said this at the time I filled my comments out, but I don't remember.
I would like acknowledgement from each legislator that the email was received and opened
I would like confirmation that my comments were received.
I would like to at least have an automatic reply that comment was even received.
I would like to know the comments were read. Something similar to the bill reports that summarizes public testimony should be done with the written comments in the bill reports.
I would like to know who actually sees or used the information generated by my input so that I know it is worth my time. I'm not going to waste my time on some black hole system that does not have any impact on what I think is important.
I would like to see the option of receiving feedback, or at least an acknowledgement that someone read it.
I would want to know that my comments were reaching my legislator (or his/her staff member) as quickly as if I sent an e-mail directly to the legislator. On important and timely legislation I need to know my legislator has heard my input.
I'd like confirmation that my email was received. It may have been; I can't recall.
If it is not too difficult, a response back indicating which legislators/staff actually read the comment would be nice.



## Appendix B

### Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

It has been a while since the e-Comments I sent in so I can't quite recall the topic details. It would be helpful to get some kind of acknowledgment. What is the reason for legislators or their staff not having to respond? I think it would be really useful to have a follow-up email that is a direct link to help constituents follow the progress of the particular piece of legislation, with timelines, in case further comment is desired.
It seems a leap of faith right now to know that my legislators received and considered my comments since there is no response. I could see this being very useful but would have to know that my voice is being heard and valued as much as an email, phone call, or visit to my representatives.
It would be beneficial to receive an e-mail confirmation when the comments are sent.
Knowing that the message is received and read would be nice.
Let us know somehow our voice was heard.
Make it easier to access and very simple. If they won't be giving feedback, please mention it. I did wonder if my comments went through, maybe have a final thank you for sending your comments page, so we know you received it. Thanks.
Maybe a generic email response to comments would let us know that it Was recieved. And remind us (me) that there is this website Available to use to give feedback. Once signed up- there are so Many sites! - we could return to this site again for another bull.
Maybe some way of tracking whether or not my representatives actually read my comments, suggestions, and concerns.
need some way to know that the comments were received and actually got to the staff and/or legislator
Not necessary though it would be appreciated to receive a response email that my comment was read.
on similar situations, I've received feedback or the representatives position..however, it should just be a acknowledgment that the representative is aware of my views as a voter and one of the people he is elected to represent not present a opposing viewpoint..
Overall, I thought the process was very easy and I was able to voice an opinion on the matter. I think it would be nice to maybe get notice that my comments were read by someone with the power to do something with the information. I don't need a comment from them, just a note saying it was read by the office of so and so or something along those lines showing it was viewed. Just a way of knowing my time writing about a matter didn't go unnoticed.
Provide to the one commenting feedback as to the legislators and staff that read the comment.
Quicker response time, acknowledgement that my comments were read--does not need a personal response, just an e-mail saying that my responses were seen by the appropriate parties.
Real time so that comments can be reviewed and taken into consideration during the session and before the vote is taken. Some tipe of confirmation that this has happened as well.
Responses to issues and let us know if they have read our email. Often times feel you have this for respinse but you don't care. Just a tool to makeit appear as if you are interested in what the tapayer has to say but of no value to legislators.
Some "receipt" that legislators/staff had actually read the comment.
some acknoldgement that it has been opened/received and read by at least one person, and/or directed to a legislator or committee for their reading.
Some kind of acknowledgement would be nice. This was just a black hole from my end of the transaction.
some response, knowledge that a staff member actually read the comments
Some sort of acknowledgement that what I posted was at least looked at.



## Appendix B

### Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

Some type of acknowledgment that the law makers indeed received our comments. These are matters we feel strongly enough about to make an effort to write.
some type of confirmation that the comments were read. many thanks!
Some way knowing it got to the people it should
Submitting comments was very easy. Having a confirmation of who receives the comments would be great.
That legislators or their aides respond, primarily so that we know the message has been received.
The flow of the software is not that intuitive. At the end of the comment segment, its not clear if the comment was recorded or not.
There is no way for the person who sends in comments to know they were received or read. How do you know if it has an impact? If not, why bother? I suggest looking at Oregon's Legislature's OLIS system too, for other bill help. Thanks, Mark
There is no way to know if the e comments make any difference when there is no feedback. It is unlike email where you get some response. It is a lot like sending a message in bottle into the ocean and hoping someone finds it.
There needs to be some form of confirmation the comment was read by the legislators and staff (especially the pertinent committees and leadership). As structured, it was like a "black hole" and there was no way to know if anyone read the comment. It has the potential to be valuable - but it needs fine tuning. Making comments public would give be a chilling effect and would probably limit the usage.
Too many things disappear into cyberspace without any expectation of performance. The current system is nothing more than a feel good effort on the part of the legislature to the submitter, presuming the comment will be even read. That however is hollow. If the commenter never receives acknowledgement, then how do they even know the message was read? It further alienates the commenter by not allowing them to know if others have similar concerns. Or if the only ones the legislators are listening to are high priced paid lobbyists. This gives the commenter a false sense that comments sent through e-Commerce will be viewed and considered equal to testifying at a hearing. That simple fallacy stifles real public input and further allows only those groups with money access to our legislators. I indicated the program should be continued; and that it has no value as implemented. If you really intend to use this program effectively, the public needs to know the comments are important enough to warrant acknowledgement, response and openness. Otherwise it is a waste of time and resources and the false sense of involvement should be discontinued post haste. As implemented, I could never rely on this system as a replacement for the fact that in order to make my voice hear I still need to miss work and take the day off to travel to Olympia and hope to get three minutes to have my voice heard in a hearing.
Using this cell for comment to prior question #4: It is not that one expects response, but knowing that comments were actually collected/received by the specified Legislator would be a nice feature. One doesn't know once comment submitted that comments were not just sent to netherland.
Verification that the comments were read. Could be as easy as a simple Thank you.
Well for me it was impossible to know if my comments were heard or understood. I just kind of wondered after the message was submitted. I guess it would be really difficult to respond to massive emails. In this case I would anticipate an "auto response". I would prefer no response to an auto response because I think they are more robotic than informative.
Would love an auto response that indicated the Legislator's current position on the Bill.

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

<p>You could have the sign up page for an account turned into a widget that you place on the legislation page so you don't have to flip around from window to window the first time. The sign up process was a bit clunky. You could have an auto responder email that tells you 1 your comment was submitted correctly and 2 the list of legislators who technically received your comments via email etc. would be nice to know exactly who got your comments, even if it doesn't mean they read it. For example, I think I commented on a health care bill and I actually heard back from sen Mcauliffe's staff (my senator) even though she was not on the health committee</p>
<p>You have already covered it in a previous question. I would like a response from my legislator. Why? So I know I was actually heard and just not part of a data dump.</p>

### Value of the Service

<p>As long as the legislature is both reading the comments and taking them into consideration when they make decisions on bills, I'd say it's a clear sign that Washington state is pushing itself to improve as a democracy.</p>
<p>Encourage legislators to read and take seriously the comments made. I fear few elected officials actually care what their constituents think about any legislation. Most are more than willing to act against the voters' concerns in favor of corporate lobbyists and campaign contributors.</p>
<p>Explain the process on how the legislators see and use this information. We just want to know that our voice is being heard. Thanks!</p>
<p>How do legislatures weigh the comments. I don't suppose they are the equivalent of testifying before committee, but it would be nice to know that they carry weight, or are part of the public record, or that some formal standard applies to the comments.</p>
<p>I am not sure at this point. I am not convinced that the legislature is interested in the public's comments or what is important to them. My interests don't seem to be popular with those that make policy or in making sure that the policy is followed.</p>
<p>I appreciate the opportunity to be able to comment on present / pending legislation but would be interested in knowing how effective a means of communicating with lawmakers the system actually is.</p>
<p>I can't remember enough to give specific input as to "changes", but it should be well promoted to the public, simple to use, not costly to administrate, seen as a valuable source of feedback to Legislators, and if possible some communication sent back to those who use the service. I would not want a new department of state employees set up to run this service.</p>
<p>I don't have any suggestions. I think it is useful to have an opportunity to provide written feedback to legislators regarding current issues, and I think it's important that comments be publicly available.</p>
<p>I don't know of any improvements I can think of. I do wonder though how much effect a person's comments have.</p>
<p>I don't think legislators pay any attention to voters any more and wonder if this is done just to let us think we have a say.</p>
<p>I find it hard to believe the legislators used it. They have not responded to any of my correspondence. I have lost faith in them caring about anything but political gain.</p>
<p>I gain quite a bit of information from feedback of others so naturally I think this would be a great way to get valuable input from the people who are concerned about the issue in an interactive forum, but having it become more manageable and specific than generic letters or phone calls that are less easily tracked on your end. I think it's great you are considering it!</p>

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

I have no idea hoe the e-comments are processed/ or their effect. If the legislators pay them any heed, it is a good service.
I see only limited evidence that my legislators respond to anything but the most overwhelming evidence of political power (i.e. NRA opposition to background checks).
I suspect I'm dreaming here, but it would be nice if the members of the legislature too our comments with a heavier weight than the lobby that is buying them lunch each day. Actually, if they even considered our opinions it would be a nice change.
I think overall it is fine the way it is. What do the legislators think of it? I hope it is useful to them and they are (or staff) actually looking at the comments and using them to help in the decision making process on issues.
I want the Legislators to listen, the service is only as strong as how the information is received. the public votes on initiatives and the Legislators vote them down. The public speaks through their vote, it appears Legislators take party lines, dismiss public's voice.
I would like feedback to know how the legislator uses this service.
I would like the legislature to actually take the comments into consideration.
I would like to be ASSURED that my representative is actually READING the comments and THINKING about what to do BEST for ALL residents of the state, not just those that voted for them.
I would like to know if my opinion really holds any sway over the legislators. I often feel that my voice doesn't matter and that they are going to do whatever they want to. I often feel as if they think they know better than the people they work for and ignore the citizens over and over again to get what they think they want, regardless of how the citizens feel. Cases in point, overturning tax cuts the citizens have voted for, ignoring citizens about light rail, ignoring citizens about the kingdome, ignoring citizens about car taxes, gas taxes, etc. etc. etc. Just a little frustrated here.
I would like to know what the effect of the e-Comments are on the Legislators (and staff).... It is my impressions that sometimes electronic communication is received with less weight or importance as other communications (though I have used multiple methods, phone or paper mail, eg, and am not sure if anything gets through).
I would liked to have known that the comments were actually viewed by legislators in a timely manner. If not, it's worthless.
If the opinions are actually implemented it will be a great idea
I'm unclear how much of a difference making these online comments can make. Are legislators and staff required to read them? Do they receive less weight than phone calls or hand-written letters?
In general, I read the information about what was going on and then contacted my legislators outside of this website. Be nice to know if the legislators feel they are getting any useful comments.
Is there a way to know what legislators think of the service? Is it meaningful to them? Do they want the comments?
It appears very easy for special interest groups to introduce legislative bills without having proved or provided due diligence on the issue. In other words, only serving the interests of a small, (less than a minority) group of individuals.
It has been so long since I commented that I can not remember so making a constructive suggestion is not possible. I suggest sending survey shortly after a comment to get a more accurate response. But, this is the Washington State legislature so an accurate truthful assessment is likely not what it wants.

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

<p>It really doesn't matter what I think, the people running this sinking ship of a State don't give a rip what the small man thinks!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!</p>
<p>It would be even better if the legislators actually listened to the comments, responded by enacting bills, and most important did their work in the time allotted, not wait until a special session is called. I work in a school district. This year having the Legislature go into special session has been highly deleterious to all of our planning: fiscal, hiring, staffing, etc. We will need to work off the calendar to fix this mess.</p>
<p>It would be helpful to know if this service is the equivalent to emailing my legislators directly, or calling them, as it seems a little more faceless.</p>
<p>It would be nice if the legislators would actually pay attention to what we are saying.</p>
<p>It would be nice to know how public comments influenced legislative decisions.</p>
<p>It's a good service if the feedback is used. That requires trust from those that submit input. Right now trust is pretty low, especially with requiring a third session to complete its job.</p>
<p>Keep working on it if the legislators truly believe it was beneficial. If it is just window dressing, then forget about it.</p>
<p>Make it obvious that submitting online comments is similar to testifying in person in a hearing.</p>
<p>Not a change ... but I'd like to know generally whether legislators and/or their staffs made much use of the Comments that were received (I've heard a rumor that it wasn't used much). That seems a crucial link in determining whether the service is valuable.</p>
<p>Not enough options for answers - should be other than yes or no We don't know 'how effective' our input is - what is done with the info - is it read by them? their staff? Is this just another 'tool' that looks good and results not used?</p>
<p>Only used it one time through a link. Not really all that familiar with this service besides that. If the legislators really use the feedback from it and it truly has an impact, then I think reviewing the user interface on a regular basis is a good idea.</p>
<p>Some kind of feedback would be nice. I would be willing to provide commentary on more issues, especially ones that I care about, if there was some way to know that my comments had some kind of impact. At the very least, I would like to know which legislators were informed of the contents of the comments and how (did they read them directly, were they presented with digests of the content, etc.).</p>
<p>The e-Comments are only valuable if properly analyzed and interpreted to improve the functioning of state government. If, like so many opinion polls, they are only used to determine voter preferences so that reelection strategies can be developed by the legislators then the entire process is a waste of everyone's time.</p>
<p>The legislators I talked with didn't access the information that was generated for them. As a former legislator it seems like an incredibly powerful tool, yet expect it isn't changing the way legislators operate - mainly deferring to their caucus leads on any given issue. Sincere thanks for developing this tool. If the right people start using it, it will be a great connection for our elected representatives.</p>
<p>The legislators that I contacted thru the website later told me during Town Hall meetings when I asked them about it, that it is not a particularly good way to get their attention. Calling and leaving a phone message reached them on the floor of the house and senate more quickly.</p>

## Appendix B

### Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

The value would purely depend on if the Legislators pay any attention to it. If they don't even actually look at it it is a waste of our money and should not be another governmental waste program. Surprisingly, these people actually vote on Bills without even reading them. That's BS! Using it was a pain because you put your comments in and then it asks you to log-in etc. The interface needs to be significantly improved such that you easily log in and then start making comments. If you want to make more comments on other Bill then you should be able to do that without anymore logging in. That aspect was confusing and unnecessarily difficult.

This probably isn't very helpful, but the biggest problem I see with this (and any form of communication with the government) is simply that it's difficult to believe that anyone sees or cares about comments/email/whatever. Particularly with electronic communication; it's 'common knowledge' that it's a waste of time to even try. I don't know how to change that perception (or how true it is) but it'd be nice if we could be convinced otherwise.

This would be a good source of information if everyone reads it.

TO HAVE THEM ACCTUALLY READ AND PAY ATTENTION TO WHAT WE THE PEOPLE ARE SAYING AND ACCTUALLY DO THEIR JOBS OR GET OUT OF OFFICE!

To let us know that our opinions and comments will be read and taken into consideration.

to sure yet to ne, is the information used in any way? maybe share what you do with the information

Too many things disappear into cyberspace without any expectation of performance. The current system is nothing more than a feel good effort on the part of the legislature to the submitter, presuming the comment will be even read. That however is hollow. If the commenter never receives acknowledgement, then how do they even know the message was read? It further alienates the commenter by not allowing them to know if others have similar concerns. Or if the only ones the legislators are listening to are high priced paid lobbyists. This gives the commenter a false sense that comments sent through e-Commerce will be viewed and considered equal to testifying at a hearing. That simple fallacy stifles real public input and further allows only those groups with money access to our legislators. I indicated the program should be continued; and that it has no value as implemented. If you really intend to use this program effectively, the public needs to know the comments are important enough to warrant acknowledgement, response and openness. Otherwise it is a waste of time and resources and the false sense of involvement should be discontinued post haste. As implemented, I could never rely on this system as a replacement for the fact that in order to make my voice hear I still need to miss work and take the day off to travel to Olympia and hope to get three minutes to have my voice heard in a hearing.

Too soon to say. I need to know how it was pereived by legislators and staff.

Well, it is not clear to me that anything I send to government makes a whit of difference. I think they are in thrall to the money, their party positions, and the lobbyists. Same as DC. And I don't see how it is at all possible for ANYONE in an elected position to do what is best for the state because of all the myriad tugs and hauls on them from competing interests. It is very clear that our education system is a massive sinkhole of incompetence and lousy outcomes and yet it is the biggest budget item (after state salaries and pensions, which are out of control) in the expenditure side of government. Why doesn't the legislature look at education systems that work and DEMAND the same kinds of results from our broken system. Get people in there that can fix it and get those who should not be there OUT. Plenty of teachers are incompetent. Most come from the lower 1/3 of SAT scores. In Finland, they come from the upper quartile!! So, I'm ranting because I see that nothing of significance can be made to happen.

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

With all the corruption in the government I'm really curious if the feedback and comments, especially ones with differing views, is honestly counted and taken into consideration or just ignored and not counted.
With regard to Question 2, I think it is very valuable ASSUMING it is actually read and taken into account by those creating the legislation. In regard to Question 4, I did not EXPECT a response, but would of course love to get one...or follow up question or clarification or whatever. In regard to Question 5, I seriously considered saying that everyone should be able to read them, but that would likely create more of an posting blog with one person responding to another's post and I think it more useful to have each individual provide their input and let the legislators/staffers draw their own conclusions on each posts individual merit.
You collected my email address so you could spam me but fail to give valid feedback for valid concerns. I feel all this is is just hand-waving appeasement so you can say "you're listening to the public"

### General Comments

1.) This survey should of came sooner. 2.) A synopsis of what I commented on would be good. 3.) I was expecting a response from someone, not a survey. 4.) What good is participating in the e-Comments if I know I'm not going to receive a response. 5.) e-Comments invokes the feeling that it's an easier way ignore people than by email.
A comments block along with canned question is fair.
A gaurantee that Representatives OUTSIDE of our District would still consider our opinion, even though we can't vote against them.
A input regarding bill voting.
Add a line in the instructions something like: Your opinion and comments should be based upon personal knowledge or experience and fact rather than on emotion and hearsay.
As much as possible provide access to congressmen and women through their staff as a priority before proposing legislation.
Become more conservative. Stop Passing Law's and Bills that violate The Washington State Constitution and the U.S. Constitution. Take a Stand For Our Rights And Our Liberty. It's Time To Start standing up for the rights of the Majority Instead of those who want to Op-press Us. Repeal those Laws that allow A Few to control votes and who lie to keep control. It's UP to You.
Being able to effectively communicate with legislators, and have them understand my concerns.
Being able to state a persons opinion on a subject important to that person is even a feeling better than voting. Although voting is great. I can give my opinion on the issue when there is no voting.
cut all spending the exceeds the normal standard, such as jobs the govt does always pay the highest dollar around, whereas the regular home owner gets bids and looks for the lowest bidder with the best quality. Wish the govt would do the same. Also stop all spending that pays people to search out answers to questions that really don't benefit the overall population.
Do it before, at a midpoint, in the sessions or, as now, when the legislature is deadlocked.
Do not use this or ANY OTHER SERVICE until you pass a reasonable, responsible budget without taxing citizens into oblivion. Feel free to contact me at 509-947-5164 if you need help in figuring out how to do it.
Due to the overall lack of leadership talent and judgement skills legislature should have polling and essentially put everything to a vote. However voting should only be done by those in the district of that legislature.



## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

<p>Education technique comments should be made available to legislators, and not just from the Dept. of Education or Colleges of Education. There are too many teachers out there who wish they had learned something in teacher ed that would work for basic reading in primary grades. The best methods are available, just not in vogue. This also applies to teaching basic math. Legislators could delve into this with an open mind and make some significant improvements. It would cut down on our 25% drop out rates in many high schools. Why should kids who struggle have to fail because they can't get anyone to actually teach the basics? Relying on special education IEPs is not the answer.</p>
<p>Example: Agenda revealing legislation such as Obama hiding all his records, also his voting record to refuse Med aid to live birth botched-abortion babies, Exec Orders... the legislation, the legislator, etc., all these things should be made public. They are revealing and the public should know! The media tells us nothing negative about THEIR favored legislators/candidates.</p>
<p>For legislators to listen is about it. mine seem to</p>
<p>FOR OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS CAN HEAR WE THE PEOPLE .....</p>
<p>For the legislature to get off dead center and get things accomplished. Some time before the State goes broke. Split this into two different states West Washington and Eastern Washington.</p>
<p>Google</p>
<p>I think I just have to do my own searching. My Senator istim Sheldon. He portrays himself as a Democrat and is really a Republican. I have not voted for him for a long time. So I have no representation.</p>
<p>I would love to experience a much higher level of transparency from this and all other government sites and services. There is just too much that we the people do not know and it is this way because of the choke-hold that our corporatized government has conjured up through its claim to "secrecy", even though it is purported to be about the people's business. More transparency, less government, more community building, less profit-motivated warmongering and the resultant industries that cater to the needs of one conquered nation after another. I am disappointed in my government and believe it is time for all of us to consider what we are doing to make this world a place that is clean, prosperous, transparent, and supported by absolute data that affirms that each of us is the embodiment of eternal essence, wait for it...absent limits. If such is the case, and I believe it is, then we really do not even need government as each of us is grounded in our own limitlessness. I would like this government to research the documents filed on behalf of the One People's Public Trust under the UCC that forclore all corporate structures that are, in effect, supporting and enforcing a monetary slave system. Since this filing has not been rebutted since the filing date (Dec.12, 2012) it is therefore a reality that all governments (which are corporations) and all corporations are foreclosed in accordance with UCC rules. This is a game changer and ought to be understood by all of us. I send good will to all.</p>
<p>If you really cared about what your constituents thought, you wouldn't be sailing our civil rights down the river in the first place. Listen. And remember your oaths.</p>
<p>I'm not sure. Suffice it to say that I am very disenchanted with our legislature. It seems that regardless of what the constituents say, legislators have already made their choices and back-room deals on how they will vote. I guess a real improvement would be to figure out a way to make the legislative process more transparent.</p>
<p>Include some minor amount (30-50%) of partisan-based questions posed equally by the minority and majority parties.</p>

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

It could be good to see them actually start working for us who elect them not the well paid lobbyists. For example, we have high gas taxes which appear to be spent on everything BUT maintaing the roads and bridges. Yet we are building pontoons that leak and high cost tunnels so a few property owners will see increases in their land values.
It seems to me that some of the questions were directed to get a desired answer. However, the initial time I did this seems to Bea while ago. Maybe I am wrong.
it should be on the main wa site so everyone can take the survey and limited to on servery per PC or person how ever that might work.
Legislators should Read the comments and vote the will of their constituents!
Legislators would actually pay attention to the public's desire to do their work on behalf of the common good of Washingtonians.
Lets hope legislators will use this as one source, not the only one. Majority rule can destroy a good government.
Listen to what is sent in and cut spending instead of increasing any taxes. if I don't have the money to pay for something I do not buy it. The governor and legislators need to listen to the voters. I never miss a vote.
Make sure the legislature actually reads the comments... I really don't expect those idiots to do anything about them !
more questions
More timely access and follow-up where needed.
My State Representatives and Senators. This would allow them to keep up with areas of interest in local area.
new legeslators on the west side of the state.
None that I can think of. Just better response by senators and representatives to get busy and work together--that's the response I would like to see to our surveys.
Only change things to save money.
Public access
Reps should do what the people want and not just fallow the party line but as far as this goes it works fine
Return contact
Seems pretty worthless in its current incarnation. There needs to be a lot more thought behind design & implementation. And, there needs to be a reasonable expectation that this avenue will actually have some impact--in particular as a mechanism for offsetting the 'quiet' lobbying that dominates Olympia during (and between) legislative sessions.
Service is just fine. If only the Legislature would stop blowing money on every pseudo environmental organization instead it should be value and outcome based.
Solutions to problems can be found in the public.
tell legislators to listen.
Use it during special sessions too. I'm driving to Olympia today to sign in pro-not wishing to testify at a House Committee hearing.
We need more inclusion of public debate in our legislative process. Democracy is not a spectator sport.
While I was the one making the comments, and I entered my name as the person commenting, the response came to my husband. I can only assume it is because he is the primary person listed as owner for my address? Just a guess. It would have been nice to have the response directed to me.



## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

Would like to see the sources of legislative input. I hope that no Washington State legislator makes any use of the ALEC legislature writing materials.

yikes, where to begin. i suggest that you implement a comprehensive system of interaction between the public and Olympia. Long gone are the days when one had to drive their horse and buggy to Olympia to have their voice heard. The occasional scripted dog and pony show in the home district doesn't work either. Build a comprehensive tool and utilize social media to open every subject up to those who choose to participate. Don't just look to collect feedback on legislation that only legislators have decided is good for them. You should be opening up the entire planning sessions so that the public can direct the priorities as to what legislation takes priority. All discourse and debate on all legislation should be open and available online for public input and should be required to be online for public review. The public, and rightfully so i suspect, is suspicious of the lobbying and special interest conversations that go on behind closed doors in Olympia. NO better way to address that public perception than to require that all meetings in olympia be not just subject to the open meetings act, but an easily accessible and searchable calendar should be available to all online for every meeting for every legislator with minutes and attendee information. All input and comment should be 100% transparent. If the coal port lobby wants to have dinner with a legislator then that needs to be transparent to the public - who was there and what was discussed and what is the followup. Legislators should publish a list of topics they plan to pursue. the public can then provide input upfront as to what the priorities should be. use open dialogue (i.e. blogging) to help distill the priorities. Each individual then will have the opportunity to 'follow' the conversation by receiving alerts when there is comment or planned activity on a subject - slogging through mountains of dry procedural stuff auto dumped to a web page is not the answer. each legislator can have an aid help moderate the public conversation on a topic. When we really need to roll our sleeves up and have a debate we can hold an online chat/video chat. Transparency is key. Public perception of our politicians in WA DC is at record lows. Public perception of what goes on in Olympia is not much different. It will be interesting to see what you do with this survey and whether you choose to seek input on this feedback or just file it where all other good suggestions go to die...

You need someone with a military/operational background that could align the questions to make more of an impact. Emotional questions versus factual questions.

Believe all legislators should be required to provide a toll-free number to reach their office. As a general matter, communication between legislators and voters AND VICE VERSA and extremely poor!!!! But, maybe the legislators like it that way. After all the all-important PACs have no problem getting their attention, do they? What do they need us for?

### Which Member Should See Comments

#### Committees

1 of 2 things. Either make an option to submit written testimony, as that is not the easiest process. Or send the person submitting comments a response each time a legislator or staff views the comments, and give the ability to respond if they so desire. At this time it seems worthless, because the public at large doesn't know if there was 1 view or 600 views. It is not a good way to engage legislators unless we know it is being used.

Be able to send comments to Committee members addressing specific legislation. It was my understanding that we could only send comments to members of our legislative district.

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

Comments for proposed legislation during hearings or committee meetings...acknowledged during the public meeting in some way.
Comments obtained during committee meetings are part of the record. It would be nice if online comments also became part of the record for each bill. I hope that comments would be attached to the bill as it moves through the legislative process so that feedback is available to legislatures at each step of the way.
Comments sent to all on both house and senate comms
Consistency between the House and Senate in capacity to sign in pro con or concerned w a capacity to explain in 50 words or less why.
E Comments should become part of the bills record and carry the same impact as if comments were made in person at committee hearing. It is unfair that only those that can travel to Olympia and take the time required are able to participate in the law making process. A e comment system could be a large step in the right direction by allowing anyone to have input in the legislative process.
I did not understand how the e-Comment program worked or what it was for. I used it to comment on legislation when there were too many people in line at Cherberg, if I remember correctly. I thought it was just for that purpose.
I do think it is fine the way it is, although I seem to recall that it was not always easy to find or perhaps I did not have the correct bill #. I also contact my legislators directly and that is when I expect a response. I do feel that when a bill is in committee the public should be able to make an impact to get it out on the floor and voted on. Committee heads have too much power to kill a bill when it is from the opposite camp....i.e. Pam Roach.
I only used this once then realized the comments were directed only to my legislators. It would be nice to be able to direct e-comments to committee members for bills being heard in committee.
I prefer some type of feedback on all comments the legislature receives. I would like to be informed as to which medium the legislature would use as in: radio, newspaper, mass emailing. Is there a way to view other comments anonymously?
I really appreciated this option of communicating my views on different bills. I would want to make sure my thoughts go not only to my legislators but also the committee heads who make the decisions on what bills are voted on.
I thought that it was a good way to post comments; it is clear that legislators can be deluged with responses which may have little information content. This format is an easy way for the public to transmit and the legislators and staff to screen responses. The issue that I was posting on is fairly technical and received close to zero public attention. I would hope that it was passed on to the appropriate committees.
I would like to be able to send comments to committee members and leadership, not just to my own reps.
Incorporate comments into the public record if received prior to a public hearing. This would allow public paying attention but not able to physically attend a chance to be heard.
It should be possible to testify either online via a live web link or by submitting testimony that is read aloud at a committee hearing. It is impossible for most regular citizens to participate in public hearings due to short notice, work conflicts and distance. So effectively, only paid lobbyists have a voice.
Make comments open to a whole committee.
Make it easier to email the entire committee at once

## Appendix B

### Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

Make sure that if a bill is in hearing phase, that comments go to those committee members. It would be nice to get a response from the legislator, maybe a boilerplate one, as I suspect they're too busy for individual responses.
My legislative representative AND the committee members that sponsor a bill should all get the messages. Many times my local legislator is not part of the bill and only can vote later. The committee and sponsors could then modify the bill before it hits the floor.
target the comments to members of the committee where the legislation is being heard, as well as to the legislator in my district.
The first time I used it was quite a few months ago. And, I can't recall my first time using it completely. I think it could be more helpful if it could automatically identify a users district and legislators based on submitting a zip code. It would also be helpful to be able to be able to select a committee you'd like to reach, as well as Representatives / Senators and the Governor, Lt. Governor, etc. It would also be nice to be able to reach all Representatives and all Senators when it comes to floor votes -- much like the 1-800 line works.
The frustrating thing about this site is that it only allowed communication with my Sen/Reps and I would have preferred to my comments submitted to everyone of the committee that was hearing the bill at that time.

#### Want to be able to choose

Also have the ability to send the comments to your representatives so they can be aware of your opinions.
I would like the option of sending one message to a selection of legislators or to a specific committee.
I would like to not only leave comments for my representatives to see but also other legislators that could be selected on an "info" or "copy" line. That way a bills sponsor or members of a committee could be "info'd" on my comments.
I would like to see a system that would allow you to also direct your comments to Legislatures and staff in your voting districts.
It would be great if I could've chosen to whom I wanted to make my comments available. Specifically, I had to copy and paste my comments to about 8 different legislators. Would've been great to be able to specify multiple legislators in one instance. As a proof of concept, it gets my endorsement, but ease of use can be improved. Thanks for trying it!
see comment on #5 -- it is not very useful if I cannot send comments to any legislator I wish to contact.
The ability to specify which legislator(s) would receive and request a response.
Would like to specify who the comments go to. For example, for the current biennium budget proposals I'd like to write the budget negotiators -- not just my representatives. I'd also like to be able to write to a committee chair, or an entire committee. They are doing work that affects Washingtonians beyond their districts. Would like my comments to be treated like an email -- expect a response. All of that and it would be incredible!

#### Who does see the comments

Clarify that it is just an overall survey. Allow comments to go directly to certain legislators. Allow request for reply/response from them.
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## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

I have no idea how effective the feedback from constituents is. Does anyone actually read it? It would be helpful if we could learn who reads the comments (legislators? staff? both?) and if anyone really cares or not that the feedback is being provided. My guess is that they only care (to receive the feedback) if the feedback supports their position.
It would be nice to know who receives the comments. Only my representatives and senator, or did others received it as well?
Make it clear what will happen with the comments and who will actually see them.
See previous comment. It was not clear who the comments would be going to. I like that you get to comment just once. But then do we get to comment again when the bill changes? Also, it would be nice to know whether or not we should be expecting feedback from the legislators about the issues.
There seems to be no way to tell which legislators get the comments. For instance, if I am commenting HB 1000 for instance, while the bill is in the house I want my two reps. to get that message. But if HB has passed the house and is in the senate, I just want my senator to get the comment. I can't tell which of my legislators are getting my comments, and at the right time in the legislative process. There is a need for clear guidance on how the comment process works and who gets the message. Also, I am aware of a number of people who got very frustrated trying to comment and registering to do so.
You need to be VERY CLEAR on the site WHO gets the info and WHEN they get the info. I was under the impression that ALL legislators would be getting my full comment as soon as I submitted it. That was not the case. Many citizens used this feature to communicate their concerns about a bill I was involved with this year, but apparently their 'voices' were not heard. Extremely disappointing and frustrating.

### All members

All House and Senate members should see the results by district and totals state wide.
As I said, allowing comments to be forwarded to more than just my 2 or 3 legislators.
I should be able to contact all legislators, not just those from my district.
I think the legislators should see the comments so they can know directly what people think of the bill/law in question.
I want copies to 1. My elected legislators in my zip code 2. All bill sponsors 3. All committee members who will be hearing testimony on the bill 4. Option copy to Gov. 5. Both house and senate companion bills should copy comments to each other. ID these companion numbers for comment 6. Option to copy your comments to the commenters email.
Make comments available to the legislature.
Take bill-specific comments to entire legis. body.

### Sponsor

Comments on a specific bill should be made available to the bill's prime sponsor.
Comments should automatically be forwarded to sponsors of the bill in question.
Would like my response to go to the bill sponsor also.

## Appendix B

### Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

#### My Members

There should be a way so that each member receives any comment by someone that they represent. Members are elected to represent, and not follow special interest agendas.
would have liked my comments to also go to my legislative representatives.

#### Staff

I am not sure what I would change, staffers should see the comments.
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#### Other Comments About the Service

a follow-up report on how the legislator voted on the bill in question
A link to this service should be on each legislatures web site.
a quick email telling if the legislation had passed or failed
Allow for more actions taken by legislators for us to comment on prior to conclusions
An e-blast as a reminder of new issues. I get so busy with day-to-day, I'm not diligent about checking-in. I really appreciate this access; it's a big gift to the communities affected by change. i hope you can take this to the next level of exposure. This is so valuable. If I can volunteer time to assist in some small capacity, count me in.
As I recall the option of identifying the commentator as to what their role is in the discussion. For example, I am a locally elected official and some of the issues are important to my constituents and some are personally important. If I am speaking for my official duties the legislator may appreciate having a grouping or identifier of some sorting to help know who is saying what.
Be easier to find. I just tried to find it to refresh my memory about it and couldn't find it and am assuming it isn't presently available.
Get information out faster
Have the option available for all active legislation. While it would be nice to receive comments back from legislators, it is unrealistic to expect legislators, or their aids to have time to respond. Enabling the public to view other's comments, could be interesting, but some people might be less inclined to comment if they feel their privacy is invaded by doing so — and worse, it could spark comment wars, as often occurs in online comment threads. It is best to keep it simple, and allow legislators to review comments, and give them an option to contact the writer, as needed.
I have not tried or checked, but a mobile e-comments site or app might be nice. I really love having the short comment field in e-comments. Writing a letter to my legislator is always a pain because I feel like I must write a full page persuasive business letter, even though I just want them to vote "Yes" or "No" and my reasoning could be succinctly written in one paragraph or less.
I started receiving legislative update emails from a rep not in my district after submitting comments to a bill he sponsored. I don't mind his newsletters but others may not want them so there should be a way to allow legislators to sort commenters into their district and other districts when viewing comments or some way to subscribe/unsubscribe easily.

## Appendix B Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

I would like feedback. I would also like a way to tie future comments to my original comment
I would like to make sure this is more accessible to everyone include Deaf and Hard of Hearing people.
I would love to see a multi-paned window option that would allow easier selection and review of bills that are pending. I would also like to see the option for legislators to reply privately or leave comments in response to comments posted
If I recall, it wasn't very easy to get to my rep from that site. So I didn't submit so I could get a response from my rep, even tho that's what I wanted to do.
Include forwarding comments to my own representatives.
It's is to new for me to suggest changes and I have know idea what the bacxk end looks like. What I expect is that we try this out and see if it is a good addition to public hearings. If it is too burdensome for our resources we will change it. For now just throw all the comments in a basket sorted by Legislator district and forward those to the respective Legislator.
Make it easier to access and cover more topics.
make it easier to contact representatives directly. get message cannot connect to destination server
Make sure that all bills that are still active are included.
More citizen involvement. If we could see all the issues on the RADAR / Horizon and state an opinion ahead of time, perhaps legislators could make better votes.
open questions on all subject s and topics
Option to leave a voice note
Option to send comments to selected legislators.
Retention period of submitted items.
Should allow us to select multiple items as many recent bills were associated.
Sometimes the comments could be on an earlier version of a bill. The most current version should be made available so comments are relevant.
The service could link to a list of legislators with their contact information so the user could give additional feedback directly to their respective legislator.
The service is a great idea. I just found the navigation process a bit cumbersome because I had to keep searching for the specific legislation numbers. It would be great if we could subscribe to receive updates about new legislation and click on a link to read it and then browse to the comments. It would be also a good idea if we could opt to be alerted when the legislation we just commented on was rewritten so we could see what changed, or not, or if the legislators would like us to elaborate more on our comments. Nevertheless, congrats for the initiative and thank you for offering a venue for the public to voice our opinion.

## Appendix B

### Verbatim Responses

Overall, what changes or improvements to this service would you suggest?

This can be a valuable tool; however, there is always opportunity for abuse. Some special interests like anti-gun and anti-hunting organizations have their list of followers that are ready to write their communications when asked to do so. The same can be said for the other side of the fence as well; however, if those counter-tactics are not employed, then those of us fighting for our rights and freedoms with sincere input would be bulldozed by those that want to take our rights and freedoms from us. My statements probably tell you which side of the fence I'm on. Use this tool to help our representatives stick to their oaths of office to protect and defend the Constitution and Bill of Rights; that is why we are a free people. The trend of the "Liberal Progressives" is toward Socialism which is definitely NOT freedom. Use the tool for "We the People". Remember, we are a Republic; the democratic process is used in our Republic under a set of laws that protects the rights of individuals; it seems many people and some of our representatives have forgotten that fact. In other words, just because 51% of the constituents think they know what is best for all, doesn't mean they have a right to vote away the individual rights of the remaining 49% who disagree. This is unfortunately what happens when dealing with decisions made by urban western Washington that profoundly affect the lives of the rural residents in eastern Washington. My point is, don't use the tool as a voting mechanism; it merely gives representatives a sample of how their constituency feels (with a margin of error). Laws must not be passed to satisfy the screams for action resulting emotionally charged events or a flood of propaganda. I hope that makes sense. Read and understand the Constitution and Bill of Rights. Use this tool to keep in touch with the constituency, but not as a voting mechanism.