

Washington Lt. Governor calling for boost in state legislator pay

The raise would be on top of a 1% bump coming in July.

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OLYMPIA, Wash. — When now-Lt. Governor Denny Heck was first elected to Olympia as a member of the House of Representatives in 1976, he received \$3,800 a year for the part-time job.

That same position now pays \$57,876.

But Heck said those salaries should be increased “materially.”

He said unlike when he started, the position has become a full-time job for some members, who no longer only work when the legislator is in session, for 60 days in even years and 105 in odd years.

”Fair is fair. People, all people, regardless of their position ought to be paid for the time they put in and the responsibilities they have,” said Heck.

He is not requesting a raise in his own salary. Lt. Governors currently earn \$119,353 a year.

Heck also said a raise in compensation might make for a more diverse legislature.

”We would all benefit if there were more housewives, assembly line workers, electricians, you name it,” said Heck, “If the legislature was more reflective more of a mirror of society, in general, we would benefit.”

State legislator salaries are scheduled to rise by one percent July 1.

Heck’s request would impact salaries in 2023 and potentially 2024.

The salary commission is set to take public input on those, and other potential increases, during its October meeting.

According to 2019 figures, the Washington Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials ranked Washington legislators as the [tenth-highest paid](#) in the country, when the state paid lawmakers \$52,766 a year.

California lawmakers, who work year-round, earned \$110,459 in 2019.

House Minority Leader, Rep. J.T. Wilcox, R-Yelm, said he has not spoken to fellow Republicans about Heck's intentions, but he did not like the idea.

"It just doesn't seem appropriate," said Wilcox, "At a time when so many of our constituents are worried about their own finances."

Wilcox also said the Republican candidates running for positions this fall are the most diverse he's ever seen.

[Lt. Governor says state legislators should earn higher salary | king5.com](#)