



SILVER BULLETIN

19TH TSHL 4Q2021

FROM THE TSHL SPEAKER:

What a joy to see everyone at the Orientation Session of the 19th Texas Silver-Haired Legislature in Austin last July. Sixty-nine of our 88 delegates were present and sworn in by the Honorable Brian Hughes, Senator from District 1. Those delegates who could not be present are being sworn-in by local/area officials (related story, p4.)

We have 23 new delegates this term, and this Freshman class is without a doubt one of the most energetic and enthusiastic that we've had in a number of years!

Our theme for the 19th Session is "Moving Forward for Older Texans," and we are off to a great start. On behalf of all of the Officers who were re-elected for a second term, please accept our thanks for your confidence and your dedication to/support of TSHL. We look forward to working with each of you on behalf of the older citizens of Texas.

-- Rhonda Rogers, TSHL Speaker

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19th TSHL Session

The 19th TSHL Session convened at the Marriott Courtyard & Conference Center, Pflugerville-Austin, Texas, July 18-22, 2021.



Officers for the 19th Texas Silver-Haired Legislature take the oath of office administered by Dr. Elise Brazier, President of the TSHL Foundation. Pictured (l to r) Barbara Adylett, Deputy Speaker Pro Tem (Heart of Texas AAA); Bobette Doerrie, Secretary (Panhandle AAA); Rhonda Rogers, Speaker (Ark-Tex AAA); Sherry Hubbard, Speaker Pro Tem (Concho Valley AAA) and Wayne Merrill, Comptroller (Concho Valley AAA).



19th Texas Silver-Haired Legislature

Media creation by Barton Wilder Custom Images, Austin, Texas

By: Scott Christensen, Chair, Legislative Action Committee

Despite uncertain economic conditions and a pandemic, combined with significant legislative controversy on major initiatives, TSHL succeeded in having 15 resolutions influence enacted legislation to accomplish all or a part of each resolution.

**TSHL RESOLUTIONS THAT INFLUENCED BILLS PASSED INTO LAW IN
2021 STATE OF TEXAS LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Bolded Resolutions were in the Top Ten TSHL Priorities, # in ()

RES#	RESOLUTION TOPIC	AUTHOR(S)	BILL#/AUTHOR(S)	SPONSOR
R016	Amend Texas Telemedicine Law to Include Teledentistry Services	James Rivers	HB2056/Klick, Guerra	Perry
R003	Prevent Financial Abuse of Older Adult Citizens (#5)	Dolores Garcia	HB1156/Thierry et al	Mendenez
R045	Strengthen Public Policy & Initiatives to Expand Rural Broadband Infrastructure in Texas (#9)	Carol Peters, Joe Henderson, Barbara Williams	HB5/Ashby SB1/Nelson SB632/Buckingham HB3853/Anderson	Nichols Bonnen Buckley Perry
R037	Simplify the Certification & Recertification Process for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) for Certain Persons Aged 60 and Older	Marlene Cohen	SB224/Perry, West	Walle et al
R031	Allow Licensed Physicians to Legally Prescribe Medical Cannabis and Support Evidence-Based Testing of Cannabis (#1)	Paul Stempko, Sue Wilson, Linda Parrish, Mary Pat Smith, Betty Lee Streckfuss	HB1535/Klick	Schwertner
R032	Supplemental Funding Plan for the State Employee Retirement System Pension (ERS)	Scott Christensen, Sherry Hubbard, Paul Stempko, Nancy Byler, Earl Wall, Johnny Waldrip	SB321/Huffman HB2/Bonnen SB1/Nelson	Bonnen Nelson Bonnen
R033	Reject Conversion of TRS Pension from Defined Benefit (DB) to Defined Contribution (DC) Plan (fully appropriate funds for current years of 2019 Plan)	Scott Christensen, Sherry Hubbard, Paul Stempko, Nancy Byler, Earl Wall	SB1/Nelson	Bonnen
R034	Reform TRS-CARE by Increasing State's Contribution Rate (Prior to any consideration of increasing retiree costs)	Scott Christensen, Sherry Hubbard, Paul Stempko, Nancy Byler, Earl Wall	SB1/Nelson	Bonnen
R002	Amend Texas Penal Code to Include and Penalize Undue Influence	Jetta Roberts, Al Campbell	HB1156/Thierry, Leach, Bell, Keith, Crockett Co-Authors: Guillen, Lopez, Parker, Reynolds, Zwiener	Menendez
R007	Enhance Criminal Degree and Fines for Those Who Perpetrate Internet Fraud Against Older Texans (#10)	Sherry Hubbard	HB1156/see above	Menendez
R027	Increase Funding for the Texas Lifespan Respite Care Program	Sue Wilson, Barbara Aydlett, Mike Sandoval, Paul Stempko, Rose Timmer	SB1/Nelson	Bonnen
R019	Require Criminal Background Check for CNAs and LVNs in NHs, Assisted Living, and Home Health Companies	Pat Porter, Rhonda Rogers, Barbara Aydlett, Jetta Roberts, Viola Hebert	SB271/Perry	Klick
R039	Support Construction of New and Preservation of Existing Affordable Housing Units	Pat Porter	SB1679/Alvarado	Johnson et al
R043	Increase Access to Healthcare for Older Adults via Telemedicine	Sherry Hubbard, Pat Porter	HB4/Price et al	Buckingham
R044	Improve Access to Healthcare in Rural Texas for Older Adults	Pat Porter	SB1780/Creighton	Burrows

It's really quite a story — a good bit of the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature's history that Dan Roberts brought with him from Tarrant County when he was sworn in as a new inductee at the State Capitol on July 19, 2021.

This saga of independence began to unfold when three senior community activists from Tarrant County pioneered the pathway for a group of men and women to come together en masse, determined that their past and perilous efforts to wholeheartedly advocate for their older neighbors and friends across the State now, and in the future, would finally be heard and not be in vain.

To capture a Legislator's attention, and unbeknown to but a few, the three activists--Harriet Griffin, Jeter Pruett, and Bob Gibbons-- had begun this journey long ago when they had earlier traveled to Missouri to meet with other like-minded colleagues, seeking their counsel in the "Show Me" State. There a Silver-Haired Legislature was in full force.

Armed with an itinerary of knowledge and time-consuming research compiled over arduous hours of hard scrabble work, the three sought out the late Sen. Hugh Parmer (D-Tarrant) who already was well known as the champion of numerous humanitarian causes from his past crusades.

Dan Roberts was at work in Sen. Parmer's Capitol office when the three pioneers appeared before him. (Dan was the District Manager and Legislative Assistant for Constituent Services and had been on board with the Senator since 1977 when he served as Mayor of Fort Worth.)

Roberts, with the three stalwarts now in tow, approached Sen. Parmer who accepted this undaunted challenge without added hesitancy. Words once scribbled down on pieces of paper became a vibrant reality as his legal staff drafted a Resolution which became SCR 37; it was then sponsored in the Senate by Sen. Parmer, and the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature was born in 1985 during the 69th Legislative Session. (Rep. Jerry Clark (D-Buna/Jasper) carried SCR 37 in the House of Representatives. It was approved with unanimous consent.)

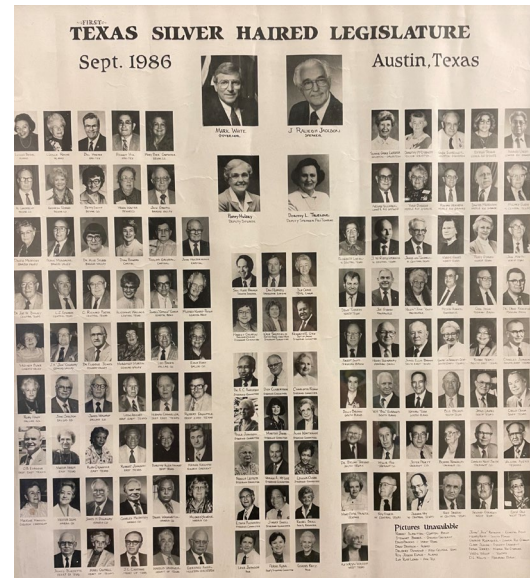
Now it was mandated Texas law. "It was like a jailbreak," Roberts recollected, "what do we do now?" Roberts didn't have to ponder that very long. Sen. Parmer's next words to him were, "Dan, you need to create the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature."

Now given the reins of leadership, Roberts decided to call upon the Texas Department of Aging for assistance and inquired if they knew of active older citizens across the State who served on AAA Advisory Committees. They gave him some names.

A Steering Committee then was established to work on providing a permanent, structured framework for the operational development of the newly-formed organization as a "legislative body" with the key focus on advocating for older Texans—their health, safety, and wellbeing-- wherever they called home across the State—large and small, rural and urban.

The Texas Silver-Haired Legislature was inaugurated in September of 1986, convening at the State Capitol for the first time on record.

It worked. History. It's still being made.



The Legislative body of the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature in 1986 is pictured above. Dan Roberts, Legislative Liaison, is in the front row, center, and middle section with the first Steering Committee. Sen. Hugh Parmer (D-Tarrant) is to the left of Roberts. (Photo courtesy of Dan Roberts.)

Thanks to Dan Roberts for sharing the picture and his experience in the founding of TSHL with Communications Committee member, Bess Mitchell. And thanks to Bess for telling his story!



Pat Porter (left), representing the Permian Basin, was named **Speaker Emeritus** during the TSHL Biennial Awards Banquet. In making the presentation, Speaker Rogers (right) praised Porter for her dedication, commitment, and hard work

Other Awards presented at the Biennial Awards Banquet include:

- Outstanding Freshman:** Pat Gleason-Wynn, Tarrant County AAA
- Members' Choice Award:** Linda Timmerman, Heart of Texas AAA
- Executive Committee Performance Award:** Joann Blackmon, South Plains AAA; Sharon Brazeal, Texoma AAA; Sue Wilson, Capital AAA
- Leadership Award:** Paul Stempko, Capital AAA
- Speaker's Commendation Award:** Barbara Aydlett, Heart of Texas AAA; Scott Christensen, Brazos Valley AAA; Sherry Hubbard, Concho Valley AAA



Ann Bishop (center), Executive Director of the Texas Public Employees Association (TPEA) presents a resolution thanking TSHL for its advocacy efforts and dedication to repair the financially ailing State ERS pension. Pictured with Bishop are the co-authors of TSHL R032 (l to r) Scott Christensen, Deputy Speaker Pro Tem Sherry Hubbard, Nancy Byler, and Paul Stempko. Christensen said, "the expertise provided by Ms. Bishop and the TPEA, through our collaborative efforts, enhanced TSHL effectiveness."

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UPCOMING DATES FOR TSHL

- 19th TSHL Training Session, October 10-13, 2021, Pflugerville
- TSHL Exec Comm Mtg., Jan/Feb 2022, Brownwood
- 19th TSHL Legislative Session, April/May, 2022, Austin
- TSHL Exec Comm Mtg., July, 2022, TBD
- TSHL Exec Comm Mtg., October, 2022, TBD
- TSHL Foundation Gala, February 22, 2023, Bullock Museum
- TSHL Exec Comm Mtg., February 23, 2023, Austin
- Senior Day at the Capitol, TBD 2023
- TSHL Executive Committee Mtg., April 2023, TBD

Silver Bulletin is published quarterly. At this time, we are seeking an Editor – TSHL members, please let Speaker Rogers know if you are interested in this position.

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Grayson County Judge, Bill Magers, gives the TSHL Oath of Office to Joe Henderson and Sharon Rolirad on August 10, 2021.



What happens after swearing-in? Coffee, of course! Attendees: (l to r) Sharon Rolirad, Joe Henderson, Sharon Brazeal, Speaker Rhonda Rogers, and Ross Rolirad. Not pictured is Cara Lavender, new Director of the Texoma AAA, who also attended the swearing-in ceremony.