



Historical 18th TSHL Session

SILVER BULLETIN 18TH TSHL 3Q2020

FROM THE TSHL SPEAKER:

After much thought and prayer, the TSHL officers and I have made the painful decision to hold our upcoming Legislative Session, July 27-29, in a 100% virtual environment. As previously announced, we will also meet virtually for the Executive Board meeting on July 26. We believe this is the best decision for the delegation since all of us are in the vulnerable high-risk category based on age.

That being said, we will not let this fact deter us from the important work we do for older Texans! To all committee chairs and all members who entered the "brave new virtual world" of videoconferencing and email to allow us to continue the work we've been called to do – THANK YOU! To those who are stepping up and taking on roles and responsibilities to assure that our organization remains viable and strong despite the obstacles currently in place – THANK YOU! Stay safe and healthy, and I look forward to seeing you on your computer screen!

-- Rhonda Rogers, TSHL Speaker

www.txshl.org

The 18th Session of the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature, scheduled for July 26 (Executive Board) and July 27-29 (full delegation) will be one for the history books as it will be the first session in the 35-year history of the organization to be conducted in a 100% virtual format! The last in-person gathering was the January 30, 2020, Executive Board meeting in San Angelo. Since that date, all of the work of the committees has occurred via email or video conferencing.

In March, the Proposed Resolution Review Panel (PRRP) received, reviewed, and assigned tracking numbers to over 70 proposed resolutions. These resolutions were then forwarded to the Legislative Issues Committee (LIC) Chairs for the second phase of the process. Each LIC Chair then led their respective committee members through the progression of reviewing each resolution, interviewing authors and co-authors, facilitating edits deemed necessary to the resolution, and preparing the resolutions for submission to the Legislative Action Committee (LAC). These deliberations were held by telephone, videoconferencing, and/or email.

As the LIC Committees were reviewing the proposed resolutions, it became apparent that more work was necessary to include resolutions that would address the COVID-19 situation. Recognizing that unprecedented times call for unprecedented action, Speaker Rogers and the Executive Committee re-opened the call for resolutions and gave delegates a 3-week period to submit new or revised resolutions specifically related to the pandemic and the awareness of the effects it was having on the older citizens of Texas as well as the toll it was taking on the Texas economy. Four new resolutions were submitted, and the PRRP and LICs followed the established protocol for disposition of these resolutions.

As of the writing of this edition of *Silver Bulletin*, 64 Resolutions are ready for LAC, review and vote. These reviews are scheduled for July 7, 10, 14, and 17 from 9:30 – 12 noon (see page 4 for details). Each review will also occur via videoconference and all delegates are invited to join the virtual meetings to observe the process.

Please continue to check your TSHL mailboxes and the TSHL Lounge for updates. As Speaker Rogers said, "We have the ability to show other older Texans that we still have the capability and willingness to learn and be useful. We can. We must. Over 5 million older Texans depend on us. Let's do this!"

What you can do now:

Begin to plan how you will access FreeConferenceCall.com to participate in the sessions

- ❖ If you don't have access from home, consider...
 - Ask your local AAA if they would be willing to get you set up in a conference room using their equipment
 - Contact your local library, or your church, Chamber of Commerce, or local government offices. They are often willing to help.
 - Check with your children/grandchildren!

- ❖ If you do have a computer at home
 - make certain you have a reliable internet connection with unlimited data – check with your internet provider!
 - You can purchase a WebCam from Amazon if your computer does not have a built-in camera.

If all else fails, you can join us by phone. Again, check with your phone company/cell provider to assure you have unlimited long-distance calling and/or unlimited minutes. Our sessions will be lengthy, and you will not want to incur over-charges.



Speaker, Rhonda Rogers, Paris
Speaker Pro-Tem, Sherry Hubbard, Junction
Deputy Speaker Pro-Tem, Barbara Aydlett, Aquilla
Secretary, Bobette Doerrie, Booker
Comptroller, Vacant

Comptroller Needed - URGENT!

We have a vacancy for the **Office of Comptroller**. If you are interested in serving in this capacity, please let Speaker Rogers know. Also, please send a completed Form 204 to Bobette Doerrie, Secretary. The duties of this important office are outlined on page 8 of your *TSHL Official Documents Manual*. We will elect a new Comptroller for TSHL at our next Executive Committee meeting pursuant to Article V, Section 4, of our By-Laws.

MEMBER CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Please update your TSHL Roster with the following new address for:

John R. (Dick) Coupe
15531 Earlport Circle
Dallas, TX 75248

TSHL Fb Lounge

Remember that we have a "members-only" Facebook page – it cannot be accessed by the public. To join, go to Facebook and search for "TSHL Lounge." Complete the questions and hit submit. TSHL members are encouraged to use this platform to share best practices, pictures, and information related to TSHL with other members and to follow these rules:

Use this site only for THSL information: Please do not post personal information that is not related to TSHL on this site. And do not fundraise or advertise your business/family business on the page.

Respect Everyone's Privacy: Being part of this group requires mutual trust. Authentic, expressive discussions make groups great, but may also be sensitive and private. What's shared in the group should stay in the group.

Be Kind and Courteous: We're all in this together to create a welcoming environment. Let's treat everyone with respect. Healthy debates are natural, but kindness is required.

Share best practices: Remember to cite sources as we do not have permission to post anything that has been or may be copyrighted.

Nonpartisan Organization: Remember, we are a nonpartisan organization. Do not post any partisan views or articles.

SPEAKER ROGERS CREATES TEMPORARY COMMITTEE REVIEW COMMITTEE

When TSHL was developed in 1986, some wise members decided to create committees based loosely on the committee structure in the Texas Legislature at that time. Thus, we have our three-tiered structure: Legislative Issues Committees (LICs), Administrative Committees, and Ad Hoc or Special Committees. This structure has served TSHL well for over 30 years, and “the time has come to take an objective look at our current committees,” according to Speaker Rogers. Citing examples, Speaker Rogers noted that “for the last two terms one LIC has not had ANY resolutions to review. Other committees no longer appear to line up with a Texas Legislative Committee.”

The newly appointed Ad Hoc Committee will take a fresh look at the current LIC committees and make recommendations to the full body for review and possible realignment. They will look at the number, name, and assignments of the current committees. After a thorough review, they will decide if any changes are necessary. They have also been asked to give a cursory review to the Administrative and standing Ad Hoc/Special Committees.

Barbara Aydlett, Deputy Speaker Pro Tem has been appointed to chair the committee. She is joined on the committee by Bettylee Streckfuss (Emeritus Member), Joe Henderson Jerry Tyson, and Viola Hebert. “I asked some long-term members and some newer members to serve on this committee. These members are from around the State and have served on a variety of LIC, Administrative, and Ad Hoc committees” said Speaker Rogers. The Committee’s report will be presented at the October 2020 Executive Committee meeting. “After completion of their work, the committee will disband, with our thanks” said Rogers.

Any member of the TSHL Legislature is encouraged to contact a member or members of the Committee Review Committee if you have any thoughts or ideas about the structure of the working committees of TSHL.



In “Happier Times” (i.e., before the pandemic – in February) several members of TSHL met with staff members of State Representative Lizzie Fletcher (Dist 7) to discuss the Medicare Advantage Program. Pictured l-r are: Maryann Barthelemy; Betty Jo Brown; Jean Williams; Betty Lee Streckfuss; Shirley Martinez (with Representative Fletcher’s Office); Viola Hebert, and Spencer (last name unknown) with Representative Fletcher’s Office

Our LAC meetings have been moved from the planned meetings in Austin to all teleconference meetings in advance of the Legislative Session meetings.

The Legislative Action Committee (LAC) will begin its meeting for the final review and decisions on approval for proposed resolutions to go to the full TSHL body votes, scheduled July 27 - 29. Per normal operating procedure, all members are welcome to log on to attend these meetings as observers. **All members will be required to maintain their computers or phones on mute.** There will be no testimony scheduled or requested. The LIC Chairs will address any questions on resolutions approved by their committees. However, if there is a question on any resolution that cannot be addressed by the appropriate LIC Chair, the LAC Chair may request information from an author if he/she is present. You may choose to "distance/virtually" attend all sessions, some, some parts, or none at your option.

Master Schedule

<u>DATE SCHEDULED</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>RESOLUTIONS</u>
Tuesday, July 7	9:30 AM - Noon CT	Criminal Justice (7), Educ. (4), Rural/Urban (5)
Friday, July 10	9:30 AM - Noon CT	Health & HR (11), State Affairs (5)
Tuesday, July 14	9:30 AM - Noon CT	State Affairs (3), Retirement & Aging (15)
Friday, July 17	9:30 AM - Noon CT	Human Services (10), Utilities & Nat. Resources (4)

Once all resolutions have been reviewed and voted on, the approved resolutions will be forwarded to the Speaker and Secretary for distribution to all members in advance of the July 27 TSHL House session start.

There are 64 resolutions approved by the LICs and submitted to the LAC out of the original 76 submitted, after any withdrawals, combining, or rejections of resolutions at the LIC level.

Some key points to be aware of...Two of the major required criteria that the LAC will look at are: (1) It must be deemed a Senior Issue (as in policy and has been communicated numerous times) and, (2) It must be for legislation that is in the purview of the TX State Legislature (for instance, Medicaid is, and Medicare is not). The LAC, by policy, can make corrections to grammar, punctuation, spelling and minor wording that does not change the intent of the resolution. While the LAC may return a resolution to the author for significant re-write, this will be the infrequent exception as this work should have been done in LIC. By policy, the LAC may reject this type of resolution.

Instructions to attend the LAC meetings will be sent the day or evening before each meeting. Be sure to watch your inbox to be able to join us

Let's move forward to accomplish our mission, even in these challenging times!

Paul Stempko
LAC Vice Chairman

PLAN TO TELECONFERENCE:

Download –

FreeConferenceCall.com to your PC, laptop, or tablet – follow the prompts on the screen as you download the application. You will be asked to create a user name and password.

We have found that joining the conference through the FreeConferenceCall app works better than just clicking on the link that will appear in the email invitation. So, you are strongly encouraged to install the app on your device.

Practice –

Ask your AAA Delegation, family members, friendly neighbor, etc. to join you in a virtual meeting during the next week or so. Just “play around” with it – we promise, you won't break it!

Don't be intimidated by the technology!

Find a way to participate. Our Oath says we will serve older Texans. As Speaker Rogers says, “the fact that we are still here tells me that each of us still has a purpose on earth. This is the only way we can have these meetings this term. Our State Legislators and older Texans are depending on each one of us.”