



19th TSHL Session Convenes in July 2021

SILVER BULLETIN 18TH TSHL 3Q2021

FROM THE TSHL SPEAKER:

It's hard to believe that the 18th Session of the TSHL is coming to a close in just a few days. As we know, it was an historic session due to the pandemic; yet TSHL members persisted with virtual sessions, phone calls, emails, written and virtual testimony, and even a few in-person events.

Now, we look toward the 19th Session and gathering together for the first time in a very long time to renew friendships, make new ones, and begin our work for the 2021-2023 biennium.

The theme for the 19th Session is "*Moving Forward for Older Texans.*" We accomplished several objectives during the 18th session to help facilitate this theme. We look forward to sharing our new Website, our new Mentor Program, and the new *Official Documents Book* with you.

Welcome new members! We will see everyone in Pflugerville-Austin soon.

-- Rhonda Rogers, TSHL Speaker

www.txshl.org

The 19th TSHL Session will meet at the Marriott Courtyard & Conference Center, Pflugerville-Austin, Texas, July 18-22, 2021. The theme of the 19th Session is "Moving Forward for Older Texans," and the first of three general sessions that will take place during the upcoming biennium is the Orientation Session. Highlights of the Orientation Session include:

- Swearing-In Ceremony
- Memorial Service
- Election of State Officers
- Mentor/Mentee Dinner
- Organizational meetings of the newly appointed Legislative Issues, Legislative Action, and Administrative Committees
- AAA Delegation Meetings
- TSHL Biennial Awards Dinner

Thanks to Barbara Williams, Chair of the Training Committee, for coordinating the following workshops and presentations during the upcoming Orientation Session:

"Essential Advocates for Older Texans" – Scott Christensen

"TSHL: The Big Picture" – Dr. Sherry Hubbard

"Directory Presentation" – Pat Porter

"TSHL Resolutions: Follow the Process, Get the Results" – Paul Stempko

"TSHL Communications: Ideas, Methods, Options" – Dr. Linda Timmerman

"Where Do I Go From Here" – Barbara Adylett

"TSHL Foundation Organization" – Dr. Elise Brazier & Mark Sanders

"New Website Presentation" – Janice Hosteger & Lori Martin

Hurry! It's ALMOST too late.....

Today, July 1, is the cut-off date to make your hotel reservation at the special TSHL rate (\$99 + taxes). To make your reservation, call the hotel directly at (512) 220-2525 and ask for the TSHL rate. The TSHL Foundation will pay one-half of the room rate for each TSHL member. If you would like a TSHL roommate, please contact Sherry Hubbard (sherryhubb1@gmail.com).

You can still make hotel reservations after July 1, but you are not guaranteed the special TSHL rate!!!!

Despite Uncertain Times, 11 TSHL Resolutions Influence Legislation Enacted in 2021

By: Scott Christensen, Chair, Legislative Action Committee

The 87th Texas Legislative Session in 2021 was anything but dull. Six months prior to the session, the State was looking at a revenue shortfall from the last biennium. In addition to health and mortality concerns, COVID 19 had shut down many businesses or left them only partially open to the consumer. Major sources of State revenue, especially sales tax, were down materially. By the time the Legislative Session started, some recovery had occurred, and the outlook was close to a break-even with the previous biennium. And, marginally better news came in subsequently. Still, it was a session where competition for funding was quite apparent – in some instances fully maintaining of funding levels was a challenge.

In his recent press release certifying the 2022-2023 budget, Comptroller Hegar said the pandemic makes it impossible for anyone to predict with complete accuracy how the economy will unfold through the next budget cycle, which ends Aug. 31, 2023. “As the extreme shifts in economic conditions we’ve experienced in the last 15 months show, we still do not fully understand exactly what will happen with the pandemic’s long-term effects on businesses, workplace practices, employee availability, and consumer behavior,” Hegar said.

But, despite the uncertain economic conditions, combined with significant legislative controversy on major initiatives – drama throughout the session – TSHL succeeded in having 11 resolutions influence enacted legislation to accomplish all or a part of each resolution (as of reports received by the LAC to date). Four of our Top 10 resolutions were addressed in bills enacted into law. Seven others also were addressed in laws enacted. A brief summary of the resolutions that influenced law follows (Bolded R#s indicate a TSHL Top 10 Resolution):

R031 Allow Licensed Physicians to Legally Prescribe Medical Cannabis and Support Evidence-Based Testing of Cannabis (**#1**) – HB1535

R003 Prevent Financial Abuse of Older Adult Citizens (**#5**) – HB1156

R045 Strengthen Public Policy & Initiatives to Expand Rural Broadband Infrastructure (**#9**) – HB5, SB1, SB632, HB3853

R007 Enhance Criminal Degree and Fines for Those Who Perpetrate Internet Fraud Against Older Adults (**#10**) – HB1156

R002 Amend Penal Code to Include and Penalize Undue Influence – HB1156

R016 Amend Telemedicine Law to Include Teledentistry Services – HB2056

R027 Increase Funding to Texas Lifespan Respite Care Program – SB1

R032 Supplemental Funding Plan for State Employee Retirement System/ERS –SB321, HB2

R033 Reject Conversion of Teacher Retirement System/TRS From a Defined Benefit (DB) Plan to a Defined Contribution (DC) Plan, (Appropriate Pension per 2019 Plan) – SB1

R034 Reform TRS-CARE by Increasing State Contribution Rate prior to Increasing Retiree Costs – SB1

R037 Simplify Certification and Recertification for SNAP for Persons aged 60 and older – SB224

You’ve heard me discuss the 360° approach of TSHL – addressing all issues affecting older Texans – not just one! We’ve covered the scope well with our resolutions enacted into law. We’ve addressed medical treatment and research; financial abuse and fraud; communications and connectivity; teledentistry; public sector retiree pensions and healthcare; caregiving respite, and, nutrition. And, the enacted laws from our resolutions will have significant impact on many thousands of older Texans. Remember, also, to look at the agenda items Governor Abbott puts on the special session starting July 8 to see if your resolution might have another chance. This could be especially important for the COVID related ones as further decisions could be made.

The reports received on these 11 resolutions were very organized and well documented. All reports gave readable, brief, highly informative information on the effect of the bills and how they related to our resolutions. The LAC will be compiling the reports into a summary report and send it to all members electronically prior to the July Orientation. **Note:** If you had a resolution with a bill enacted into law that is not listed above, it is because you did not report it to the LAC as requested of all members via email on June 17. **You can still submit it to LAC (Scott C., Paul S., and Sue W.) for the final report, but this must be done by July 8 to be on the report for the Orientation Session.**

READY...SET...CAN'T WAIT TO SEE EVERYONE!

Speaker Rogers sent an earlier email with the following list of things to bring/pack when you come to Orientation – just as a reminder, here they are again:

- Returning Members: bring your current TSHL ID badge.
- Face masks. We will have hand sanitizer, but feel free to bring your own.
- Attire for all sessions at the Marriott Courtyard and Conference Center and meals will be business casual.
- Attire for photos and the Monday afternoon session at the Texas Capitol (hopefully!) will include coat and tie for gentlemen and professional business attire for ladies.
- Bring copies of any materials you have been sent with you.
- Paper to take personal notes on. Pens and/or pencils to write with.
- Returning members bring a 3-ring binder or large folders for your registration packet.
- TSHL bag if you have one.
- All the medications you will need for 4 or 5 days away from home.
- Workout clothes for the fitness room or swimming pool, if you find time to work out.
- Jacket, sweater, etc. for cooler meeting rooms.
- Recommend bringing your laptop, tablet, or smart phone. Remember to bring your chargers for these and charge them at night.
- Your copy of the most current Directory is always good to have along. Joann Blackmon, Operations Chair, will have some Directories for you to pick up and deliver to your area.
- Funds for any incidentals you may want.

INFORMATION: Hotel rooms have a mini-fridge and coffee pot.

All parking is self-parking at no extra charge. Make sure to always keep your vehicle locked.

Remember that you will probably NOT be able to get into your hotel room until 3 pm or later on Sunday. Please be patient with hotel personnel. They will get our rooms ready as quickly as possible. Luggage may be stored with front desk personnel or briefly in the TSHL Operations Center named the Ideas Room, close to the main Check-in desk.

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MET WITH LEGISLATORS

On June 22, members of the Strategic Planning Committee, under the leadership of Charles Scoma, met with several legislators/legislative staff to obtain their input on three key questions: 1) What information would you like to have about TSHL?, 2) How can the TSHL work more closely with Legislators to achieve our purposes?, and 3) How would you like the TSHL to communicate with you and how frequently?. Three Legislators (Senator Jose Menendez, Representative Liz Campos, and Representative Shawn Thierry) attended the virtual meeting, and one, Representative Terry Meza, met with TSHL members following the meeting. Sixteen legislative staff attended (2 in person and 14 via Zoom). Speaker Rogers welcomed the group via Zoom, and Speaker Pro Tem Hubbard represented the TSHL Officers at the meeting. The meeting was very productive, and a report of the proceedings will be provided by Mr. Scoma.

NEWS FROM AAAs

The new Director of the Alamo Area and the Bexar Area AAA is:

Jo Ann Tobias-Molina

jtobias-molina@aacog.com

Phone: 210.362.5240

The new Director of the Tarrant County AAA is:

Shakita Johnson

Shakita.johnson@unitedwaytarrant.org

Phone: 817.258.8128

The new Director of the Texoma AAA is:

Cara Lavender

clavender@tcog.com

903.813.3575

Please note these changes in your
Elections & Credentials Manual

THANKS & APPRECIATION...

As of this writing, 24 former members of TSHL have indicated they will not be able to return for the 19th Session. We express thanks and deep appreciation for the tireless work these members have done for the organization and, more importantly, for older Texans:

Leo Alarcon, Irma Cauley, Mary Jo Collins, Steve Coycault, Presley Donaldson, Carolyn & Garrett Dorsey, Trini Garza, Pat Gleason-Wynn, Walter Graham, Linda & Tom Hesse, Jim Hitt, Ted Hubert, Barbara Lampert, Judy LeUnes, Jenee Liaci, Annie Mazone, Lynda Mitchell, Mari Okabayashi, Linda Parrish, Chris Shoop, Johnny Waldrip, Earl Wall
We will miss each of you.



Speaker: Rhonda Rogers, Paris
Speaker Pro Tem: Sherry Hubbard, Junction
Deputy Speaker Pro Tem: Barbara Aydtlett, Aquilla
Secretary: Bobette Doerrie, Booker
Comptroller: Wayne Merrill, San Angelo

UPCOMING DATES FOR TSHL

- 19th TSHL Orientation Session – July 18-22, 2021, Austin
Executive Comm Meeting, October 2021, TBD
- 19th TSHL Training Session, October 2021, Austin
TSHL Exec Comm Mtg., January 2022, TBD
TSHL Exec Comm Mtg., April/May, 2022, Austin
- 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 23, 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

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Email: timmerlinda@gmail.com Call or Text: 903-654-8249

Welcome New Members!

Twenty-two new members join TSHL for the 19th Legislative Session:

Bonnie Andrews – Bexar AAA
Mercedes Bristol – Bexar AAA
Fred Burrell – North Central Texas AAA
Mary Carlman – Concho Valley AAA
Soyla Castillo – South Plains AAA
Audrey Fisher – Bexar AAA
Ada French-Goring – Dallas AAA
Gary Gerstenhaber – Capital AAA
Jane Glover – Central AAA
Richard Hackney – East Texas AAA
Charles Isaac – Middle Rio Grande AAA
Cindy Jones – Concho Valley AAA
Alan Mathis – Central AAA
Rosemary Mathis – Central AAA
Fred Meyer – Texoma AAA
Charles Pankey – Dallas AAA
Dan Roberts – North Central Texas AAA
Edward Rogers – Alamo AAA
Bert Simon – North Central Texas AAA
David Timmerman – Heart of Texas AAA
David Toback – Dallas AAA
Jack White – Lower Rio Grande AAA

MENTOR PROGRAM

This Session our new members will be paired with an existing TSHL member who will serve as a mentor to them during their first term. Deputy Speaker Pro-Tem Barbara Adylett has developed the program and will coordinate the training for the Mentors. “We’ve talked about doing a Mentor Program for several terms,” said Speaker Rogers, “and we are grateful to Deputy Speaker Pro-Tem Barbara Adylett for bringing the program to fruition.”

Members who joined TSHL during the mid-term may also request a Mentor by contacting Barbara.

A Mentor/Mentee get-acquainted dinner will be held at the hotel on Sunday evening, July 18, at 6 p.m. All TSHL members are invited to attend.