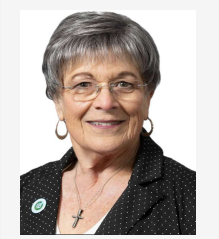
TSHL SILVER BULLETIN 3Q2026

THE 21st TEXAS SILVER-HAIRED Legislature



From the Speaker's Desk

by: Speaker Dr. Sherry Hubbard

As I reflect on the conclusion of the 21st Biennial Texas Silver-Haired Legislative Session, my heart is filled with pride and gratitude for the remarkable work accomplished by our legislators during five productive days of debate, discussion, and deliberation.

Legislators representing the 28 Silver Legislative Districts across Texas gathered in the State Capitol from May 17-21 to fulfill the mission of the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature, to serve as the voice of older Texans. Through thoughtful research, respectful debate, and a shared commitment to improving the lives of older adults, we considered 64 proposed resolutions and ultimately adopted 61 to be forwarded to the Texas Legislature for consideration during its upcoming 90th Session.

These resolutions address a wide range of issues affecting older Texans, including healthcare, caregiving, transportation, housing, consumer protection, long-term care, and many other concerns identified by older Texans from across the state. Each resolution represents hours of work by dedicated legislators who listened to their constituents, researched solutions, and crafted proposals aimed at making Texas a better place in which to age.

While the conclusion of our legislative session marks the completion of one important chapter, it also signals the beginning of another. The real work now begins. Over the coming months, we will transition from legislators to advocates. Our adopted resolutions will be compiled into the 21st TSHL Legislative Report and distributed to the Governor, members of the Texas Legislature, state agencies, the 28 Area Agencies on Aging, and other key stakeholders. We will seek legislative sponsors, educate policymakers, testify before committees, and work tirelessly to ensure that the concerns of older Texans are heard and addressed.

Advocacy is where our resolutions gain the power to become law. Every conversation with a legislator, every community presentation, every letter, email, phone call, and committee testimony helps advance the issues that matter most to older Texans.

I encourage each TSHL legislator to remain engaged. Share our adopted resolutions with your local communities. Meet with your elected officials. Continue gathering input from older Texans and be prepared to tell their stories. Personal experiences often provide the most compelling reasons for legislative action. I want to express my sincere appreciation to every legislator, officer, and committee chair whose dedication made this Legislative Session a success. Your passion, professionalism, and commitment continue to demonstrate the value and importance of the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature. Together, we have identified the needs. Together, we have proposed the solutions. Now, together, we must advocate for their passage. Thank you for your service, your leadership, and your unwavering commitment to improving the lives of older Texans. Our session may be over, but our mission continues with gratitude and determination.

The Texas Silver-Haired Legislature Adopts 61 Resolutions for Consideration by the Texas Legislature

Speaker: Dr. Sherry Hubbard
Communications Chair: Otilia Buantello-Enriquez

The Texas Silver-Haired Legislature (TSHL) concluded its 21st Legislative Session in Austin with the adoption of 61 resolutions to be reported to the 90th Texas Legislature, which convenes in January 2027.

As the authorized voice of older Texans, TSHL legislators engage directly with their communities to identify the issues, challenges, and opportunities affecting Texans age 60 and above. Through research and deliberation, legislators develop resolutions that propose practical solutions for consideration by the Texas Legislature, with the goal of improving the quality of life for older Texans across the state.

Representing the 28 Silver Legislative Districts, TSHL legislators debated 64 resolutions and adopted 61 during the session held in the House Chamber of the Texas Capitol. The adopted resolutions will be compiled into the official 21st TSHL Legislative Report and distributed to the Governor, members of the Texas Legislature, the 28 Area Agencies on Aging, and other key state agencies prior to the upcoming legislative session.

"We sincerely thank our Texas legislators for their continued commitment to addressing the needs of older Texans," said TSHL Speaker Sherry Hubbard. "For 40 years, the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature has been effective in shaping nearly 300 pieces of legislation impacting older adults and their families. I commend our legislators for their dedication, thoughtful debate, and hard work throughout this session. It was not only productive; it was focused and meaningful."

The Texas Silver-Haired Legislature is a nonpartisan, volunteer advisory mock legislature authorized by the Texas Legislature in 1985 through Senate Concurrent Resolution 37 (69th Texas Legislature) to serve as the authorized voice of older Texans in the legislative process. TSHL members are elected by their peers and represent 28 Silver Legislative Districts across the state.

Texans age 60 and older who are registered voters and are interested in serving in the TSHL may learn more by contacting tshl.elections.credentials@gmail.com.

Texas Silver-Haired Legislature
21st Legislative Session May 17–May 21, 2026

Texas Silver-Haired Legislature 21st Legislative Session Top 20 Resolutions from the 2026 TSHL Legislative Session

by: Rhonda Rogers, DRC, SLD-5 ARK

1. **SL001:** Child Related Income & Benefits Follow the Child
2. **SL005:** Provide State Funding Parity to Kinship Caregivers
3. **SL008:** Expand Legal Standing for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
4. **SL013:** Require Acuity-Based Staffing Policies for Alzheimer's Certified ALFs
5. **SL015:** Establish Full Practice Authority for Nurse Practitioners
6. **SL018:** Suspend Funding of Quality Bous Program to Commercial Insurers
7. **SL020:** Increase SNAP Benefits for Older Adults
8. **SL022:** Authority for Advanced Practice Providers to Sign DNR Orders
9. **SL024:** Increase the Texas HHSC Budget for Home-Delivered Meals
10. **SL028:** Strengthen & Expand State Support for LTC Ombudsman Program
11. **SL032:** Incentivize Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation in County and Rural Hospitals
12. **SL035:** Reduce the Cost of Homeowners Insurance
13. **SL042:** Mandate Backup Power Generators in Skilled Nursing Facilities
14. **SL045:** Allocation of Medicaid Fraud Recoveries to Rural Hospitals
15. **SL048:** Expand Access for Rural Transit
16. **SL050:** Enhance the Quality of Care for Older Texans in Texas Nursing Facilities
17. **SL054:** Remove Delivery Charges/Taxes on Senior Centers' Electric Bills
18. **SL055:** Prevent Water/Energy Intensive Industries from Shifting Utility Costs to Residential Consumers
19. **SL056:** Improve Broadband Equity, Accountability, and Universal Connectivity
20. **SL058:** Update Rate of Capture to Protect Groundwater Availability

WELCOME!

We were honored to welcome Mr. Steve Munistri, Senior Advisor to Governor Greg Abbott, who greeted Legislators of the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature, in May. We appreciate his support and participation.

Who is the Aging Texas Well Advisory Committee?

by: Charles Scoma, SLD-26 TAR

I was honored to have been appointed to the Aging Texas Well Advisory Committee (ATWAC) by the Health and Human Services Executive Commissioner in 2023. The ATWAC consists of twelve members with diverse backgrounds serving two-year terms. It has been one of the most enjoyable experiences of my thirty-eight years in community service. I am currently in my second term and serve as Vice Chair of the ATWAC.

The ATWAC was created by Executive Order RP-42, issued by Governor Rick Perry on April 1, 2005, to advise the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) on the needs of an aging Texas population.

RP-42 mandates that HHSC biennially produce an Aging Texas Well Strategic Plan to be submitted to the Texas Governor and state leadership, with guidance from the Aging Texas Well Advisory Committee. The plan is the state's comprehensive master plan on aging that "identifies aging needs and priorities, guides state readiness, and promotes increased community preparedness for an aging Texas population." As a member of the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature (TSHL), I take some of these issues and proposed resolutions for consideration in the TSHL legislative process for potential inclusion in our Legislative Report.

I was honored to chair an ATWAC committee in 2024 that reviewed the status of the current Aging Texas Well Strategic Plan strategies and proposed resolutions for modifications and additions to the document in a formal recognition of the importance of the ATWAC to older Texans. The 21st TSHL Legislature passed a consent resolution expressing its appreciation for the continued leadership and vision of the Texas Legislature, the Governor, and the members of the Aging Texas Well Advisory Committee.

The Honorable Charles Scoma, Texas Silver-Haired Legislator, speaks to the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature at the Capitol during the 21st Biennial Session in May.

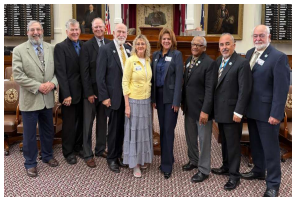
Protecting the Homes of Older Texans Is Vital

by: Janet Alvarez Gonzalez, SLD-25 DAL

As Texas home values soar, many older adults face a quiet crisis: being priced out of the very homes they have owned and maintained for decades. While the 89th Texas Legislature successfully froze school property taxes for seniors aged 65 and older, all other county and municipal property taxes continue to climb based on rapid home appreciation. This places an unsustainable burden on older Texans — the fastest-growing segment of the state's population. To address this growing challenge, I, Dr. Janet Alvarez Gonzalez, Dr. Eric Hammersen, and Carol Hammersen co-authored Resolution SL038, "Freeze Gross Property Taxes on Homesteads for Texans Aged 60+." It respectfully urges the 90th Texas Legislature to extend that critical freeze on property tax increases to all homestead property taxes for older Texans (defined in Texas law as those aged 60 and older), with no property value limits.

This resolution is essential for the security of our communities. A substantial 70% of Texans aged 62 and older rely heavily on Social Security to make ends meet, and 45% depend on a fixed retirement income. When property tax increases outpace income growth, seniors are forced into devastating financial choices — keeping their homes or paying for healthcare, utilities, and daily food expenses. Current research from AARP Texas indicates that over 765,000 households headed by older adults are legally "cost-burdened," meaning they are forced to spend at least 30% of their limited income strictly on housing. Furthermore, more than 12% of older Texas adults live below the federal poverty level, placing them at immediate risk of displacement.

By stabilizing these taxes, this resolution defends the fundamental right of older Texans to age in place with safety, housing stability, and financial dignity. It allows vulnerable citizens to redirect their limited income to essential living needs without fear of losing their properties. This initiative is not just about tax relief; it is about honoring older Texans and protecting the homes they built.



The Texas Silver-Haired Legislator Veterans

Using Medicaid Fraud Recoveries to Sustain Rural Hospitals

by: Hope Williams SLD-9 PRB

One of the proposed resolutions from the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature is Resolution SL045, "Allocation of Medicaid Fraud Recoveries to Rural Hospitals." This resolution asks the State Legislature to require that the state's share of all financial recoveries obtained by the Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit be deposited into the state's Medicaid fund and designated for rural hospitals. These funds would help offset uncompensated care costs associated with Medicare-eligible Medicaid patients. Texas has the highest percentage of uninsured residents per capita and remains one of 11 states that has not expanded Medicaid.

Since 2020, the Texas Medicaid Fraud Control Unit has recovered more than $1 billion in settlements, judgments, and restitution for taxpayers. In fiscal year 2023 alone, Texas recovered over $203 million, followed by $125 million in 2025, from healthcare fraud cases and related enforcement actions. One major case resulted in $26 million in restitution and a 10-year prison sentence for a Texas physician.

Of Texas' 254 counties, 133 are rural**.** Among them**,** 47 have no hospital**,** and 68 have only one. The Texas Hospital Association reports approximately 147–148 rural hospitals**,** and between 2010 and 2020, 26 rural hospitals closed across 22 communities.

Texas has 4.5–5 million residents aged 65 and older, with 1.07 million living in rural areas. These older adults rely heavily on rural hospitals due to higher Medicare usage, chronic illness, transportation barriers, and limited alternatives for emergency or inpatient care. Rural hospitals report that 55% of their inpatients are Medicare beneficiaries, and 20% of older rural Texans are covered by Medicaid.

With many counties already lacking hospital access, the closure of even 25 additional rural hospitals could affect 250,000 to nearly 500,000 older Texans. Directing Medicaid fraud recovery funds to rural hospitals could prevent further closures and ensure continued care for Texas' rapidly growing aging population.

We extend our sincere appreciation to Senator Pete Flores, District 24, for administering the oath of office to the Legislators of the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature and helping launch the 21st TSHL Legislative Session.

The THIN Resolution

by: Dr. Sherry Hubbard, TSHL Speaker, SLD-10 CNV

Sometimes the best legislative ideas come from real-life experiences.

While driving westbound on Interstate 10, I suddenly encountered a large tire lying in the middle of my lane. After safely avoiding it, I continued my trip only to come upon another dangerous hazard about ten miles later—a deer carcass straddling the center of two westbound lanes. Either obstacle could have caused a serious accident, especially for motorists traveling at highway speeds.

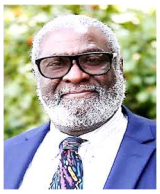
As I drove on, one question kept coming to mind: *Who do I call to report these hazards?* I had no idea.

That experience inspired me to write a resolution proposing the creation of the Texas Highway Information Network (THIN)—a simple, three-digit, non-emergency reporting number, such as 844, that motorists could use to quickly report roadway hazards, disabled vehicles, debris, flooding, damaged guardrails, or other dangerous conditions.

A dedicated reporting system would allow the appropriate authorities to respond promptly, improving highway safety, reducing preventable crashes, and helping protect vulnerable drivers across Texas. Such a system would be especially valuable on rural highways, where hazards may go unreported for extended periods of time.

The Texas Silver-Haired Legislature has long sought practical solutions that improve the lives of Texans.

THIN is one such solution—simple, cost-effective, and potentially lifesaving.



Why I Joined the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature

by: Anderson Land, Jr., SLD-15 SET

My decision to join the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature (TSHL) grew from many years working in operations and facilities management within the healthcare industry—particularly in long-term care and acute care—as well as from my years in public service. I wanted to continue advocating for older Texans and helping address the issues that affect their quality of life.

As a Vietnam-era Navy veteran, former city councilman, former mayor, nonprofit leader, and licensed real estate professional, I have spent much of my life working to improve the communities I serve. Through those experiences, I witnessed firsthand the challenges many older adults face, including access to healthcare, affordable housing, transportation, caregiving support, and economic security.

Like many Texans, I have watched our senior population grow rapidly. Older adults have contributed greatly to our state and nation, yet their voices are often underrepresented in the legislative process. When I learned about the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature and its mission to identify and advocate for issues affecting Texans age 60 and older, I recognized an opportunity to continue serving in a meaningful way.

The TSHL provides a unique forum where experienced citizens can study important issues, develop policy recommendations, and communicate directly with state leaders. I was particularly drawn to its commitment to nonpartisan advocacy and its focus on improving the quality of life for current and future generations of older Texans.

Serving as a Texas Silver-Haired Legislator allows me to combine my background in public service with my passion for helping others. It also gives me the opportunity to work alongside dedicated individuals from across Texas who share a common goal: ensuring that older Texans are heard, respected, and represented.

I joined the TSHL because I believe that service does not end with retirement. Our experience, knowledge, and commitment remain valuable resources for our communities and our state. Through the Texas Silver-Haired Legislature, I am honored to continue contributing to the conversation and advocating for policies that help older Texans live with dignity, independence, and opportunity.

The Voice of Older Texans: Advocacy in Action

by: Laurinda Boyd, SLD 18 ALM

In May, I had the opportunity to attend my first legislative session in Austin in my new role as a Texas Silver-Haired Legislator. It was the first time I had ever been in the House chamber as a participant rather than a spectator, and it was incredibly educational to see firsthand how the House works to adopt resolutions, move legislation forward, and how the TSHL contributes to that process. And yes — I even got to sit in those big brown chairs with the Texas star on the back.

In January, I was sworn in by my Texas Representative, Wes Virdell, District 53. Someone asked me recently why I chose to take on this role. After being the primary caretaker for four elderly family members over a span of twenty years, I learned how important it is to speak up and be their voice.

By the time many elderly citizens are being cared for by family members, paid caregivers, or nursing facilities, they often no longer have a clear mind or the ability to communicate effectively with people in positions of authority. Not everyone is fortunate enough to have a family member who can care for them daily or the financial means to pay for home care. These vulnerable individuals need someone to advocate for them. My hope is that through this volunteer position, I can be a small part of that voice.

Young Texas Visitors in The Balcony

21st Texas Silver-Haired Legislature Opening Session
Sunday, May 17, 2026

Adjournment
May 21, 2026

THE 21st
TEXAS
SILVER-HAIRED
Legislature

Silver Bulletin is Published Quarterly
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TSHL Calendar of Events (2026–2027)

▶ **July 7, 2026** — EC Meeting, 3:00 PM (Zoom)

▶ **October 5–8, 2026** — Delivery of LR

▶ **October 6, 2026** — EC Meeting, 4:00 PM (Austin – Hotel)

▶ **January 1–15, 2027** — Officer Candidate Filing Period

▶ **January 1 – February 28, 2027** — Legislator Candidate Filing Period

▶ **January 12 – May 31, 2027** — 90th Texas Legislature in Session

▶ **February 8–11, 2027** — Advocacy in the Capitol

▶ **February 8, 2027** — Campaign speeches at EC Meeting, 4:00 PM; voting at April session.

▶ **February 9, 2027** — TSHLF Gala

▶ **April 5–8, 2027** — Advocacy Meeting

▶ **April 6, 2027** — Session Meeting, 4:00 PM

Candidates for officer positions declare and present campaign speeches at the EC Meeting and deliver legislative reports to newly-elected Texas legislators; EC Meeting to be zoomed to all legislators.

The following is the future date/ deadline for upcoming Silver Bulletin publications:

October (4Q2026) Publication
Articles and pictures must be received between September 1st and the 15th

Embracing the Legacy; Forging the Future

Texas Silver-Haired Legislature is a statewide, all-volunteer, self-funded community education, research, and advocacy organization supported by contributions through our TSHL Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. To make your contribution, please go to TSHLF.ORG and click the Donation Tab on our website at: https://www.paypal.com/donate/?cmd=_s%20xclick&hosted_button_id=XQDCBSKM8YPDG&source=url