

Oklahoma Silver Haired Legislature

A Voice
for Older
Oklahomans





A Voice for Older Oklahomans Since 1981

For more than three decades, the Oklahoma Silver Haired Legislature has been a voice speaking for the best interests of older Oklahomans. The Oklahoma Legislature created the OSHL in 1981 to educate older Oklahomans about the legislative process and bring the needs of this growing population to the legislators' attention for action.

OSHL representatives are recognized and respected as a voice for older Oklahomans. When OSHL representatives work with state legislators to meet the needs of older Oklahomans, it is an exhilarating and rewarding experience.

Become an OSHL Representative

Candidates for OSHL must be 60 years of age or older and must be registered to vote in the Oklahoma precinct they seek to represent. Candidates not already OSHL members must join OSHL prior to, or at the time of, announcing their candidacy. Silver Haired Legislators are elected for two-year terms in 11 districts which correspond to the state's 11 Area Agencies on Aging planning and service areas. The OSHL has 22 senators, 44 representatives and 66 alternates. Elections are held in even-numbered years.

Annual Meetings

The OSHL meets each year in September at the Oklahoma Capitol.

In odd-numbered years, the OSHL holds a two-day legislative session modeled after the Oklahoma Legislature. Bills and resolutions are considered and acted upon in

committees before being passed by the OSHL Senate and House. The bills and resolutions favorably acted upon are considered and prioritized in the joint OSHL session. The top five are submitted to the Oklahoma Legislature for consideration. Silver Haired Legislators also consider interim studies.

In even-numbered years, a two-day training session familiarizes Silver Haired Legislators with the legislative process and informs them about senior issues. OSHL House and Senate leaders are elected by their peers. Senate leadership positions include President Pro Tempore and Floor Leader of the Senate and four committee chairs and vice-chairs. House leadership positions include the Speaker and Speaker Pro Tempore of the House of Representatives and four committee chairs and vice-chairs.

Contact Your OSHL Representative

To find information about your local Silver Haired Legislator, contact your local AAA by calling the Senior Info Line at 1-800-211-2116.

Accomplishments

The OSHL has been instrumental in the passage of many laws which benefit older Oklahomans:

- Silver Alert
- Living Wills (Advance Directives), Do-Not-Resuscitate Consent Form and Consumer Protections
- Long-Term Care Ombudsman Bill
- Spousal Impoverishment Act
- Alzheimer's Disclosure Bill
- Hiring of only certified nurse's aides by nursing facilities
- Prescription medications for low-income elderly
- Increased staff-to-patient ratio in nursing homes
- Interest on funds in Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust Fund are used for health care and "well being of seniors"
- Establishment of Office of Elder Rights and Legal Services Developer in the OKDHS ASD
- Oklahoma Public Guardianship Act

Funding and Support

The OSHL is supported through membership dues, fundraisers and donations. Membership dues are \$12 per year. The Oklahoma Silver Haired Alumni Association provides financial and advocacy support for the OSHL. Oklahomans may support the OSHL by marking a donation on their state income tax returns and donations may also be made directly to OSHL. Call 405-521-2281 for more information.

OSHL is also assisted by the OKDHS Aging Services Division and the Oklahoma Area Agencies on Aging.

Join OSHL

- Learn about the legislative process
- Develop legislative proposals for the Oklahoma Legislature
- Provide leadership in your community

**Become a voice
for older Oklahomans!**

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