

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

If you want to become a candidate for the SHL, election rules and procedures may be obtained from the Silver Haired Legislature or local Councils on Aging or Area Agencies on Aging.

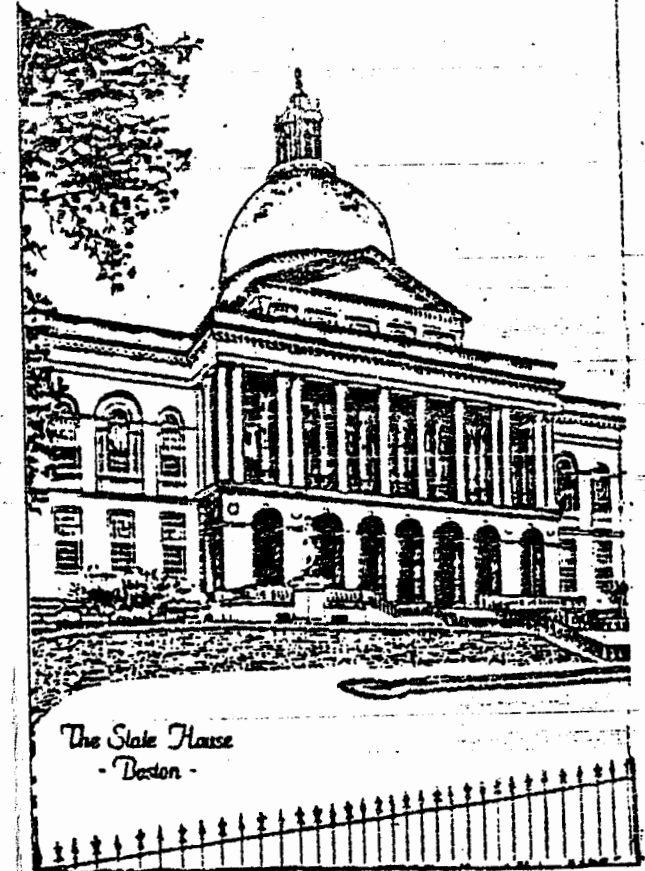
If you do not want to become a candidate, you can still be involved by supporting the candidate(s) of your choice. In addition, suggestions concerning issues that are germane to the elderly are welcomed by SHL members.

Once the members of the SHL have been elected, you should continue to give your support to them. One of the first jobs for SHL legislators is to draft bills to be acted upon by the SHL and referred to members of the General Court. Your help is needed in determining issues and drafting bills. When bills are adopted as priority legislation for the SHL, your continuing support is needed if they are to be enacted into law.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
SILVER HAIRED LEGISLATURE
5th Floor, McCormack Building
One Ashburton Place
Boston, Massachusetts 02108-1696
Telephone: 617-222-7408

ONE ASHBURTON PLACE
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02108-1696

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
SILVER HAIRED LEGISLATURE



"TO PROVIDE AN EDUCATION
ADVOCACY PROGRAM FOR SENIORS
TO BECOME MORE AWARE OF THE
LEGISLATIVE PROCESS, TO ADVOCATE
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, AND TO
ENCOURAGE ADDITIONAL
PARTICIPATION FOR SENIOR LEADERS."

From guidelines adopted
by the Department of
Elder Affairs — March 1981

WHAT IS THE SILVER HAired LEGISLATURE?

The Silver Haired Legislature (SHL) is composed of 40 Senators and 160 Representatives. All are over age 60 and are elected from the same districts as members of the General Court. The SHL meets annually for a State House Conference in November to develop legislation that responds to the needs and concerns of the elder residents of Massachusetts. In addition, SHL members work throughout the year with members of the General Court to advocate for bills submitted by SHL members and adopted as priority legislation at the State House Conference.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE SHL?

To provide the opportunity for elder citizens of Massachusetts, through the election of Silver Haired Legislators, to identify priority concerns and to develop legislative proposals that will insure the dignity and independence of all elderly persons in the Commonwealth.

WHO MAY BECOME A SILVER HAired LEGISLATOR?

Any person over the age of 60 who is a registered voter and a resident of the district he/she will represent is eligible to be a candidate for the SHL. Candidates may run for the Senate or the House of Representatives. The term of office is two years. Members may run for re-election to succeed themselves.

HOW ARE SILVER HAired LEGISLATORS ELECTED?

SHL elections are conducted by local Area Agencies on Aging in conjunction with the Councils on Aging. Only citizens over age 60 who are registered voters of the district in which they live are eligible to vote.

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SILVER HAired LEGISLATOR?

Primary responsibilities of a Silver Haired Legislator are to:-

- Advocate for legislation, particularly on issues and concerns affecting elderly citizens.
- Testify at hearings on SHL legislation.
- Meet with and listen to seniors in their districts to develop and draft bills for consideration at the SHL State House Conference.
- Report to senior groups in his/her district on legislation affecting the elderly.
- Attend and participate in the three-day State House Conference.
- Attend scheduled SHL meetings.
- Activate letter and telephone campaigns to support pending legislation.

WHEN AND WHERE ARE SHL SESSIONS HELD?

The annual State House Conference of the SHL is held in Boston. The final session of the Conference is held in the Chamber of the Massachusetts General Court. Other meetings during the year are scheduled by the SHL Leadership Committee.

WHAT IS THE SHL LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE?

Officers and Committee Chairpersons and Vice Chairpersons comprise the Leadership Committee. Officers are the President of the Senate and President pro tem elected by SHL Senators and the Speaker of the House and Speaker pro tem elected by the SHL Representatives. A Senator and Representative Chairman and Vice-Chairman are elected by the members of six committees: Commerce and Labor, Education and Housing, General Legislation, Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs, and Ways and Means. The Leadership Committee meets monthly when the General Court is in session.

ARE SHL MEMBERS REIMBURSED FOR THEIR EXPENSES?

All expenses incurred in the discharge of SHL duties are the responsibility of individual members.