



Missouri SHL Bulletin

February 2024

A Newsletter for those who promote conscientious legislative advocacy for Missouri's older adults.

Missouri Silver Haired Legislature Hosts Annual Senior Advocacy Day at the Capitol

Submitted By John Kramer, SHL President

On January 31, 2024, 70 Missouri Silver Haired Legislature (SHL) delegates and coordinators participated in a regular meeting of the Board of Directors, received words of encouragement from various luminaries, and delivered advocacy messages to their respective Legislators. Delegates highlighted SHL's past achievements as well as its current priorities listed in the 2024 SHL brochure.



JOHN KRAMER, SHL PRESIDENT,
MARY KRAMER, SHL HOUSE
MINORITY LEADER.

SHL Top Five Priorities for 2024

1. Increase funding for transportation services to provide additional options for seniors.
2. Increase accessibility to public buildings for individuals with disabilities.
3. Require special dementia training in long-term care facilities.
4. Increase the Medicaid Personal Needs Allowance (PNA) to \$100 per month with an inflation rider.
5. Money recovered by MO HealthNet to be returned to the MO HealthNet program.

Last fall, SHL delegates came together for their 50th Annual Conference and chose these issues as their Top Five

Priorities to support for the 2024 legislative session (see graphic to the left). On Page 9, is a graphic with a list of additional legislative issues SHL supports. The 2024 SHL brochure listing priorities, issues and officers can be found at:

<https://health.mo.gov/seniors/silverhaired/>



Photos From the Jan. 31 Annual SHL Senior Advocacy Day at the Missouri State Capitol

Thank you to all who submitted photos to the *SHL Bulletin*.



(LEFT TO RIGHT) BARB MERCADANTE, SHL AGING AHEAD; SEN. DOUG BECK (DISTRICT 1); AND DAVE CARR, SHL AGING AHEAD.



(LEFT TO RIGHT) REBECCA SMITH, SHL CARE CONNECTION; AND REP. PEGGY MCGAUGH (DISTRICT 7).



SHL TREASURER, THOMAS EYSEL, GIVES THE FINANCIAL REPORT DURING THE BUSINESS MEETING.



(LEFT TO RIGHT) BENITA JONES, ST. LOUIS SHL; SEN. STEVE ROBERTS (DISTRICT 5); AND SHEILA BASSOPPO-MOYO, SHL COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE.



(LEFT TO RIGHT) REP. DON MAYHEW (DISTRICT 24); PEGGY DON YATES, SHL SECRETARY; AND MARK PRICE, SHL SENIOR AGE.



BARB ITTNER, SHL PAST-PRESIDENT AND SHL REGION X.



SHL AGING AHEAD DELEGATION ENJOYING THEIR RIDE TO ADVOCACY DAY AT THE CAPITOL.



RIGHT—TWO SHL BUSINESS MEETING PHOTOS.

Photos From the Jan. 31 Annual SHL Senior Advocacy Day at the Missouri State Capitol



SHL BUSINESS MEETING.



(LEFT TO RIGHT) MARY WESCHE, SHL AGING AHEAD; REP. MARLENE TERRY (DISTRICT 66); AND LARY MOHL, SHL AGING AHEAD.



(LEFT TO RIGHT) BARBARA GRADY, SHL ST. LOUIS; GAIL MARTIN-MEYERS, SHL ST. LOUIS; REP. KIMBERLY-ANN COLLINS (DISTRICT 77); SHEILA BASSOPPO-MOYO AND BENITA JONES, SHL ST. LOUIS.



JAKE LUEBBERING, DHSS DSDS DEPUTY DIRECTOR ADDRESSES DELEGATES DURING THE BUSINESS MEETING.



SHL BUSINESS MEETING.



NICOLE BRUEGGMAN, MISSOURI COUNCIL ON AGING (MCOA) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SPEAKS AT THE SHL BUSINESS MEETING.



JULIE PEETZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MISSOURI ASSOCIATION ON AREA AGENCIES ON AGING (MA4), SPEAKS AT THE SHL BUSINESS MEETING.



(LEFT TO RIGHT) WENDY BRUEMMER, DSDS CONSTITUENT SERVICES MANAGER AND KAYLA CURRY, STATE SHL COORDINATOR.

New Aging & Disability Bill Tracker Resource

The Missouri Council on Aging (Coa) has created a Bill Tracker, where you can see what bills are currently active in the legislature and who is sponsoring.

Subscribe to the Missouri legislative process by tracking bills using this link <https://fastdemocracy.com/shared-bills/?sharing-bill-list-id=zoHEogweaiL9>. Or, scan the QR code to the right. You will be asked for your email and if you want updates daily or weekly.



Bill tracker will be updated with bills impacting older adults as the session continues. You are encouraged to check the resource regularly and call your senator or representatives about bills for which you are passionate.

Attend a Town Hall Near You

Aging with Dignity: Missouri's Master Plan on Aging

Submitted by Kayla Curry, Community Relations Supervisor, Office of Constituent and Emergency Services, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

Aging with Dignity: Missouri's Master Plan on Aging (MPA) is a multi-sector initiative aimed at countering age and disability discrimination, dismantling barriers to graceful aging, and fostering dignity among Missouri's aging citizens. The overarching goal of the master plan on aging (MPA) is that all Missourians, regardless of age or ability, will have access to person-centered programs and services necessary to help them age in their environment of choice and in a safe and healthy manner.



AGING WITH DIGNITY
Missouri's Master Plan on Aging

We need your help! Meetings will be held across the state to gather feedback from local individuals who know about issues and needs in their communities. These in-person town hall-style events are open to anyone who wants to influence the direction of the state when it comes to aging in Missouri. On the next page is a list of the 10 town halls that will be occurring in locations near you at the end of February and beginning of March. Make plans to attend and share with others so we can ensure their voices are heard and that Missouri's MPA reflects the needs and wishes of its citizens.

If you have additional questions about the MPA or you would like to get involved, visit the [MPA webpage](#) for more information.

MISSOURI MASTER PLAN ON AGING TOWN HALL *Events*

SPONSORING AGENCY	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
AGING BEST	2/26	9-11 AM	AGING BEST 2027 CHRISTY DR JEFFERSON CITY
CARE CONNECTION	2/27	2-4 PM	WARRENSBURG COMMUNITY CENTER 445 E GAY ST WARRENSBURG
YOUNG AT HEART	2/28	9-11 AM	EAST HILLS LIBRARY THEATER ROOM 502 N WOODBINE RD ST JOSEPH
NORTHEAST MISSOURI AREA AGENCY ON AGING	2/29	2-4 PM	MONROE CITY NUTRITON CENTER 314 S MAIN ST MONROE CITY
MID-AMERICA REGIONAL COUNCIL/ SHEPHERD'S CENTER KC	3/1	9 AM-12 PM	KAUFFMAN FOUNDATION CENTER 4801 ROCKHILL RD KANSAS CITY
AGING AHEAD	3/5	9-11 AM	MARYLAND HEIGHTS COMM CENTER 2300 MCKELVEY RD MARYLAND HEIGHTS
ST LOUIS AREA AGENCY ON AGING	3/5	12:30-2:30 PM	O'FALLON PARK REC COMPLEX 4343 W FLORISSANT AVE STL
AGING MATTERS	3/6	2-4 PM	SHOW ME CENTER 1333 N SPRIGG ST CAPE GIRARDEAU
SENIORAGE	3/7	2-4 PM	SOUTHSIDE SENIOR CENTER 2215 S FREMONT AVE SPRINGFIELD
REGION X AREA AGENCY ON AGING	3/8	2-4 PM	JOPLIN SENIOR CENTER 2616 S PICHER AVE JOPLIN



WE WANT TO KNOW THE NEEDS OF OLDER ADULTS, ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES, AND CAREGIVERS IN YOUR AREA. JOIN A TOWN HALL MEETING. SHARE YOUR INPUT.



Missouri Council on Aging Launches Learning Labs

Submitted by Nicole Brueggeman, Executive Director of the Missouri Council on Aging



Last fall, in anticipation of the Legislative Session, the Missouri Council on Aging (MCoA) introduced *Learning Labs*. Each lab offers a structured learning experience for Missourians to delve into specific issues affecting older adults in the state.



Learning Labs are time-limited (typically 30 minutes) and provide participants with the opportunity to gain insights into the issue, and its significance for older adults, explore both supporting and opposing viewpoints, and identify the key advocates for the cause within Missouri.

When possible, participants also receive informative talking points related to the topic.

Nicole Brueggeman, Executive Director of the MCoA, commented, “*Learning Labs* are akin to dynamic policy briefings. They assist us in comprehending various topics and issues while providing valuable insights on how to effectively communicate and frame these issues.”

Marjorie Moore, Executive Director of VOYCE, has played a pivotal role as a facilitator in the Learning Labs. She skillfully leads each discussion, ensuring that learning objectives are achieved within a concise timeframe.

Additional Learning Labs are scheduled for February 2024. If you are not currently receiving updates about these sessions, please reach out to Nicole Brueggeman at nicole@missouricouncilonaging.org



Missouri Legislative Calendar		Put on your Calendar	
March 14-22	Spring Break	Feb. 26 to March 8	Town Hall Events for Master Plan on Aging (see page 5)
April 1	Easter Break—no session	Aug. 14	Senior Day at the Missouri State Fair—Sedalia
May 3	Appropriations bills must be truly agreed to and sent to the Governor by 6 p.m.	Sept. 9-11	Show Me Summit on Aging & Health—Springfield
May 17	Last Day of Session	Oct. 15-17	SHL Annual Legislative Session—Jefferson City
Sept. 11	Veto Session		

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Relates to Childcare Legislation

By Sheila Bassoppo-Moyo, SHL Communications Committee

During Senior Advocacy Day on January 31st at the State Capitol, Representative Mike Henderson, District 117, spoke to SHL delegates on issues being considered by the Legislature including more funding for childcare. This relates directly to the SHL's support for establishing a commission to conduct public hearings on ways state government can support grandparents raising grandchildren.



According to the Children's Defense Fund website, in Missouri, approximately 43,907 grandparents report that they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them. About 40% of these grandparents live in households without the children's parents present.



REP. MIKE HENDERSON (DISTRICT 117)

Representative Henderson said assistance to families may come in the form of tax credits. "We have to do something to expand childcare assistance. Because of the pandemic, a lot of childcare centers shutdown." He said many mothers cannot go back to work because childcare is out of reach for families. "Childcare is so expensive because of the lack of it. It is not our job to fix the problem, but we are asking what can we do to make access to childcare easier for these families."

It is a financial strain for older adults raising grandchildren. Grandparents are often retired or working part-time and lack of childcare assistance adds to the financial responsibility of raising children. For some grandparents taking care of grandchildren can deplete their retirement savings to secure guardianship if they are in a situation where they have to assume the role of a parent.

Representative Henderson said the bill has already been in Committee in the House and is a priority for the Governor. He said there is a good chance of something being done on childcare.

GRANDPARENTS ARE OFTEN RETIRED OR WORKING PART-TIME AND LACK OF CHILDCARE ASSISTANCE ADDS TO THE FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF RAISING CHILDREN.

St. Louis Five Star Senior Center Older Adults Welcome in 2024

By Barb Mercadante, Aging Ahead, SHL Communications Committee

Following a fun event at the Five Star Senior Center in St. Louis, the older adults were willing to share some of their childhood memories of New Year's Eve traditions and celebrations.

Mary B. recalled always attending the First Baptist Church services on New Year's Eve.

Tammy W. shared at midnight, along with her brother and sister, would open their front door and yell Happy New Year and blow horns.

Carol B. remembered getting together with girls in their neighborhood and playing games on New Year's Eve. At midnight they would go outside and make a lot of noise.

Rhoda G. grew up in New York City. She remembered attending midnight mass on New Year's Eve at Sacred Heart Church.

Mary H. fondly remembered her baby sister was born on New Year's Eve. Each year they still celebrate New Year's Eve and her sister's birthday.

Paul K. grew up in northeast Iowa in the late 40's. At the age of 5 or 6 years old, Paul remembered fresh snow on New Year's Eve. His Dad let them go outside and make snow angels. Also, they made snow cones. That was when you could eat snow safely.

After the seniors shared their memories, it was time to celebrate 2024! Although the timing of their New Year's Eve countdown wasn't at midnight (more like 12:00 noon on Dec. 29th) their New Year's Party was perfectly orchestrated by Gabrielle Meyer, Director of Community Outreach and Client Engagement. Also, joining in the celebration was Carla Evans, Executive

Director of the Five Star Senior Center. The New Year's Eve Party was a great way to welcome in 2024!



SHL Will Also Support Legislative Action for the Following Issues

- Income tax deduction for transportation of seniors for qualified organizations.
- Tax rebate for seniors to get energy efficient home updates.
- Establish a commission for grandparents raising grandchildren assistance.
- Raise the Aged and Disabled Waiver from 85% of the federal poverty level (FPL) to 100% of the FPL.
- Increase Medicaid asset level.
- Restore funding for the MO Rx Program for all eligible Medicare beneficiaries.
- Funding for the Hearing Aid Distribution Program.
- Updating the Missouri Property Tax Credit (PTC) also known as the Circuit Breaker.



SIGN UP TODAY!

For Public Advocacy E-Newsletter

To subscribe, go to <http://agingahead.org/missouri-shl>

All SHL delegates are encouraged to become subscribers and to recruit others to subscribe.

Use these links to contact your legislator(s) to advocate for legislation impacting Missouri Seniors.



<https://house.mo.gov>
<http://senate.mo.gov>

<https://www.mo.gov>
<http://www.govtrack.us>

From the links you can track bills, committee hearings, contact legislators, and more.



Also subscribe to the SHL Advocacy update at: <https://www.agingahead.org/missouri-shl/>

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