

NCSTHL Update

Issues committees work to finalize legislative proposals

The NC Senior Tar Heel Legislature (NCSTHL) operates within a two-year legislative cycle, mirroring the work of the NC General Assembly (NCGA). Currently, it's an even-numbered year and NCSTHL members' goal is to recommend to the NCGA enactment of legislative measures that will ensure the quality of life available to NC's older adults across the state when it convenes in the 2023 long session.

For NCSTHL members, the winter and spring were spent studying the most pressing challenges facing older adults, considering information and data from the state's aging experts and deliberating impacts and solutions. In June and July, NCSTHL members submitted their ideas for legislation that could serve to enhance the lives of older adults. The NCSTHL's Resolutions Standing Committee has received the ideas and is working to sort them into one of the six categories of the issues committees, which are tasked with the important work of distilling the ideas from the NCSTHL into proposals that protect and empower NC seniors. Between now and October, each issues committee will convene to discuss, debate, and distill the ideas assigned to them into three proposals, for a total of 18 possible proposals. Then each member of the NCSTHL will deliberate the merits and impact of the proposals. At the October General Session, the NCSTHL will vote as a body to approve the top three to five proposals as its legislative priorities for consideration by the NCGA in 2023.

- Rosalyn Pettyford (Durham County) is the chair of the Crime/Safety/Security Issues Committee, which focuses on physical, emotional and financial threats faced by older adults.
- Former Speaker Rev. Dwight Cartner (Davidson County) is the chair of the Enrichment Opportunities Issues Committee, which addresses gaps faced by older adults who seek local enrichment activities such as education, exercise, well-being and socialization outlets.
- Kaye White (Dare County) chairs the General Legislation Issues Committee, which pinpoints issues that do not fall into the other issues committee categories, but which are critically important. Topics might include livable communities, work skills development, financial education, veterans and technology, among others.
- Currently under selection, the chair of the Health Issues Committee guides the team to identify challenges faced by older adults with respect to all aspects of healthcare, ranging from Medicaid expansion to the need for doctors and nurses specializing in geriatric fields, and programs that advance coverage for social determinants of health, such as Home and Community-Based Block Grant services, among others.
- Bill Lamb (Wake County) chairs the Long-Term Care Issues Committee, which addresses shortcomings in both the institutional and private setting of long-term care, including resident-to-staff ratios in assisted living and skilled nursing facilities and upholding residents' rights.
- Gayla Woody (Gaston County) is assigned to chair the Service Access Issues Committee, which detects obstacles that stand in the way of older

adults who need to access supportive services such as broadband, tele-health and addressing the digital divide.

NCSTHL Speaker Norma Duncan (Mitchell County) shared: "We are facing many challenges as we strive to meet the needs and demands of a rapidly growing aging population. North Carolina ranks 9th in the nation of age 60+ population and, unfortunately, we have gaps in our safety nets. There are 11,000 older adults currently on waiting lists for home-based services that would help them remain active, independent and healthy. The chairs of our issues committees are strong advocates and eager to establish legislative priorities that ensure North Carolina's older adults can age with dignity and respect."

The North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature was created as a nonpartisan, unicameral body by the North Carolina General Assembly with the passage of Senate Bill 479 in July 1993. Its purpose is to identify the most pressing issues facing older adults across the state and propose new legislation that will improve their quality of life. The NCSTHL is comprised of delegates and alternates representing each of North Carolina's 100 counties, supported by the area agencies on aging serving the state's 16 service areas. For more information about NCSTHL, visit ncseniortarheellegislature.org.

The NCSTHL delegate for Carteret County is Victor Heinrich, who can be reached at veheinrich1@gmail.com, and the alternate delegate is Amy Lock, PhD, reachable at amy@amylock.com. Mr. Heinrich and Dr. Lock are on the Health Issues Committee.

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 <p>PKS YARD WASTE PICK-UP DATES September 13, 27</p>	 <p>PKS RECYCLE DATES "A" Week: September 12, 26 "B" Week: September 5, 19 <i>Please place recyclables and trash out on Sunday night to ensure pickup.</i></p>
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Please clearly mark recycling containers to ensure that recycling is not picked up by the trash truck. Stickers for this purpose are available at town hall. Contact Charles Rocci at town hall at 247-4353, ext. 13, or clerk@townofpks.com with questions.