



Rep. Sharon Cooper
District 45

Biography

Chair Public and Community Health

Born in Houston, Texas, Sharon is proud to have called Georgia home for over 39 years and was married to the late Dr. Tom Cooper for more than 33 years. She was first elected to the Georgia General Assembly in 1996 as the State Representative for House District 45.

In 2002, she was elected Caucus chairman by her Republican colleagues, and in 2004, she was elected Majority Caucus chairman making her the highest-ranking woman in the Georgia House at that time. In 2007, in response to her ever increasing committee responsibilities, Rep. Cooper assumed the role of Caucus chair emeritus.

Currently, Rep. Cooper chairs the Public and Community Health Committee, one of the busiest committees in the House. She also serves on the Human Relations & Aging, Intragovernmental Coordination, Judiciary Non-Civil, Regulated Industries and Rules committees, as well as the Special Committee on Healthcare. She also serves as an Ex-Officio member of the Health Committee.

During the 2019 legislative session, Rep. Cooper sponsored several pieces of legislation to improve health care in the state. House Bill 62, or Margie's Law, requires mammography examiners to notify patients when dense breast tissue is found to better help detect the early signs of breast cancer. She also sponsored House Bill 63 to improve step therapy protocols in the state, as well as House Bill 290, which established a pilot program that provides pre-exposure assistance to people at risk of HIV infection. Rep. Cooper also championed House Bill 345 to address and protect health care conditions for pregnant inmates or inmates who are in the immediate postpartum period. Finally, one of Rep. Cooper's most notable achievements from the 2019 legislative session was House Bill 346, which provides certain rights for tenants who submit complaints about the health and safety of their living conditions.

Rep. Cooper holds several degrees, including a B.S. in Child Development, a M.A. in Education and M.S. in Nursing. Sharon has written two textbooks on psychiatric nursing, and in 1994, she authored Taxpayer's Tea Party – a how-to book that encourages the average citizen to become politically active. Recently, she was asked to update this book, which is available now in E-book.

A graduate of the first class of the Coverdell Leadership Institute, Rep. Cooper was able to pass a major revision of the state's stalking law while still in her freshman term. In 2002, A.G. Ashcroft appointed her to the President's 30-member, National Advisory Committee on Violence Against Women. In 2006, Cobb County Commission Chairman Sam Olens credited Rep. Cooper as being the major catalyst behind the creation of Cobb County Police Department's Domestic Violence Unit.

She has also served on former First Lady Mary Perdue's Advisory Committee on Foster Care. Rep. Cooper continues to author and foster legislation that promotes improved health care for Georgians, such as the HIV screening bill for pregnant women, Georgia Smoke Free Air Act and the "Health Share" Volunteers in Medicine Act. Over the last few years, Rep. Cooper has focused on fighting the state's opioid crisis and other related addictions. She passed the first House bill to make Narcan, an antidote to opioids, available to the state's first responders. The bill also included an amnesty provision for someone using drugs if they called 911 and stayed until help arrived rather than abandoning another user experiencing a severe medical emergency.

Rep. Cooper has earned the reputation of being one of the hardest working legislators at the Capitol, as well as being honest, straightforward and committed. Former Governor and U.S. Senator Zell Miller still calls her "the little legislator that tells it like it is."

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

- * Public and Community Health, Chair
- * Health, Ex-Officio
- * Human Relations & Aging, Member
- * Judiciary – Non-Civil, Member
- * Regulated Industries, Member
- * Rules, Member
- * Special Committee on Healthcare, Member

DISTRICT 45 INFORMATION

Representative Sharon Cooper represents the 45th district, which is located in East Cobb County, the third largest county in the state of Georgia. It is located just north of Atlanta.