

PRELIMINARY STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

CARRIER:

Senate Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

SUBSEQUENT REFERRAL TO: None

Action:

Vote:

Yeas:

Nays:

Exc.:

Prepared By: Cheyenne Ross, Administrator

Meeting Dates: 3/21, 3/28

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Urges Congress to overturn U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' regulation prohibiting provision of service or therapy dogs for veterans with emotional and mental disabilities.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Provisions of memorial

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: Many veterans suffer from physical, emotional and mental disabilities due to military service. Federal law permits the provision of service dogs, "trained for the aid of [veterans] with mental illnesses, including post-traumatic stress disorder" (38 U.S.C. 1714(c)(3)), but on September 5, 2012, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs issued a rule that, among other things, prohibited funding for mental health service dogs, due to its inability to determine the medical benefit. House Joint Memorial 1 supports lifting this prohibition.

House Committee Vote: 7 • 0 • 0

House Floor Vote: 55 • 0 • 5