

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

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<b>Action:</b>	Be Adopted
<b>Vote:</b>	7 - 0 - 0
<b>Yeas:</b>	Boone, Esquivel, Fagan, Huffman, Parrish, Witt, Matthews
<b>Nays:</b>	0
<b>Exc.:</b>	0
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Elizabeth Edwards, Administrator
<b>Meeting Dates:</b>	2/19

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**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:**

- Waiting period for service dog can be two years or more and many applicants cannot wait that long
- Rapidly declining number of World War II veterans and Vietnam War veterans
- Difficulty of training own service animal and role of training facilities
- Future owner involved in training of own service dog

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:** No amendment.

**BACKGROUND:** Many veterans suffer from physical, emotional and mental disabilities due to their military service. Under 38 U.S.C. 1714(c)(3), the Department of Veterans Affairs is authorized to “provide service dogs trained for the aid of [veterans] with mental illnesses, including post-traumatic stress disorder...” On September 5, 2012, the Department of Veteran Affairs issued a rule which, among other items, prevents funding for mental health service dogs due to a lack of clinical evidence to support such programs. House Joint Memorial 1 supports lifting this prohibition.