

HOUSE BILL No. 4843

July 12, 2017, Introduced by Reps. Brann and Kosowski and referred to the Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs.

A bill to create a veterans training service dog pilot program; to provide for the powers and duties of certain state entities; to create a veterans training service dog pilot program fund; and to provide for the use of the fund.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 1. As used in this act:

2 (a) "Department" means the department of military and veterans
3 affairs.

4 (b) "Eligible veteran" means an individual who received a
5 referral to the program from a mental health professional and
6 served in the United States Armed Forces, including the reserve
7 components, and was discharged or released under conditions other
8 than dishonorable.

9 (c) "Follow-along support services" means training and support

1 services provided to a participant after the fostering and training
2 of the participant's dog is complete.

3 (d) "Fund" means the veterans training service dog pilot
4 program fund created in section 3.

5 (e) "Participant" means a selected eligible veteran that has
6 agreed to participate in the program.

7 (f) "Program" means the veterans training service dog pilot
8 program created in section 5.

9 Sec. 3. (1) The veterans training service dog pilot program
10 fund is created within the state treasury.

11 (2) The state treasurer may receive money or other assets from
12 any source for deposit into the fund, including general fund
13 appropriations, gifts, state and federal grants, and bequests. The
14 state treasurer shall direct the investment of the fund. The state
15 treasurer shall credit to the fund interest and earnings from fund
16 investments.

17 (3) Money in the fund at the close of the fiscal year must
18 remain in the fund and not lapse to the general fund.

19 (4) The department is the administrator of the fund for
20 auditing purposes.

21 (5) The department shall expend money from the fund, upon
22 appropriation, only for the following purposes:

23 (a) To award grants to nonprofit entities as provided under
24 this act.

25 (b) To carry out its duties under this act.

26 Sec. 5. (1) The veterans training service dog pilot program is
27 created in the department. The 5-year program must do all of the

1 following:

2 (a) Identify no more than 10 participants who are each paired
3 with a dog capable of performing as a service dog.

4 (b) Provide any necessary funding from the fund to a nonprofit
5 entity to implement the program as provided in section 7.

6 (c) Provide each participant who completes the program with
7 the opportunity to adopt the dog trained by that participant.

8 (2) The department must establish and publish the selection
9 criteria for eligible veterans, dogs, and nonprofit entities as
10 provided in this act within 180 days after the effective date of
11 this act.

12 (3) Within 1 year after the conclusion of the program, the
13 department shall submit a report to the standing committees of the
14 house of representatives and senate responsible for legislation
15 concerning military affairs and concerning agriculture. The report
16 must include the following:

17 (a) The number of veterans who participated in the program.

18 (b) A description of the services provided under the program.

19 (c) An assessment of the report submitted under section
20 7(2)(e).

21 (d) The department's recommendation on expanding or extending
22 the program.

23 Sec. 7. (1) A nonprofit entity is eligible to apply to the
24 department to implement this program if the nonprofit entity has a
25 long history of providing a variety of support services to the
26 veteran population within this state and is able to identify and
27 willing to partner with an organization that is qualified to train

1 service dogs.

2 (2) The department shall require a nonprofit entity awarded a
3 grant to do all of the following:

4 (a) Select its participants based on the criteria published by
5 the department under section 5.

6 (b) With input from the participant, select a dog based upon
7 the participant's specific and individual needs.

8 (c) Assist in placing the selected dog with the participant.

9 (d) Provide training, mentoring, and follow-along services to
10 participants while they train their selected dog and to
11 participants who complete the program and are willing to train a
12 subsequent dog for another eligible veteran who is physically
13 unable to complete the training program.

14 (e) Report measurable outcomes and an evaluation of those
15 outcomes to the department within 180 days of the program's
16 completion. A report submitted under this subdivision must include
17 the following information related to participants:

18 (i) Symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder and post-
19 deployment adjustment difficulties, including, but not limited to,
20 depression, maintenance of sobriety, suicidal ideations, and
21 homelessness.

22 (ii) Physiological markers that possibly relate to the
23 interactions with service dogs.

24 (iii) Family dynamics.

25 (iv) Insomnia and pain management.

26 (v) Overall well-being.

27 Enacting section 1. This act takes effect 90 days after the

1 date it is enacted into law.