

**State of Vermont**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Montpelier, Vermont**



**House Resolution**

**H.R. 20**

House resolution requesting the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to complete the research necessary to determine if the use of service dogs, including veterinary care, would benefit veterans who have been diagnosed with PTSD

Offered by: All Members of the House

Whereas, according to the Mayo Clinic, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) “is a mental health condition that’s triggered by a terrifying event—either experiencing it or witnessing it,” and

Whereas, among U.S. military veterans, PTSD is a serious problem, and

Whereas, although the estimates cited in different studies vary, the respected RAND Corporation reports that at least 20 percent of veterans who served in either Iraq or Afghanistan have PTSD or depression, and

Whereas, among veterans receiving medical care at Veterans Affairs hospitals, PTSD is the third most prevalent psychiatric diagnosis, and

Whereas, a 2003 statistical analysis documented that a large majority of Vietnam veterans have experienced PTSD at some point in their lives, and

Whereas, in 2009, pursuant to Sec. 1077 of Pub.L. No. 111-84, Congress authorized the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (the Department) to study the “benefits, feasibility, and advisability of using service dogs for the treatment or rehabilitation of veterans ...including [those with] post-traumatic stress disorder,” and

Whereas, the legislation stipulated that nonprofit organizations would provide dogs to 200 veterans, and at least one-half of the study group was to consist of individuals “who suffer primarily from a mental health injury or disability,” and

Whereas, although the study was completed, the Department still believes there is inadequate research support to provide dogs and their veterinary care to veterans who are diagnosed with PTSD, and

Whereas, conducting the research deemed necessary to render a decision on this question could prove of long-term benefit for some of the veterans diagnosed with PTSD, now therefore be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives:

That this legislative body requests the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to complete the research necessary to determine if the use of service dogs, including veterinary care, would benefit veterans who have been diagnosed with PTSD, and be it further

Resolved: That the Clerk of the House be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Vermont Congressional Delegation.