

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5081

To require the Attorney General to establish a grant program to assist with the medical expenses of qualified working dogs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 14, 2019

Mr. WRIGHT (for himself, Mr. GAETZ, Mr. PENCE, Mr. RIGGLEMAN, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. CARTER of Texas, and Mr. BILIRAKIS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To require the Attorney General to establish a grant program to assist with the medical expenses of qualified working dogs, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “K–9 Hero Act of
5 2019”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) On October 27, 2019, United States special
2 operations forces carried out a raid, which resulted
3 in the death of ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

4 (2) A military working dog, whose identity is
5 classified, played an integral role in the success of
6 the raid and kept United States military personnel
7 out of harm's way.

8 (3) Although injured during the raid, the mili-
9 tary working dog is recovering and continues to
10 serve heroically alongside his handler in theater.

11 (4) Working dogs, such as the one involved in
12 the Al-Baghdadi raid, play a critical role in assisting
13 our Armed Forces and Federal and local law en-
14 forcement in protecting Americans and defending
15 freedom at home and abroad.

16 (5) Within the Federal Government, working
17 dogs assist the U.S. Capitol Police, the Bureau of
18 Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the
19 Transportation Security Administration, the Depart-
20 ment of Defense, U.S. Customs and Border Protec-
21 tion, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation,
22 amongst other Federal departments and agencies.

23 (6) Almost all working dogs work in tandem
24 with our Armed Forces and law enforcement officers

1 until they are no longer medically able, at which
2 point they are medically separated.

3 (7) The future of retired working dogs with re-
4 spect to ownership and provision of medical services
5 is often unclear and the medical treatment required
6 by many former working dogs is significant enough
7 that it creates a hardship for the individuals, often
8 former partners, who take in these canine heroes.

9 **SEC. 3. GRANT PROGRAM TO FUND COVERED MEDICAL EX-**
10 **PENSES FOR QUALIFIED WORKING DOGS.**

11 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 fiscal year
12 after the date of enactment of this Act, and each fiscal
13 year thereafter for 4 fiscal years, the Attorney General
14 shall carry out a program under which the Attorney Gen-
15 eral may award grants, each in amounts not to exceed
16 \$575,000, to eligible nonprofit organizations to assist with
17 the covered medical expenses of qualified working dogs.

18 (b) ELIGIBILITY.—A nonprofit organization is eligi-
19 ble to receive a grant under this section if the organization
20 primarily exists to care for qualified working dogs and
21 provide medically related financial assistance to owners of
22 qualified working dogs.

23 (c) APPLICATION.—To receive a grant under this sec-
24 tion, a nonprofit organization shall submit to the Attorney
25 General an application at such time, in such manner, and

1 containing such information as the Attorney General may
2 require, including information that demonstrates that the
3 nonprofit organization meets the eligibility requirements
4 under subsection (b).

5 (d) USE OF FUNDS.—A recipient of a grant under
6 this section shall use such grant to pay for covered medical
7 expenses of qualified working dogs.

8 (e) GRANT AMOUNT REDUCTION.—A grant amount
9 awarded to an eligible nonprofit organization for a fiscal
10 year pursuant to this section shall be reduced by an
11 amount equal to the total amount of unexpended grant
12 funds awarded under this section in previous fiscal years.

13 (f) REPORT.—The Attorney General shall submit to
14 Congress a report that details—

15 (1) the number of qualified working dogs as-
16 sisted pursuant to a grant awarded under this sec-
17 tion; and

18 (2) the average medical expenses for each quali-
19 fied working dog assisted pursuant to a grant
20 awarded under this section.

21 (g) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act—

22 (1) the term “covered medical expenses” means
23 any expenses related to medical treatment and care
24 of qualified working dogs, including veterinarian of-

1 fice visits, medical procedures, diagnostic tests, and
2 medications or medically necessary supplements; and

3 (2) the term “qualified working dog” means a
4 retired dog that worked for the Federal Government,
5 including the Armed Forces, to carry out military or
6 law enforcement activity.

7 (h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
8 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act
9 \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2025.

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