

HB 1369 -- SERVICE DOGS

SPONSOR: Sommer

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Veterans by a vote of 11 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Rules-Legislative Oversight Committee by a vote of 9 to 0.

This bill revises the term "service dog" to include a psychiatric service dog or mental health service dog that is trained to do work or perform tasks for an owner with a psychiatric disability, medical condition, or developmental disability recognized in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

This bill is the same as HB 262 (2017).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that service dogs provide a sense of security and are trained to help their owners cope with the effects of their disability or medical condition. These service dogs provide a valuable service not just to individuals suffering from psychiatric or developmental disabilities but also to their families and their communities. Service dogs help men and women suffering from PTSD and other disabilities while allowing them to engage with their families and participate in the world around them.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Sommer; Becky Flanigan; Missouri Association of Veterans Organizations (MAVO); Nancy Cowan; Pat Rowe Kerr; National Association of Social Workers-Mo Chapter; Missouri Psychiatric Association; and Missouri Association of Veterans Organizations (MAVO).

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.