

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5314

To require the immediate termination of the Department of Defense practice of euthanizing military working dogs at the end of their useful working life and to facilitate the adoption of retired military working dogs by law enforcement agencies, former handlers of these dogs, and other persons capable of caring for these dogs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 27, 2000

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To require the immediate termination of the Department of Defense practice of euthanizing military working dogs at the end of their useful working life and to facilitate the adoption of retired military working dogs by law enforcement agencies, former handlers of these dogs, and other persons capable of caring for these dogs.

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. IMPROVED TREATMENT OF MILITARY WORK-**
4 **ING DOGS.**

5 (a) REVISION OF EUTHANIZATION POLICY.—As soon
6 as possible after the date of the enactment of this Act,

1 the Secretary of Defense shall revise the Department of
2 Defense policy regarding of the euthanization of military
3 working dogs—

4 (1) to terminate the practice of euthanizing
5 military working dogs at the end of their useful
6 working life; and

7 (2) to limit the euthanization of military work-
8 ing dogs to those situations in which euthanization
9 is medically necessary or necessary for public safety,
10 as determined pursuant to guidelines issued by the
11 Secretary of Defense.

12 (b) PROMOTION OF ADOPTION OF MILITARY WORK-
13 ING DOGS.—(1) Chapter 153 of title 10, United States
14 Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new
15 section:

16 **“§ 2582. Military working dogs: transfer and adoption**
17 **at end of useful working life**

18 “(a) ADOPTION REQUIREMENT.—Notwithstanding
19 any other provision of law, the Secretary of Defense shall
20 make a military working dog of the Department of De-
21 fense available for adoption by a person or entity referred
22 to in subsection (c) at the end of the dog’s useful working
23 life or when the dog is otherwise excess to the needs of
24 the Department, unless the dog has been determined to
25 be unsuitable for adoption under subsection (b).

1 “(b) SUITABILITY FOR ADOPTION.—The decision
2 whether a particular military working dog is suitable or
3 unsuitable for adoption under this section shall be made
4 by the commander of the last unit to which the dog is
5 assigned before being declared excess. The unit com-
6 mander shall consider the recommendations of the unit’s
7 veterinarian in making the decision regarding a dog’s
8 adoptability.

9 “(c) AUTHORIZED RECIPIENTS.—Military working
10 dogs may be adopted under this section by law enforce-
11 ment agencies, former handlers of these dogs, and other
12 persons capable of humanely caring for these dogs.

13 “(d) CONSIDERATION.—The Secretary may authorize
14 the transfer a military working dog under this section
15 without charge to the recipient.

16 “(e) HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT.—The Secretary
17 shall require the recipient of a military working dog under
18 this section to agree to hold harmless and indemnify the
19 United States from any claim for damages for injury or
20 other loss caused by the dog after the transfer of the dog
21 to the recipient’s possession.

22 “(f) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit
23 to Congress an annual report specifying the number of
24 military working dogs adopted under this section during
25 the preceding year, the number of these dogs currently

1 awaiting adoption, and the number of these dogs
2 euthanized during the preceding year. With respect to
3 each euthanized military working dog, the report shall
4 contain an explanation of the reasons why the dog was
5 euthanized rather than retained for adoption under this
6 section.”.

7 (2) The table of sections at the beginning of such
8 chapter is amended by adding at the end the following
9 new item:

“2582. Military working dogs: transfer and adoption at end of useful working
life.”.

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