

PROVIDING EMOTIONAL ASSISTANCE WITH RELIEF AND
LOVE ACT

SEPTEMBER 30, 2025.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the
State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. GARBARINO, from the Committee on Homeland Security,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 3965]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Homeland Security, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 3965) to establish in U.S. Customs and Border Protection a pilot program to adopt dogs from local animal shelters to be trained as support dogs, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the bill do pass.

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PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

H.R. 3965, the “Providing Emotional Assistance with Relief and Love Act” or “PEARL Act,” would establish a three-year pilot pro-

gram requiring U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to adopt dogs from local animal shelters and subsequently train them to serve as support therapy dogs for agents and officers tirelessly defending our homeland. This legislation seeks to bolster CBP's efforts to increase workforce morale along our nation's frontlines by reducing stress, anxiety, and depression in and out of the workplace.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

The men and women of U.S. Customs and Border Protection face extraordinary stressors in the performance of their mission to secure the Nation's borders. Over the past several years, CBP and fellow Department of Homeland Security (DHS) law enforcement agencies have experienced an unprecedented number of personnel losses, including line-of-duty deaths, off-duty fatalities, and suicides. These tragic outcomes underscore the acute emotional and psychological toll borne by DHS's frontline officers and agents.

To help address this crisis, CBP launched the Support Canine Program in January 2023. This initiative provided emotional support dogs to frontline personnel with the goal of alleviating symptoms of stress, anxiety, and depression, thereby promoting and enhancing workforce resilience. The first such canine, a six-year-old yellow Labrador named Pearl, served in the Laredo Sector and became a symbol of the program's promise and effectiveness. Canine Pearl retired from active service in April 2025.

The "Providing Emotional Assistance with Relief and Love (PEARL) Act" builds on this success by institutionalizing and expanding the Support Canine Program throughout CBP. In addition to strengthening the mental health and morale of frontline personnel, the legislation ensures that support dogs are sourced from local animal shelters and adoption programs. By adopting and training these dogs for service, the program not only benefits the CBP workforce, but also strengthens community partnerships, reduces the burden on shelters, and provides rescued animals with a purposeful role in serving those who safeguard the Nation.

The Committee believes this mutual benefit, to both the well-being of frontline agents and the communities in which they serve, underscores the value of the PEARL Act. By investing in this program, Congress affirms its commitment to safeguarding the homeland while fostering humane, community-based solutions that improve the lives of frontline personnel and their families.

HEARINGS

The Committee held the following hearing in the 119th Congress that informed H.R. 3965:

On March 25, 2025, the Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Border Security and Enforcement held a hearing entitled "Part 1: Consequences of Failure: How Biden's Policies Fueled the Border Crisis" and received testimony from Ms. Lora Ries, Director, Border Security and Immigration Center, The Heritage Foundation, who testified as a private citizen; Mr. Ammon Blair, Senior Fellow, Secure and Sovereign Texas Initiative, Texas Public Policy Foundation; Mr. Jon Anfinson, Executive Vice President, National Border Patrol Council; and Mr. Aaron Reichlin-Melnick, Senior Fellow, American Immigration Council.

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

The Committee met on June 25, 2025, a quorum being present, to consider H.R. 3965 and ordered the measure to be favorably reported to the House by voice vote.

COMMITTEE VOTES

Clause 3(b) of rule XIII requires the Committee to list the recorded votes on the motion to report legislation and amendments thereto.

No recorded votes were requested during consideration of H.R. 3965.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS

In compliance with clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII, the Committee advises that the findings and recommendations of the Committee, based on oversight activities under clause 2(b)(1) of rule X, are incorporated in the descriptive portions of this report.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE ESTIMATE, NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY, ENTITLEMENT AUTHORITY, AND TAX EXPENDITURES

With respect to the requirements of clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, and with respect to the requirements of clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII and section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee adopts as its own the estimate of any new budget authority, spending authority, credit authority, or an increase or decrease in revenues or tax expenditures contained in the cost estimate prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office.

H.R. 3965, PEARL Act			
As ordered reported by the House Committee on Homeland Security on June 25, 2025			
By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2025	2025-2030	2025-2035
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	0	4	not estimated
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?	No	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply? No	
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036?	No	Mandate Effects	
		Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No

H.R. 3965 would direct Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to develop and implement a three-year pilot program to adopt and train dogs from local animal shelters for the agency's Support Canine Program. Under this program, CBP organizes visits between its officers and emotional support dogs to improve employees' mental health.

Using information from CBP and based on the costs of similar programs, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 3965 would cost

\$4 million over the 2025–2030 period, comprising \$3 million for the salaries of the support canine handlers and \$1 million for the procurement, training, and travel of the therapy dogs. Any related spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Sean Christensen. The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

PHILLIP L. SWAGEL,
Director, Congressional Budget Office.

FEDERAL MANDATES STATEMENT

The Committee adopts as its own the estimate of Federal mandates prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 423 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995.

DUPLICATIVE FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Pursuant to clause 3(c) of rule XIII, the Committee finds that H.R. 3965 does not contain any provision that establishes or reauthorizes a program known to be duplicative of another Federal program.

STATEMENT OF GENERAL PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Pursuant to clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII, the objective of H.R. 3965 is to establish in U.S. Customs and Border Protection a pilot program to adopt dogs from local animal shelters to be trained as support dogs.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, AND LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

In compliance with rule XXI, this bill, as reported, contains no congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9(d), 9(e), or 9(f) of rule XXI.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE STATEMENT

No advisory committees within the meaning of section 5(b) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act were created by this legislation.

APPLICABILITY TO THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Committee finds that H.R. 3965 does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF THE LEGISLATION

Section 1. Short title

This section states that the Act may be cited as the “Providing Emotional Assistance with Relief and Love Act” or the “PEARL Act.”

Section 2. CBP support dog pilot program

This section requires the Secretary of Homeland Security, via the Commissioner of CBP, to institute within CBP a pilot program de-

signed to bolster CBP's Support Canine Program by requiring the agency to adopt dogs from local animal shelters and train them to serve as support dogs for frontline officers and agents.

This section requires CBP to establish the pilot program within 60 days of enactment and further establishes a sunset provision in which the pilot program shall terminate three years after establishment.

