



Saat Alety
Director
Federal Affairs and Public
Policy

Law & Regulation

April 13, 2021

The Honorable Julia Brownley
Chairwoman
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Subcommittee on Health
B234 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jack Bergman
Ranking Member
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Subcommittee on Health
B234 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Brownley and Ranking Member Bergman:

The Allstate Corporation strongly supports H.R. 1448, the Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemembers (PAWS) for Veterans Therapy Act. This bipartisan legislation would authorize a pilot program in which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs will partner with non-profit organizations who specialize in working with veterans and service dogs. These organizations will train veterans in the art and science of dog training, with preference given to organizations that employ veterans in order to encourage veteran-to-veteran engagement. This type of mission-based work therapy is widely recognized as beneficial for veterans suffering with these invisible disabilities. A standalone PAWS Act passed the U.S. House of Representatives during the 116th Congress unanimously and currently has over 300 cosponsors in the 117th Congress.

Brandon Lewis is an Allstater and United States Marine Corps veteran who has both professionally and personally benefited from having a service dog by his side. Brandon enlisted in the Marines in 2004 and retired in 2015. After his deployment, Brandon was living with the effects of both a traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Brandon saw physicians on a weekly basis and took new medications that were supposed to help with his mental and physical challenges. But after months, he felt no change. In 2017, he met his saving grace: Boothe, a 2-year-old black lab service dog. And in February 2018, Boothe became the first service dog to join the Allstate office in Lubbock, TX. Brandon experiences frequent dizziness as a result of his injuries sustained. Having Boothe by his side helps to keep him stable. Boothe also helps quell Brandon's anxiety and migraines, both symptoms of PTSD.

On February 5, the Department of Veterans Affairs released the preliminary results of a study confirming that service dogs are an effective treatment for veterans with PTSD. Enactment of the PAWS Act will create countless more success stories like the one of Brandon and Boothe. As the No. 1 employer on the 2020 Military Friendly® Employers list, Allstate fully stands behind this effort to treat the invisible wounds suffered by our men and women in uniform.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Saat Alety', written in a cursive style.

Saat Alety

cc: Chairman Mark Takano (D-CA), House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Ranking Member Mike Bost (R-IL), House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
U.S. Representative Steve Stivers (R-OH)

Allstate Insurance Company

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