



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

December 17, 2025

The Honorable Pete Hegseth
Secretary of War
Department of War
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Hegseth:

We are writing to express our strong support for the Wounded Warrior Service Dog program (WWSDP) and urge the Department of War to continue to carry out the program going forward.

WWSDP is a competitive grant program overseen by the Department of War to support nonprofit organizations that help raise service dogs and connect them with veterans. Today, 28 organizations in 23 states rely on this program to place highly trained service dogs with veterans experiencing PTSD, traumatic brain injury, mobility and hearing impairments, blindness, and other life-altering disabilities. This includes two long-standing constituent providers under the program, Dog Tag Buddies in Billings, Montana, and Service Dogs for America, located in Jud, North Dakota. WWSDP has served as an essential support mechanism, enabling veterans in our states to access the life-changing assistance delivered by trained service dogs.

Section 745 of the FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act formally established the WWSDP as a permanent program of record by directing the Secretary of Defense to establish a program to provide assistance dogs to eligible service members and veterans. Due to a lack of specified line-item funding in FY25 Full-Year Continuing Resolution Appropriations Act, the program has relied on FY24 appropriated funds that are set to expire by the end of the year.

We urge your office to take action to continue to carry out WWSDP, including through the reprogramming process and the administrative flexibility available to the Department. This action would critically bridge the gap between FY24 funds and FY26 appropriations. Notably, the House-passed Department of Defense Appropriations Act includes \$17 million in funding for the program.

The service dogs provided with the support of WWSDP are an essential lifeline for veterans who faced the harshest consequences of war to live independently and have a companion to support them. Without funding for the next year, service dog organizations across the country will be forced to suspend new intakes, stop matching dogs to veterans, and even in some cases shut down services altogether.

We greatly appreciate your attention to the urgent matter, and we hope that this essential program will continue to provide critical support for wounded veterans across the country.

Respectfully,



Troy Downing
Member of Congress



Kevin Cramer
United States Senator