

2023-K553

Assembly Resolution No. 553

BY: M. of A. Manktelow

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim October 21, 2023, as Pets for Veterans Day in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official days that are set aside to appreciate the service, companionship, loyalty, and medical benefits therapeutic animals bring to the lives of citizens of New York State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim October 21, 2023, as Pets for Veterans Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Pets for Veterans Day; and

WHEREAS, It is estimated that one in five veterans suffers from PTSD; the disorder manifests itself with anxiety, depression or insomnia, as well as flashbacks from their time in service; and

WHEREAS, National Pets for Veterans Day was created to recognize all of the exceptional therapy animals who partner with their human companions to bring comfort and healing to those in need, and to help spread awareness about veterans' emotional needs and help them transition back to civilian life or continue to live a fruitful post-service life; and

WHEREAS, The primary purpose of these therapy animals is to provide veterans with significant reductions in pain and emotional distress, and to give family members and friends of those veterans a sense of comfort and well-being; these kind and compassionate animals are most often privately owned and tend to visit VA facilities on a regular basis; and

WHEREAS, After many of these visits, veterans would ask if they could take the therapy dog home with them, leading their owners to realize that 24/7 companionship would be better for many veterans than a one-hour therapy visit; and

WHEREAS, Pets for Vets was founded on October 21, 2009, by Clarissa Black, an animal behaviorist and trainer who hoped to help veterans with issues related to their service; the organizational goal uses the principles of animal-assisted therapy and how it can positively affect a veteran's quality of life; and

WHEREAS, Pets for Vets diligently works to help connect and match veterans with pets, whether it be an older veteran or one who suffers from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder; and

WHEREAS, There are many benefits to owning a dog; being a pet owner promotes responsibility and routine, and encourages outdoor activities and sun exposure, both known to uplift mood; and

WHEREAS, The friendship and love of a pet can also alleviate loneliness, stress, anxiety, and reduces blood pressure, cholesterol,

and triglycerides; these positive impacts go beyond the emotional and psychological, they can also be physiological, helping improve the way a person functions in the world; and

WHEREAS, Not only does the pairing of a dog help the veteran, but also saves the lives of so many overlooked shelter animals; and

WHEREAS, Through the concerned and dedicated efforts of those organizations and individuals who would devote themselves to the welfare of the community and its citizenry and through the love of a friendly, patient, confident, and gentle dog, our veterans are given a second chance at a better life; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize those extraordinary therapy animals and their handlers who demonstrate tremendous care and compassion by bringing comfort and healing to those veterans in need; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim October 21, 2023, as Pets for Veterans Day in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State of New York.