

SENATE BILL 128 – SUPPORT

26 February 2020

Delegate Kumar P. Barve
Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Barve and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

As a Marylander residing in Prince Georges County and a Service-disabled combat Veteran, I want to offer my **strong support** for Senator Simonaire's **Senate Bill 128, the Pets for Vets Act of 2020**.

As you know, this bill directs county or municipality animal control facilities to waive dog or cat adoption fees for. While this will slightly impact revenues for these facilities, it can directly and dramatically assist in saving the lives of both our Veterans and the animals!

Simply put, Vets save Pets, and Pets save Vets! This legislation is a win-win-win, it helps save animals from shelters, it helps our disabled Veterans cope with life's challenges, and it helps free up space in our shelters to allow them to rescue more animals.

As the wonderful nonprofit, "Pets For Vets" notes: "Many brave troops return home with scars – both seen and unseen – that make it difficult to transition back to civilian life. At the same time, millions of wonderful companion animals wait in shelters for a forever home.

When a Veteran is matched with the right pet, both lives change for the better. The Veteran saves and welcomes the pet into a loving home. The pet provides the Veteran with unconditional love and support, easing stress, depression, loneliness and anxiety. Together, they share a bond that provides them both with a whole new "leash" on life."

As a disabled combat Veteran, I can attest to the incalculable value that Tommy, my rescue Beagle, has added to my life, as I faced the mental and physical challenges resulting from my combat service.

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 128.

Sincerely yours,



Brian T. Smith