

March 14, 2023

To the Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee, Senator Feldman, Chair:

My name is Rachel Neff, and I am a resident of Prince George's County and the Executive Director of Promise Landing Farm, a nonprofit providing equine-assisted services to people with and without disabilities, including veterans and their families, in southern Maryland. I also serve as the Chair of the Equine-Assisted Services committee of the Maryland Horse Council and am a past officer of the Maryland Council of Equestrian Therapies.

I support SB 910, which alters the definition of a "therapy horse" under the Maryland Veterans Service Animal Program. The existing definition in the law combines terms and causes confusion for PATH centers providing services to Maryland veterans. Centers can either be "premier accredited centers" or "member centers" through PATH Intl, and the combination of terms in the text of the law has caused quite a bit of confusion as to who meets the eligibility criteria. Revising the definition to strike the words "premier accredited" will provide clarity and expand access to services by clearly including the wider group of PATH Intl Member Centers providing vital, high-quality services to Maryland's veterans.

Thank you for your time and attention, and I encourage you to support SB 910.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rachel Neff". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rachel Neff