

# HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 311

Reps. Bruck, Alexander, Bezotte, Glanville, Liberati, Martin and Rheingans offered the following resolution:

1       A resolution to declare December 2024 as War Dogs Month in the  
2 state of Michigan.

3       Whereas, Throughout the history of the United States military,  
4 from World War II to the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan,  
5 military working dogs have played a crucial role in safeguarding  
6 the lives of soldiers and civilians alike, acting as sentinels,  
7 scouts, and companions on the battlefield; and

8       Whereas, The contributions of these courageous canines are  
9 evidenced by the numbers: during World War II, war dogs saved an  
10 estimated 15,000 lives, and in Vietnam, they were credited with  
11 saving at least 10,000 American soldiers. On approximately 87,000

missions, these dogs uncovered 2,000 tunnels and bunkers and facilitated 1,000 enemy captures and 4,000 enemy kills; and

Whereas, The impact of military working dogs has continued through subsequent conflicts. In Afghanistan, Technical Sergeant Justin Kitts and his dog Dyngo exemplified this heroism, securing the lives of 30,000 U.S., host nation, and coalition forces in 2011. This example underscores the life-saving capabilities of these dogs, whose efforts often go unrecognized, but whose presence on the battlefield and in rehabilitation centers has been invaluable; and

Whereas, The history of military working dogs reflects a troubling pattern of initial recognition, followed by a decline in support once conflicts end. Post-World War II and post-Vietnam, the U.S. military disassembled its war dog programs, despite their proven effectiveness. Tracker and scout dog units were dismantled, and the programs that once saved countless lives were forgotten, only to be revived with the onset of new conflicts decades later; and

Whereas, Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, and the commencement of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the urgent need for military working dogs reemerged. Despite their critical roles in detecting improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and patrolling dangerous terrain, the programs that supported the rapid deployment of these dogs were scaled back as the conflicts wound down. Budgetary constraints and shifting military priorities threaten the continuity and readiness of these canine units once again; and

Whereas, The Robby Law, enacted to prevent the neglect of retiring military dogs, represents a crucial step in acknowledging the sacrifices of these animals. However, the continued downsizing

1 of dog programs signals a potential loss of valuable lessons  
2 learned from previous wars, jeopardizing future military  
3 preparedness and the safety of soldiers; and

4       Whereas, The dedicated handlers who served alongside these  
5 dogs have become the guardians of their legacy, preserving the  
6 memory of their contributions, building memorials, and advocating  
7 for recognition. Their institutional knowledge, combined with the  
8 stories of young soldiers expressing gratitude for the lives saved  
9 by these dogs, serves as a powerful reminder of the unique bond  
10 between handlers and their canine partners; now, therefore, be it

11       Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of  
12 this legislative body declare December 2024 as War Dogs Month in  
13 the state of Michigan. We recognize the extraordinary service of  
14 military working dogs and their handlers, honoring their vital  
15 contributions to the safety and success of U.S. military operations  
16 across generations; and be it further

17       Resolved, That this legislative body calls for sustained  
18 support and investment in military working dog programs, ensuring  
19 that these invaluable assets are preserved, properly trained, and  
20 integrated into future military strategies to prevent the  
21 repetition of past mistakes and to honor the legacy of those who  
22 have already served; and be it further

23       Resolved, That copies of this resolution be sent to military  
24 leadership, veterans' organizations, and advocacy groups to raise  
25 awareness of the importance of maintaining robust and ready  
26 military working dog programs, and to express our profound  
27 gratitude to the handlers and their canine partners who have served  
28 our nation with honor and distinction.