

**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

AGENDA REQUEST

TO: Board of County Commissioners
Philip Morley, County Administrator

FROM: Julie Shannon, Executive Secretary I

DATE: August 12, 2013

SUBJECT: Consideration of Draft Letter to Representative Kilmer in support of H.R. 1705,
the Rehabilitative Therapy Parity for Military Beneficiaries Act

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

Consideration of Draft Letter to Representative Kilmer in support of H.R. 1705, the Rehabilitative Therapy Parity for Military Beneficiaries Act presented to the BOCC by Juelie Dalzell, Spokeswoman, Jefferson Equestrian Association and Joseph Carey, Commander, American Legion

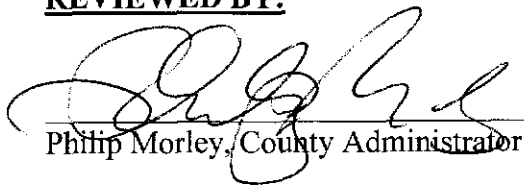
ANALYSIS:

A request was made by Juelie Dalzell, Spokeswoman, Jefferson Equestrian Association and Joseph Carey, Commander, American Legion that the BOCC consider a Draft Letter to Representative Kilmer in support of H.R. 1705, the Rehabilitative Therapy Parity for Military Beneficiaries Act

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Letter of submitted by Juelie Dalzell, Spokeswoman, Jefferson Equestrian Association and Joseph Carey, Commander, American Legion to Representative Kilmer in support of H.R. 1705, the Rehabilitative Therapy Parity for Military Beneficiaries Act

REVIEWED BY:


Philip Morley, County Administrator

8/12/13
Date

Dear Board of County Commissioners

The American Legion and the Jefferson Equestrian Association are requesting that you urge Representative Kilmer to co-sponsor House Bill H.R. 1750. The legislation would amend federal law to allow reimbursement to military families and wounded veterans for therapies including 'therapies provided on a horse' that are medically authorized.

Last year in collaboration with the Jefferson Equestrian Association our local American legion piloted a riding program that served military families. The goals and objectives of the program provided an outlet for quality family time and encouraged positive interfamily dynamics, helped with re-introduction to civilian life, and helped support personal grounding through interaction with horses. An unplanned outcome of the program is in part what encouraged us to meet with you today. The program assisted an autistic child whose father was at the time in Afghanistan. After his riding lessons the child showed remarkable changes in eye contact and in his ability to converse. The changes were noted by both the child's counselor and the child's father who was able to communicate with his son via Skype.

Prior to initiating our 2012 pilot program several community members went to Yelm to view the Horses for Heroes program that serves veterans. We were struck by how helpful the program was in allowing veterans with missing limbs to regain a semblance of balance. There also appeared to be a sense of accomplishment in being able to ride a 1200 pound animal that may have diminished some despair.

We believe that enactment of H.R. 1705 would bring a recognized benefit to military families and veterans who cannot at this time access therapeutic riding as one of the tools of recovery and so we request that you urge Representative Kilmer for his co-sponsorship of H.R. 1705.

We have included a draft of a letter for your signatures if you approved our request.

Thank you for your consideration.

Joe Carey, Commander, American Legion Post 26, 209 Monroe, PT.

Jefferson Equestrian Association

P.S. We have attached documents supporting the benefits of therapeutic riding along with a copy of the pertinent bill.

[Provided to Commissioners Separately]

DRAFT

The Honorable Derek Kilmer
1429 Longworth H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515

RE: H.R. 1705 The Rehabilitative Therapy Parity for Military Beneficiaries Act

Dear Congressman Kilmer

Please consider cosponsoring H.R. 1705, the Rehabilitative Therapy Parity for Military Beneficiaries Act. This bill enjoys strong bi-partisan support, and it clarifies that therapy using horses is covered under military insurance referred to as TriCare. There has been confusion about the appropriateness of this coverage in the past by some TriCare administrators.

Programs now operate in Jefferson County by local non-profit organizations to provide assistance to people with disabilities including veterans and their families. The need for rehabilitation therapy for our special needs citizens is clear, and horse therapy is a proven tool for improving both physical and mental health. One such effort underway is by the Jefferson Equestrian Association to develop a horse park in Jefferson County that can provide these programs throughout the year.

Please join Representative Burgess and 12 other cosponsors from around the nation in passing H.R. 1705, often referred to as Kaitlyn's Law, Kaitlyn being a special needs child whose father, a Navy captain, has had to struggle with TriCare to maintain coverage.

Thank you,

Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1705

To amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for certain forms of physical therapy under the TRICARE program.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 24, 2013

Mr. BURGESS (for himself and Mr. COTTON) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for certain forms of physical therapy under the TRICARE program.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Rehabilitative Therapy
5 Parity for Military Beneficiaries Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. INCLUSION OF CERTAIN FORMS OF PHYSICAL**
7 **THERAPY UNDER TRICARE.**

8 Section 1077 of title 10, United States Code, is
9 amended—

1 (1) in subsection (a)(17), by inserting “In ac-
2 cordance with subsection (g),” before “Any”; and

3 (2) by adding at the end the following new sub-
4 section:

5 “(g) Rehabilitative therapy provided pursuant to sub-
6 section (a)(17) may include additional therapeutic exer-
7 cises or therapeutic activities if such exercises or activities
8 are included in the authorized individual plan of care of
9 the individual receiving such therapy. Such exercises or
10 activities may include, in addition to other therapeutic ex-
11 ercises or therapeutic activities, therapies provided on a
12 horse, balance board, ball, bolster, and bench.”.

○

H.R.1705 - Rehabilitative Therapy Parity for Military Beneficiaries Act 113th Congress (2013-2014)

Overview: H.R.1705

Sponsor: [Rep. Burgess, Michael C. \[R-TX-26\]](#) (Introduced 04/24/2013)
Cosponsors: [12](#)
Latest Action: 05/06/2013 Referred to the Subcommittee on Military Personnel.
Major Recorded Votes: There are no Roll Call votes for this bill

Summary: H.R.1705 — 113th Congress (2013-2014)

Introduced in House (04/24/2013)

Rehabilitative Therapy Parity for Military Beneficiaries Act - Allows rehabilitative authority provided for beneficiaries under the Department of Defense (DOD) TRICARE program (a DOD managed care program) to include therapeutic exercises or activities included in the authorized plan of care of the individual receiving such therapy.

Allows such activities or exercises to further include therapies provided on a horse, balance board, ball, bolster, and bench.

Committees: H.R.1705 — 113th Congress (2013-2014)

Committee / Subcommittee	Activity	Date	Committee Reports
House Armed Services	Referral	04/24/2013	
	In Committee	04/24/2013	
House Armed Services Subcommittee on Military Personnel	Referral	05/06/2013	

Cosponsor	Date Cosponsored
<u>Rep. Cotton, Tom [R-AR-4]*</u>	04/24/2013
<u>Rep. Veasey, Marc A. [D-TX-33]</u>	04/26/2013
<u>Rep. Jones, Walter B., Jr. [R-NC-3]</u>	05/06/2013
<u>Rep. Shea-Porter, Carol [D-NH-1]</u>	05/06/2013
<u>Rep. Hunter, Duncan D. [R-CA-50]</u>	05/06/2013
<u>Rep. Miller, Jeff [R-FL-1]</u>	06/11/2013
<u>Rep. Johnson, Bill [R-OH-6]</u>	06/20/2013
<u>Rep. Enyart, William L. [D-IL-12]</u>	06/20/2013
<u>Rep. Kinzinger, Adam [R-IL-16]</u>	06/28/2013
<u>Rep. Cartwright, Matt [D-PA-17]</u>	07/11/2013