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March 9, 2022

National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission Statement for the Record
Senator Richard Blumenthal

Thank you, Chairman May, for your time and consideration of S.3447, the National Service Animals Memorial Act.

This legislation will honor and recognize the contributions service animals and their handlers have made to the American public's wellbeing, safety, and freedom.

Service animals have provided well-documented benefits to human health, safety, and security since our country's founding. While formalized service animal work dates to 1929 with the first guide dog training at the Eustice School, animals have served alongside humans for much longer. They were used during the Revolutionary War, carrying soldiers and transporting the wounded and critical supplies; delivering critical communications throughout World War I and World War II; and clearing areas of improvised explosive devices during our operations in Afghanistan – ultimately saving thousands of lives.

The support service animals provide is extraordinarily unique and diverse, particularly to our veterans and servicemembers. Service animals are trained to provide medical assistance, aid law enforcement, and support military efforts. They also play an increasingly important role in the lives of veterans as they recover from the wounds of war. These animals assist with everyday functions of our disabled veterans, including those suffering from post-traumatic stress.

As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, and the Senate Committee on Judiciary, I am confident that the role service animals play in law enforcement, military operations, medical independence, and life after service is of significant value to our country and of lasting importance. Their monumental sacrifice has yet to be memorialized in our nation's capital, and I believe it is past time to pay homage to the invaluable roles service animals and their handlers have played in America's history.

This memorial will serve as a place of introspection and education about service animals and their handlers' contributions our country.

I strongly believe this legislation and memorial will have enduring value to the American public, and respectfully urge you to support authorizing this commemorative work. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senate