

2023 HOUSE JUDICIARY

HB 1388

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Judiciary Committee
Room JW327B, State Capitol

HB 1388
1/24/2023

Relating to care for retired police dogs; to provide an appropriation; and to provide an expiration date.

Chairman Klemin opened the hearing on HB 1388 at 10:00 AM.

Members present: Chairman Klemin, Vice Chairman Karls, Rep. Bahl, Rep. Christensen, Rep. Cory, Rep. Henderson, Rep. S. Olson, Rep. Rios, Rep. S. Roers Jones, Rep. Satrom, Rep. Schneider, Rep. VanWinkle, Rep. Vetter

Discussion Topics:

- Retired police dogs
- Expenses
- Handlers involvement

Rep Heinert presented HB 1388. No written testimony.

Lyle Sinclair, Bismarck, ND: spoke in support of HB 1388. Testimony #22750

Lt. Adam Dvorak, Assistant Operation Commander, ND Highway Patrol: Testimony #15655

Stephanie Dassinger Ensebretson, Chiefs of Police of ND: spoke in favor of HB 1388. No written testimony.

Hearing closed at 10:34 AM

Delores Shimek, Committee Clerk

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Judiciary Committee
Room JW327B, State Capitol

HB 1388
1/31/2023

A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 54-12 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to care for retired police dogs; to provide an appropriation; and to provide an expiration date.

Chairman Klemin opened the hearing on HB 1388 at 3:48 PM.

Members present: Chairman Klemin, Vice Chairman Karls, Rep. Bahl, Rep. Christensen, Rep. Cory, Rep. Henderson, Rep. S. Olson, Rep. Rios, Rep. S. Roers Jones, Rep. Satrom, Rep. Schneider, Rep. VanWinkle and Rep. Vetter

Discussion Topics:

- Amendment
- Medical costs

Rep. Satrom moved to amend HB 1388. (Remove line 14 from page 1.)

Seconded by Rep. Shannon Roers Jones

Roll call vote:

Representatives	Vote
Representative Lawrence R. Klemin	Y
Representative Karen Karls	Y
Representative Landon Bahl	AB
Representative Cole Christensen	Y
Representative Claire Cory	Y
Representative Donna Henderson	Y
Representative SuAnn Olson	Y
Representative Nico Rios	Y
Representative Shannon Roers Jones	Y
Representative Bernie Satrom	Y
Representative Mary Schneider	Y
Representative Lori VanWinkle	Y
Representative Steve Vetter	Y

Motion carries 12-0-1.

Representative Karls moved a do pass as amended.

Representative Rios seconded.

Roll call vote:

Representatives	Vote
Representative Lawrence R. Klemin	N
Representative Karen Karls	Y
Representative Landon Bahl	Y
Representative Cole Christensen	Y
Representative Claire Cory	Y
Representative Donna Henderson	N
Representative SuAnn Olson	Y
Representative Nico Rios	Y
Representative Shannon Roers Jones	Y
Representative Bernie Satrom	Y
Representative Mary Schneider	Y
Representative Lori VanWinkle	N
Representative Steve Vetter	Y

Motion carries 10-3-0. Representative Rios will carry the bill.

Hearing closed at 4:00 PM

Delores Shimek, Committee Clerk

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Adopted by the House Judiciary Committee

January 31, 2023

24
1-31-23

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1388

Page 1, line 14, remove ". food, and other essential"

Page 1, line 15, remove "needs"

Renumber accordingly

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1388: Judiciary Committee (Rep. Klemin, Chairman) recommends **AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (10 YEAS, 3 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1388 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

Page 1, line 14, remove ". food, and other essential"

Page 1, line 15, remove "needs"

Renumber accordingly

2023 SENATE JUDICIARY

HB 1388

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Judiciary Committee
Peace Garden Room, State Capitol

HB 1388
3/7/2023

A bill relating to care for retired police dogs; to provide an appropriation; and to provide an expiration date.
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9:00 AM Chairman Larson opened the meeting.

Senators Myrdal, Luick, Estenson, Sickler, Paulson and Braunberger are present. Senator Larson is absent but joined the meeting at 9:13 AM.

Discussion Topics:

- Dog handlers
- Years of service
- Medical reimbursement
- Food cost

9:00 AM Representative Heinert introduced the bill and gave oral testimony.

9:08 AM Steven Mayer, North Dakota Highway Patrol, K-9 Handler, testified in favor of the bill and provided written testimony #22579.

9:18 AM Lyle Sinclair, K-9 Unit Commander, Bismarck Police Department, testified in favor of the bill and provided written testimony #22580.

9:23 AM Adam Dvorak, North Dakota Highway Patrol, Assistant Operations Commander, testified in favor of the bill and provided written testimony #22204.

9:25 AM Stephanie Dassinger, Lobbyist, Chiefs of Police Association of North Dakota, spoke in favor of the bill.

9:27 AM Chairman Larson closed the public hearing.

9:28 AM Senator Braunberger moved to Do Pass the bill. Motion seconded by Senator Larson.

9:38 AM Roll call vote was taken.

Senators	Vote
Senator Diane Larson	Y
Senator Bob Paulson	Y
Senator Jonathan Sickler	Y
Senator Ryan Braunberger	Y
Senator Judy Estenson	N
Senator Larry Luick	N
Senator Janne Myrdal	N

Motion passes 4-3-0.

9:40 AM Senator Braunberger will carry the bill.

This bill does not affect workforce development.

9:40 AM Chairman Larson closed the meeting.

Rick Schuchard, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1388, as engrossed: Judiciary Committee (Sen. Larson, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (4 YEAS, 3 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). Engrossed HB 1388 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

TESTIMONY

HB 1388



68th Legislative Assembly

Testimony in **Support** of
House Bill No. 1388

Judiciary Committee

January 24, 2023

TESTIMONY OF

Lt. Adam Dvorak, Assistant Operations Commander, ND Highway Patrol

Good morning, Chairman Larson and members of the House Judiciary Committee. My name is Adam Dvorak, and I am the Assistant Operations Commander with the North Dakota Highway Patrol. I am here to provide testimony in support of House Bill 1388.

I have been employed by the North Dakota Highway Patrol for approximately 21 years. For all but 2 of those years, I have been involved with the North Dakota Highway Patrol's canine program in some capacity. I was a canine handler for 11 years and was assigned both a narcotics detector canine and a man-trailing bloodhound in my tenure.

The North Dakota Highway Patrol has had a canine program for approximately 30 years. Since 1992, our agency has had approximately 35 police canines who wore the badge and served the citizens of our state. Sadly, due to the relatively short lifespan of dogs, the NDHP only has 3 dogs who have retired and are still alive.

When those dogs retire, they are most often adopted by the troopers who partnered with them. As many of you know, those animals come with a financial burden. House Bill 1388 proposes up to \$1,000 in reimbursement per year for those retired animals to help pay for medical bills, food, and other essential needs. Although \$1,000 a year will not nearly cover the expenses of caring for a retired police K9, it will lessen the burden experienced by those families who continue to care for the dogs who served our citizens and helped keep North Dakota safe and secure.

Some facts about the NDHP canine program are below:

NDHP Canine Program:

- K9 program since 1992.
- 35 dogs total have served as NDHP K9s.
- 9 dogs are currently working.
- Only 3 dogs are actively retired and still living.
- Average years of service for NDHP K9 is 6 years.
- Average lifespan of NDHP K9 is 11 years.
- Average age of NDHP K9 when acquired is 2 years old.
- Average length of retirement is 3 years.

This concludes my testimony. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.



68th Legislative Assembly
Testimony in **Support** of
House Bill 1388
Senate Judiciary Committee
March 7, 2023

TESTIMONY OF

Lieutenant Adam Dvorak

Good morning, Chair Larson and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. My name is Adam Dvorak, and I am the Assistant Operations Commander with the North Dakota Highway Patrol. I have been employed by the North Dakota Highway Patrol for approximately 21 years. For all but two of those years, I have been involved with the patrol's canine program in some capacity. I was a canine handler for eleven years and was assigned to a narcotics detecting canine and later a man-trailing bloodhound. I am here to testify on behalf of the North Dakota Highway Patrol, in support of House Bill 1388.

The North Dakota Highway Patrol has had a canine program for approximately thirty years. Since 1992, our agency has had thirty-five police canines who wore the badge and served the citizens of our state. Sadly, due to the relatively short lifespan of dogs, there are only three living, retired NDHP canines.

When our canines retire, they are most often adopted by the troopers who partnered with them. As many of you know, those animals come with a financial burden. House Bill 1388 proposes up to one-thousand dollars in reimbursement per year for retired police canines. This money is meant to help with medical bills and to help lessen the financial burden experienced by families who continue to care for these dogs in the dog's retirement years. Police canines spend the majority of their life training and serving our citizens to help keep North Dakota safe and secure.

Here are some facts regarding the NDHP Canine Program:

- K9 program in place since 1992
- 35 dogs have served as NDHP K9s
- 9 dogs (2 mantrailing and 7 narcotic-detecting) are currently serving the NDHP
- 3 living, retired dogs are eligible for benefits provided by HB1388
- Average years of service for NDHP K9s is 6 years
- Average lifespan of a NDHP K9 is 11 years
- Average age of NDHP K9 when acquired is 2 years old
- Average length of retirement is 3 years

Thank you for listening to my testimony, I would be happy to answer any questions.

03/07/2023

HB1388

Testimony by: Steven Mayer

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Steven Mayer, and I am a K9 handler and State Trooper with the ND Highway Patrol. I am accompanied today by Retired K9 Boudreaux. We are here today to show our support for House Bill 1388.

K9 Boudreaux is a 13-year-old Bloodhound. He has served the State of North Dakota in his official capacity as a trailing dog for 10 years retiring last May. During his tenure with the Highway Patrol, K9 Boudreaux was involved in over 200 case trails and located approximately 20 missing individuals.

Our agency retires our K9s at the peak of their performance allowing them to live a good retirement life after their service to the citizens of ND. A large majority of our handlers take ownership of the dogs after they retire and keep them as their own. I have often joked that I have spent more time with my K9 working and at home than I do with my own wife. So, you can see the attachment that we have with our partners.

Once our K9 is retired, the sole responsibility is transferred to the handler. This includes any medical bills, food, kennel costs, etc. This can often become large amounts of money as veterinarian expenses add up, especially with an older dog. In their prime when the dogs are in use, medical expenses can be minimal as they are a top performing athlete so to speak. Just like humans, as we age our medical needs go up as well. So do the K9s. This is the time when the dog is the most expensive and agency's no longer having to bear the burden of the expense that comes with an aging dog.

Just some examples of expenses that we have with K9 Boudreaux. Dog food \$90.00 a month. Joint supplements \$70.00 a month, Apoquel during summer months \$70.00. Annual physical, shots as well as heartworm and flea and tick preventative. This all adds up. The burden at this time is on the handler and not the state or agency involved no longer.

HB1388 will help offset some of the expenses that the officer now must occur due to taking ownership of the animal. Granted one can say that they do not have to take the animal and could turn it back over to the agency, but would you want to give up an "adopted" member of your family after having them for 10 years? The \$1000 limit that this bill has will help the handler take care of his dog. And I think that this bill goes a long way to show the support for these animals who have selflessly devoted themselves to the people of their municipalities, counties and state.

Thank you.

When Police Service Dog retires, the medical costs are the responsibility is up to the handler or whomever adapts them. By then, a Police Service Dog's (PSD's) is older and has been put through a lot. This includes joint stress from jumping in and out of a vehicle, riding in the back of a vehicle under less than ideal conditions. This includes detection dogs and bloodhounds used by law enforcement.

The stress the PSD are under when searching for a subject, working in less-than-ideal situations to include extreme weather conditions.

I feel a Police Service Dog is probable one of the best non-lethal tools available to law enforcement. They have proven to be an excellent de-escalation tool numerous times in North Dakota.

Some examples of where well-trained PSD's have been a valuable de-escalation tool for law enforcement include:

- in Bismarck a known violent subject assaulted a female and was later found after he in an apartment open area. He was armed with a knife and expressed that officers would have to use deadly force to take him into custody. But he peacefully surrendered when he heard a PSD arrived on scene

- in Bismarck a subject was hiding in a crawl space and threatened officers if they came in to arrest him. A highly trained PSD was able to enter the compact area, grab the subject and get him out with no injuries to the officers and minimal to the subject.

- in Dunn CO a subject had assaulted his girlfriend who was able to get out of the house and call law enforcement. The subject was semi-barricaded in the house stating if officers entered they would be met with great resistance. The handler was able to deploy his K9 through a window behind the subject who immediately surrendered when he saw the K9.

- Recently a subject in Williston was found under a bed but refused to come out. The subject was hit with numerous pepper balls but still refused to come out until the K9 arrived.

- various agencies around North Dakota use a K9's when looking for violent offenders as a de-escalation/apprehension tool

Currently Florida has set aside moneys for retired Police Service Dogs for vet bills and other upkeep for the K9. In Arizona, there is a non-profit that raises money to help handlers with veterinarian fees and other expenses after retirement.

In summary, the handler does get a "very expensive dog" when the K9 retires. However, the K9 has worked a long time and is near the end of its life and will often require additional medical services unlike when they were younger. We are not asking that all expenses be covered but a \$1,000 a year as a thank you for their service.

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