

morikawa2 - Grant

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 5:31 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: selarque@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HCR309 on 4/1/2011 9:00:00 AM

Testimony for HLT 4/1/2011 9:00:00 AM HCR309

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Marie Selarque
Organization:
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: selarque@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 3/31/2011

Comments:

morikawa2 - Grant

From: robie lovinger [rezumes@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2011 9:32 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: Committee on Health - Service Dog Testimony in support of HCR 309 HR 274 April 1 2011

Testifier: Ms. H. Louise Esselstyn, M. Div., Turning Corners Group, LLC

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF HEARING
DATE: Friday, April 01, 2011
TIME: 9:00 AM
PLACE: Conference Room 329
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

HCR 309 / HR 274
REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO PROCLAIM THE SECOND WEEK OF AUGUST AS "NATIONAL ASSISTANCE DOG WEEK".

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

Thank you for participating on this important committee and for your multiple contributions to making Hawaii the best state in America.

I offer testimony in enthusiastic support of Governor Abercrombie's actions to proclaim the second week of August as "National Assistance Dog Week".

People with disabilities, who are fortunate enough to have a Service/Assistance Dog in Hawaii, are indeed lucky. For they are far more likely to maintain their mobility, sense of well being, and a much higher level of peacefulness and security, than those without one.

These unsung heroes, when properly trained, perform tasks unique to the handler, thus allowing the person with *dis-abilities* to have greater *abilities*, resulting in a deeper sense of freedom and greater independence, foundations of our nation.

While these amazing Service/Assistance dogs are not pets, they are similarly faithful, loving, and intelligent animals. Additionally, they provide a wide spectrum of diverse and amazing customized assistance to people with dis-abilities.

For example, in my own case, as an elderly woman with Multiple Sclerosis, the Service Dog will provide balance, safety, and security for my intermittent mobility impairments.

When I fall, the Service Dog is able to do any number of tasks.

It can "brace", which enables me to regain my stance, in a dignified manner, without needing additional help.

In other situations, if I fall and do not have the physical strength or ability to regain my stance, the Service Dog may be tasked with summoning help, while staying close to me and thus providing reassurance and a safety net. This allows me to have more *abilities*, in addition to having an enhanced sense of independence, safety, security, and peace-of-mind.

It is important to understand that these Service/Assistance dogs are much more than a mobility device or *just a companion*. They are frequently an extension of the person's arms, legs, eyes, and ears. They are always the "calm in the storm", including those times when a person is having a seizure, or an anxiety attack, or a traumatic episode of disabling Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

There are so many misconceptions about the value of Service/Assistance Dogs. In addition, every day throughout Hawaii, people with disabilities are illegally harmed from enjoying their lives when a shop keeper or a business owner or a restaurant server illegally bars the Service Dog from entering the premises with their disabled handler.

Every day, throughout Hawaii, people with disabilities face illegal barriers and are prevented from enjoying their peacefulness in their own residences, when an uneducated neighbor or member of a Neighborhood Association or a Community Board of Directors, prohibits the Service/Assistance Dog from legally residing with their disabled handler.

I believe, this proclamation will further the educational flow of information and provide a greater understanding of the State and Federal laws throughout Hawaii.

Thank you for your consideration and support of this most worthwhile proclamation.