

OFFICE OF CONGRESSMAN RON KLEIN

FLORIDA'S 22<sup>ND</sup> CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT October 8, 2009

## **Klein Bill to Provide Veterans with Service Dogs Passed by U.S. House**

**Washington, D.C.** - The U.S. House today passed legislative language authored by Congressman Ron Klein (FL-22) to provide guide dogs and other service animals to wounded veterans.

Klein's language will establish a grant program for organizations that provide disabled veterans with service dogs to help keep America's promise to returning soldiers and improve their quality of life. Klein first introduced the bipartisan Wounded Warrior K-9 Corps Act in July, and similar language passed the U.S. House today as part of the Defense Authorization for Fiscal Year 2010.

"The men and women who have served this country deserve our full and complete support when they return home, and that means doing everything we can to improve their quality of life after their service," Klein said. "The language we passed today supports organizations that are training service animals to work with wounded warriors in South Florida and nationwide."

"Because of modern medicine, our men and women are surviving injuries that would have certainly been fatal in the past," Klein said. "These incredible advances come with a new responsibility to provide every possible service to soldiers who come home broken in body or mind. I share with all Americans an absolute commitment to fight for our veterans every single day, and ensure they are able to live full, healthy and productive lives after service."

Klein first announced his legislation at the Broward County VA Clinic, where he was joined by Irwin Stovroff, a South Florida resident and former World War II Prisoner of War. Stovroff works with organizations that train service dogs for veterans, and supports this important initiative with funds out of his own pocket. Klein's legislation will help

non-profit organizations like Stovroff's meet their goal of assisting wounded veterans, even in difficult economic times, by providing competitive grants to supplement their private fundraising.

"I have seen these programs in action," Klein said. "I have witnessed the growth of veterans and wounded soldiers after working with a guide dog or an animal that can assist them with physical therapy and mental health issues. These programs succeed, and they are another important way we can stand behind our service members and their families."

Klein is working closely with Republicans and Democrats in both Houses of Congress to see this legislation signed into law by President Obama in the coming weeks. Congressman Klein co-sponsored the legislation in the House with Republican Ed Whitfield of Kentucky, and the companion legislation in the Senate is sponsored by Senators Al Franken (D-MN) and Johnny Isakson (R-GA). The Senate is expected to pass this measure, and the underlying bill, early next week.

Sincerely,  
Ron Klein  
Member of Congress