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LRB103 31893 MST 60569 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The premise of equine therapy is that interacting with a horse under the supervision of a mental and physical health professional can complement traditional treatments to best support recovery; such interactions may include riding or assisted riding, feeding, grooming, and providing other kinds of care; and

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WHEREAS, During a session of equine therapy, the client, therapist, and animal come together and form a unique bond; the inclusion of animals in therapy provides a non-judgmental environment; and

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WHEREAS, For clients who have experienced trauma, equine-assisted psychotherapy (EAP) is a great addition for those who may find it easier to talk to animals rather than another person; and

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WHEREAS, The Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association (EAGALA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to setting the standard for professionals working with horses in a therapeutic setting; they offer training and have established a specialized certification process for those wanting to become a recognized, trained equine-assisted therapy professional; and

1 WHEREAS, In both children and adults, equine-based
2 psychotherapy can be used for a variety of mental health
3 conditions, including but not limited to ADHD, autism,
4 depression, eating disorders, generalized anxiety disorder,
5 PTSD, social anxiety disorder, and substance misuse; and

6 WHEREAS, In a 2011 study, seven young people considered
7 "at risk" of harming themselves or others were introduced to
8 equine therapy; they reported positive effects on their
9 resilience and reduced risks of crime, self-harm, and other
10 issues, as well as benefits to their empathy, confidence,
11 self-esteem, mastery, and self-efficacy; and

12 WHEREAS, Research on equine-assisted psychotherapy is
13 limited as it is an emerging treatment, but recent findings
14 report that it can calm and soothe the nervous system, promote
15 healthy attachment, and cultivate social learning and
16 connections; therefore, be it

17 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
18 HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
19 we recognize the benefits that equine therapy can have on the
20 lives of children, especially those that have experienced
21 trauma, abuse, and neglect; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That the Department of Children and Family
2 Services is urged to consider implementing an equine therapy
3 pilot program in order to help children process trauma and
4 address their behavioral and emotional needs; and be it
5 further

6 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
7 delivered to the Department of Children and Family Services.