

H.A.P.P.Y. Act Update

Sponsor of pet-expenses tax deduction bill seeks support.

By Eric Syverson

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A Michigan congressman is trying to round up support for a bill that would allow pet owners to deduct pet-care expenses on their tax forms.

According to The Huffington Post, Rep. Thaddeus McCotter asked fellow members to support his House bill H.R. 3501, the Humanity and Pets Partnered Through the Years (H.A.P.P.Y.) Act, in September. Introduced in July, the bill is currently without co-sponsors, and it sits in committee.

The H.A.P.P.Y. Act would allow individuals to annually deduct up to \$3,500 for pet care expenses. Veterinary care and other care expenses for qualified pets could be deducted, but the cost of buying one could not. Barring some exceptions (such as animals used for research or in conjunction with a business), a qualified pet is a "legally owned, domesticated, live animal" according to the bill.

The Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council offered praise for the H.A.P.P.Y. Act. "Providing pet owners the opportunity to deduct pet care expenses is an important step towards ensuring that pet owners provide adequate veterinary and other necessary pet care," the organization wrote in a PetAlert. "It encourages responsible pet ownership and will hopefully reduce the abandonment of pets by people struggling as a result of the economic downturn."