



SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA ITEM AGENDA STAFF REPORT

Control: 26001524

MEETING DATE: 06/23/2026
LEGAL ENTITY TAKING ACTION: Board of Supervisors
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DISTRICT(S): Board of Supervisors
SUBMITTING AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: Supervisor Wagner
DEPARTMENT CONTACT PERSON(S): Tara Campbell
Amanda Casillas, 714-834-3330

SUBJECT: Allocate \$300,000 of Third District discretionary funds to Veteran Strong USA

| CEO CONCUR | COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW | CLERK OF THE BOARD |
|------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| N/A | No Legal Objection | DISCUSSION |
| | | 3 Votes Board Majority |

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

1. Approve the allocation of \$300,000 from Third District discretionary funds to Veteran Strong USA.
2. Find under Government Code section 26227 that this expenditure is necessary to meet the social needs of County residents.
3. Authorize and direct the County Executive Officer, or designee, to negotiate and enter into an agreement with Veteran Strong USA as necessary to effectuate the purposes of this allocation, including, but not limited to, the allocation of funds.
4. Authorize and direct the Auditor-Controller, or designee, to make related payments as necessary to effectuate the purposes of this allocation, including, but not limited to Cal-Card, electronic fund transfers or check payments.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

I would like to allocate \$300,000 from Third District discretionary funds to Veteran Strong USA to expand services and support for Orange County veterans and their families.

Orange County is home to more than 86,000 veterans, many of whom continue to face challenges related to mental health, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), substance abuse, social isolation, and reintegration into civilian life. While many veterans thrive in our communities, data and stakeholder feedback have identified ongoing gaps in mental health and supportive services for those struggling with the lasting effects of military service.

Veteran Strong USA was founded by a U.S. Air Force veteran and provides innovative, veteran-centered services designed to promote healing, resilience, and long-term stability. Through equine-assisted psychotherapy, therapeutic horsemanship, peer mentorship, and comprehensive wraparound support services, the organization helps veterans and their families address trauma, PTSD, addiction, and other behavioral health challenges while fostering connection, purpose, and personal growth.

The proposed funding will allow Veteran Strong USA to significantly expand its capacity by acquiring additional therapy horses and equipment, increasing the availability of licensed therapists and counseling services, creating dedicated space for individual and family therapy sessions, and providing flexible assistance to veterans facing barriers to treatment and recovery. These investments will enable the organization to serve more veterans, including justice-involved veterans and those at risk of homelessness, substance abuse, or suicide.

This investment will strengthen Orange County's network of veteran services by expanding access to mental health treatment, peer support, and therapeutic programming that helps veterans and their families build healthier, more connected, and purpose-driven lives. It reflects the County's ongoing commitment to supporting those who have served our nation and ensuring they have access to the resources needed to thrive in our community.

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A