

Medric Cousineau: Walking for PTSD Support

by Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Monday, September 23, 2013

<https://politicsrespun.org/2013/09/medric-cousineau-walking-for-ptsd-support/>

Along with [Kate MacEachern and The Long Way Home](#) and [Robin & Stewart's Marathon for Veterans](#) we have another action in support of PTSD and Veterans, this time including service dogs!

Medric Cousineau walked 1000 km to Ottawa to raise \$350,000 for 50 service dogs for 50 veterans.

The spirit of support for PTSD issues, particularly among Canadian Forces members and veterans, as well as other first responders, is growing. It's a sign of a truly compassionate culture. The hope is that the federal government, on behalf of Canadians, will show the compassion, respect, integrity and responsibility required to do the right thing

[Eastern Passage veteran completes fundraising walk to Ottawa](#)

By [Julia Wong](#)

HALIFAX – It has been a long journey but an Eastern Passage man has finished a 50 day walk to Ottawa.

On August 1, [Medric Cousineau left on a trip](#) that would take him more than 1,000 kilometres and through four different provinces.

Cousineau served in the military for about 12 years but developed post traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, after a harrowing rescue mission. He became stressed, angry and often lashed out at his family and friends.

However, his behaviour changed after getting a service dog named Thai.

Seeing the benefits of having a service dog, Cousineau began lobbying for them on behalf of veterans with PTSD. However, Veterans Affairs does not currently fund them.

That's when Cousineau decided to take up the cause, lace up his shoes and walk all the way to the nation's capital to raise \$350,000 for 50 service dogs for 50 veterans.

Upon arriving in Ottawa, Cousineau walked past Parliament and to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and paid his respects.

The veteran says he has felt overwhelming support from the communities that he has walked

through.

“The response has been gaining as we went along,” he said. “It took time to build. As we’ve come farther towards the finish, the legions have opened their doors, their arms and their hearts. We felt truly welcomed in those communities.”

Cousineau adds the most difficult part of his walk may have been a few days where the humidex read more than 40C.

“That heat was really a challenge. We battled some of the elements but the heat was probably the worst.”

The veteran says he had a meeting Wednesday with Minister of Veterans Affairs Julian Fantino.

“They’ve committed to doing a research assessment of service dogs to help with veterans. They’re specifically going to look at the Canadian experience because they understand we have to study our people and our initiatives, and that’s a huge move.”

Despite the encouraging news, Cousineau’s not done yet.

He plans to continue fundraising. He doesn’t yet have the final tally on how much he has raised, but says four veterans have already received their service dogs.