

MAJOR RICHARD STAR ACT



S. 344 / H.R.1282

WHY IS THIS BILL NECESSARY?

When Service members retire from the military, they are entitled to both retired pay from the Department of Defense (DoD), and disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) if they were injured while in service. Unfortunately, only military retirees with at least 20 years of service and a disability rating of at least 50 percent are able to collect both benefits at the same time. For all other retirees, current law requires a dollar for dollar offset of these two benefits, meaning they have to forfeit a portion of the benefits they earned in service. It is time to fully honor veterans who were medically retired as a result of injuries incurred in combat or combat-related training. Regardless of time in service, these veterans have earned all their benefits through their extraordinary sacrifice in defending our nation.

WHAT DOES THE BILL DO?

- In 2004, Congress eliminated the offset for military retirees with at least 20 years of service and disability ratings of at least 50 percent.
- The Major Richard Star Act would expand this policy to the 42,000 retirees whose military careers were cut short due to combat-related injuries, finally allowing them to collect hundreds of dollars per month that they have been denied up until now.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Under the Major Richard Star Act, former Service members who were medically retired from the military with less than 20 years of service (Chapter 61 retirees) AND are eligible for Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) would no longer have their benefits reduced by the offset. This includes those who were retired for injuries sustained in combat and combat-related training.

WWP EFFORTS TO END THE OFFSET

DoD retired pay and VA disability compensation are two different benefits established by Congress for two different reasons. WWP strongly believes that collecting both benefits should never be considered “double dipping,” and no retiree should be subject to the offset. For this reason, WWP will continue to support legislation to eliminate the offset for ALL retirees and considers the Major Richard Star Act one step towards achieving that goal.