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Major Richard Star Act

The VFW's Concern:

More than 59,000 combat-injured veterans medically retired under Chapter 61 continue to have their military retirement pay offset by Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability compensation. These are two distinct earned benefits. Retirement pay recognizes military service, while VA compensation recognizes service-connected disability.

The bipartisan H.R.2102 / S.1032, *Major Richard Star Ac*t, would allow eligible combat-injured Chapter 61 retirees to receive both benefits without offset. However, the version included in the *Take Care of America's Veterans Act* (TCAVA) differs from the standalone bill. The TCAVA version includes budget-saving caps that would create another offset for some combat-injured retirees. Congress should not resolve one injustice by creating another.

The VFW Urges Congress to:

Pass the standalone H.R.2102, *Major Richard Star Act*, as provided for in H.Res.1247. Support the discharge petition process and be prepared to vote in favor of H.Res.1247 and H.R.2102 when brought to the House floor. The Senate should support the companion legislation (S.1032) and be prepared to pass the *Major Richard Star Act* promptly if approved by the House.

Take Care of America's Veterans Act (TCAVA)

The VFW's Concern:

The VFW opposes H.R.9237 / S.4744, *Take Care of America's Veterans Act* (TCAVA), because Section 108 would reduce future veterans' disability compensation to offset the cost of other provisions. Specifically, it would codify disputed proposed changes to disability ratings for tinnitus and sleep apnea. Disability compensation is earned for injuries and illnesses incurred through military service, not a funding source for other legislation.

Changes to the Veterans Affairs Schedule for Rating Disabilities (VASRD) should follow VA's established evidence-based regulatory process, which includes medical review, public notice, and stakeholder input. The underlying 2022 proposal drew more than 2,600 public comments and has never been finalized. Bypassing this process would set a dangerous precedent for Congress to treat the VASRD as a source of budget offsets to fund other legislative priorities. The projected reductions in future veterans' disability compensation would far exceed the value of the benefits provided under the legislation, making this an unacceptable trade-off.

The VFW supports important veterans' legislation, including the *Major Richard Star Act*, but not at the expense of future disabled veterans' earned compensation.

The VFW Urges Congress to:

VOTE NO on the *Take Care of America's Veterans Act* (TCAVA) and reject the use of veterans' disability compensation as a legislative budget offset.

VFW
NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.