



THE MAJOR RICHARD STAR ACT

A HISTORY OF THE FIGHT FOR FAIRNESS

The Major Richard Star Act would allow eligible combat-disabled veterans who were medically retired before 20 years of service to receive both military retirement pay and VA disability compensation, restoring the full benefits they have earned.

MORE THAN TWO DECADES OF BIPARTISAN SUPPORT. ONE PROMISE STILL UNFULFILLED.

For more than 25 years, Congress has expanded exceptions to the offset between military retired pay and VA disability compensation. The Major Richard Star Act seeks to address a remaining gap affecting certain combat-disabled medical retirees.

1890–1998	LONGSTANDING STATUTORY OFFSET	
	For more than a century, federal law generally required military retired pay to be reduced dollar-for-dollar by VA disability compensation.	► This is often called “the offset.”
1999–2002	CONGRESS BEGINS CREATING EXCEPTIONS	
	Congress begins easing the offset through a series of laws. In 2002, Congress creates Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) for retirees with qualifying combat-related disabilities.	► Fiscal Year 2000 National Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 106–65) began initial relief. ► Fiscal Year 2003 National Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 107–314) established CRSC.
2003–2004	CRDP CREATED	
	Congress creates Concurrent Retirement and Disability Pay (CRDP), allowing eligible retirees with 20 years of service and a VA rating of 50% or higher to receive both retired pay and VA disability compensation. Many Chapter 61 medical retirees who leave before 20 years remain excluded.	► Fiscal Year 2004 National Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 108–136) enacted CRDP. ► The law phased in this benefit beginning in 2004.
2020	MAJOR RICHARD STAR ACT INTRODUCED	
	Representatives Gus Bilirakis and Raul Ruiz introduce H.R. 5995, the Major Richard Star Act, to close the gap and allow eligible combat-disabled medical retirees to receive full concurrent benefits.	► First introduced in the 116th Congress (Feb./Mar. 2020). ► Named for Major Richard D. Star, a combat engineer who was medically retired after developing cancer from toxic exposure. He died in 2021.
2021–2024	REINTRODUCED AND BIPARTISAN SUPPORT GROWS	
	The bill is reintroduced in subsequent Congresses and gains powerful bipartisan support in both the House and Senate.	► 118th Congress: H.R. 1282 (House) and S. 344 (Senate). ► House Armed Services Committee marked up H.R. 1282 on June 21, 2023. ► More than two-thirds of both chambers supported the bill.
2025–2026	STANDALONE BILL AND TCAVA	
	In the 119th Congress, the Major Richard Star Act is H.R. 2102 (House) and S. 1032 (Senate). The policy is also included in the Take Care of America’s Veterans Act (TCAVA) as Congress considers the best path to enact this long-standing promise.	► H.R. 2102 introduced March 14, 2025. ► By early 2026 the bill had more than 330 House cosponsors and 77 Senate cosponsors. ► Congress continues to debate the legislative vehicle and financing to deliver this benefit.

WHAT DOES “PASS A CLEAN MAJOR RICHARD STAR ACT” MEAN?

There is no single legislative definition of “clean.” The Major Richard Star Act has been introduced in multiple Congresses since 2020, and its legislative text and proposed path to enactment have evolved over time.

1 STANDALONE BILL	2 CURRENT BENEFIT WITHOUT SECTION 108	3 UNDERLYING POLICY OBJECTIVE
Some advocates use “clean” to mean passing the current Major Richard Star Act by itself rather than as part of TCAVA or another legislative package.	Others use “clean” to mean enacting the Richard Star benefit without financing it through the disability-rating changes contained in Section 108.	Still others use the phrase more broadly to mean preserving the central goal, full concurrent receipt for eligible combat-disabled medical retirees, regardless of the legislative vehicle used to enact it.

WHAT HAS REMAINED CONSISTENT IS THE POLICY GOAL.

What has changed over time is the legislative text, financing, implementation, and vehicle.

95%

OF VETERANS SUPPORT THE GOAL

Mission Roll Call polling shows 95% support for allowing eligible combat-disabled veterans to receive both military retirement pay and VA disability compensation. Sources: MRC Major Richard Star Act Polling (2025)

SOURCES:

10 U.S. Code § 1414; PL 106–65 (1999); PL 107–314 (2002); PL 108–136 (2003); H.R. 5995 (116th Congress); H.R. 1282 / S. 344 (118th Congress); H.R. 2102 / S. 1032 (119th Congress); House Armed Services Committee Report 118–149. * Data current as of August 10th 2026.