



**Congress:** Ensure H.R. 1282/S. 344, The Major Richard Star Act is included in the FY 2025 NDAA base text. Help ensure combat-injured veterans receive the vested retirement pay they earned.

## Support Combat-Injured Veterans by Passing the Major Richard Star Act

**Background:** Combat-injured veterans forced into early retirement by their injury are not receiving their vested longevity pay. Reducing retirement pay because of a disability is an injustice. The Major Richard Star Act (H.R. 1282/S. 344) will correct this injustice.

### UNDERSTANDING THE STAR ACT

The Major Richard Star Act will allow combat-injured veterans to receive their earned retirement pay and their disability compensation without offset.

DoD is responsible for retired pay, and VA is responsible for disability compensation. These are *two different payments for two different purposes*.

Reducing DoD retirement pay due to a combat injury breaks faith with those who serve and will serve in the future.

*The Major Richard Star Act has overwhelming support in Congress and would end an unjust offset.* This bipartisan legislation will support 52,304 combat injured veterans who receive combat-related special compensation (CRSC) and are not eligible to receive retired pay and VA disability pay without offset.

These individuals, often seriously disabled, are subject to an offset where their retirement pay is reduced for every dollar of VA disability received. In some cases, their retirement pay is eliminated. DoD is responsible for retired pay covering vested years of service (in the past), while the VA is responsible for disability compensation covering a lifelong injury (in the future).

Congress partially fixed this injustice in the FY 2004 NDAA. What wasn't corrected includes those who were injured in combat and forced to retire before completing 20 years of service, resulting in an offset where their retirement pay is reduced for every dollar of disability provided by the VA.

### MAJ. RICHARD STAR, USAR (RET)

Maj. Star was an Army combat engineer who led route clearance and route construction missions in Afghanistan and Iraq. He was an energetic advocate for his fellow combat-injured veterans and passed away in 2021.

### COST CONCERNS

Some lawmakers and staffers point to the projected cost of the Major Richard Star Act (\$9 billion over 10 years) as a reason it has not moved forward. MSOs/VSOs reject this approach for two reasons:

- The wrong message to servicemembers: Cost should not be a factor when addressing a long-term injustice faced by those injured in service to this nation. It's especially damaging during ongoing recruiting challenges.
- The wrong math: The Congressional Budget Office estimate fails to include a five-year phase-in, which will significantly reduce the full cost of the legislation. It assumes all 52,304 combat-injured veterans who'd be eligible to switch from CRSC to Concurrent Retirement and Disability Pay (CRDP) would do so. That's not a guarantee — while about half of those veterans could benefit from such a change, the rest may choose to retain tax-free CRSC, resulting in no additional cost to the government.

### TMC'S POSITION

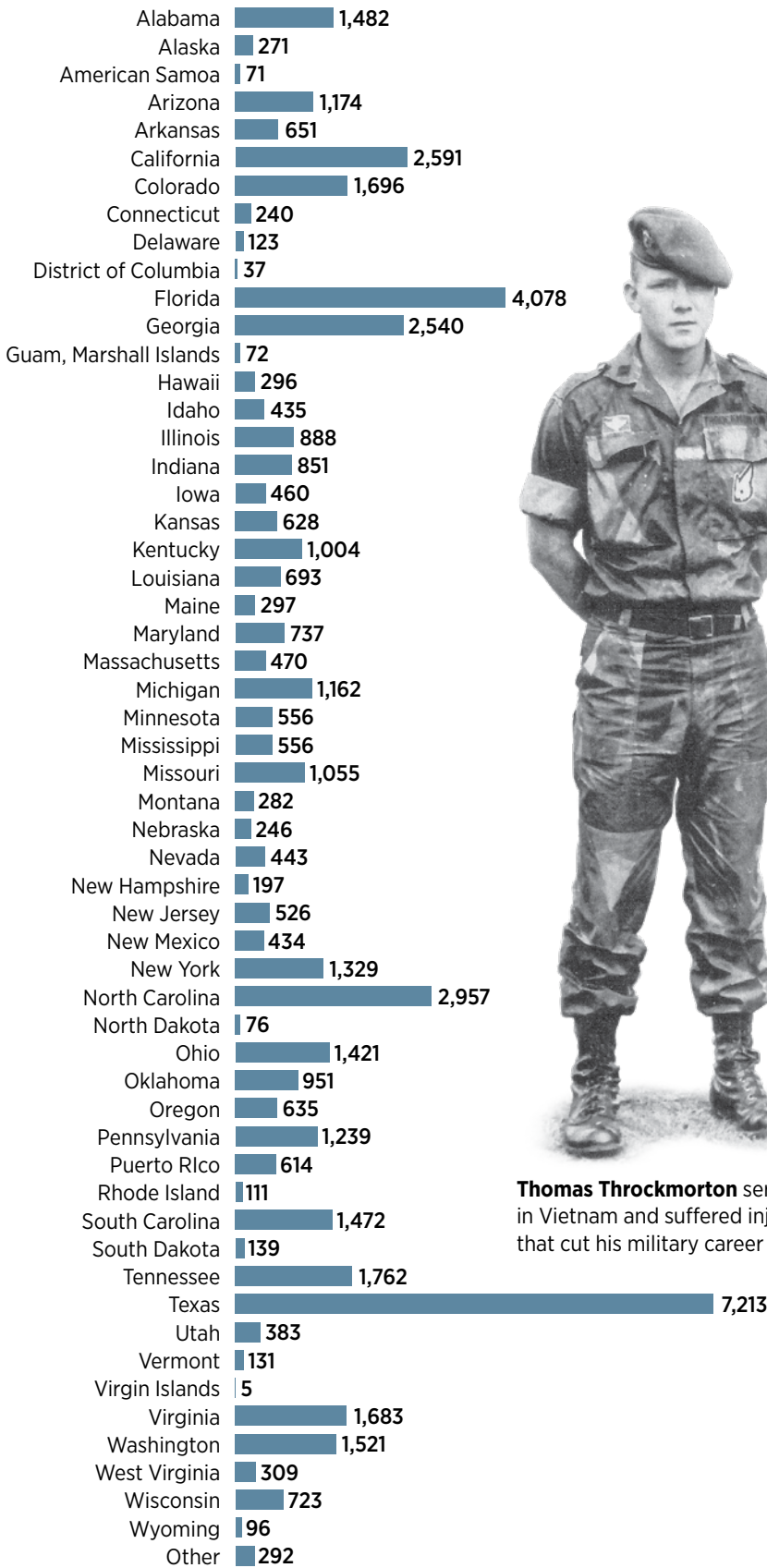
Our combat-injured veterans earned their vested retirement pay for dedicated years of service and earned their disability compensation through extraordinary personal sacrifice.

TMC remains committed to working with Congress to find solutions to enable these retirees to receive the compensation they earned through their service and sacrifice.

### The Military Coalition represents over 5.5 million members:

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AFSA  
AMVETS  
AMSUS  
AUSA  
AUSN  
BSF  
BVA  
CWOA  
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## COMBAT-INJURED RETIREES BY STATE



**Thomas Throckmorton** served in Vietnam and suffered injuries that cut his military career short.

## Combat-Injured Retirees Span Generations of War

Thomas Throckmorton, a young and career-focused Army officer, did not want to miss combat in Vietnam. It was 1964, and he believed the war would soon be over. He sought an overseas assignment and served alongside paratroopers in the 5th Vietnamese Airborne Battalion. On this first trip to Vietnam he survived a bullet to the stomach.

He healed, continued his career, and deployed again to Vietnam in 1969. This time, small arms fire pierced a helicopter he was riding in. The helo crashed in a paddy field and he was thrown out the open door. His pelvis broke in 24 places, his hip was destroyed, and his prior bullet wound added complications.

“Well that’s the end of your Army career,” a doctor quipped as Throckmorton arrived for surgery. Though Throckmorton was able to serve a few more years, the injuries led to a premature end to his career.

“I never forgot that. Of course, I was in it for the duration,” said Throckmorton, a medically retired officer and Chapter 61 retiree whose retirement pay is offset due to his VA disability pay. After 13 years in, his career aspirations were cut short. His retirement pay has been shortchanged for decades.

Because Throckmorton’s injuries occurred in combat, he would be among retirees to benefit from the Major Richard Star Act. The beneficiaries of this law would span generations.

“I’m ... at the end of my life, so it’s not going to help me that much. But it will be nice for people to get it,” said Throckmorton.

While Congress attempted a partial solution for combat vets with the Combat-Related Special Compensation program, it doesn’t come close to fulfilling the offset, Throckmorton stressed.

“The thing that I never could quite understand is why, if they enacted Combat-Related Special Compensation, to replace the concurrent receipt ... why not make it fairly similar?”

— By *Tony Lombardo*, *Military Officers Association of America*

SOURCE: DOD STATISTICAL REPORT ON THE MILITARY RETIREMENT SYSTEM - SEPT. 30, 2022

GRAPHIC: JOHN HARMAN/MQAA STAFF

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MAJ. THOMAS THROCKMORTON, USA (RET)