

1,482 Combat-Injured Alabama Veterans Lose \$1.7 Million Monthly as Major Star Act Stalls in U.S. Senate

Advocates urge SASC Member Tuberville and Sen. Britt to bypass Wicker objection and support S.Amdt. 4056.

ONE MAN BLOCKED 54,000 VETERANS

It wasn't a vote. It was a veto.

**76 SENATORS
SUPPORTED IT**

76 Senators
said YES.

Every Veteran
Group said YES.



**1 SENATOR
BLOCKED IT**

Roger Wicker
said NO.

One man stood
between 54,000
veterans and
their livelihood.



Break the Blockade. Sign the Petition:

change.org/54KVeterans #MajorStarAct #VeteranBetrayal

Montgomery, Alabama Jan 1, 2026 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Combat-injured veterans in Alabama are losing more than \$1.7 million in earned military retirement pay every month because Congress has not acted to fix a long-standing federal retirement offset affecting medically retired service members.

Advocates say progress on the Major Richard Star Act has stalled in the U.S. Senate following an objection during floor consideration, leaving thousands of Alabama families absorbing the financial consequences.

Media Coverage of the Senate Objection

The stalled legislation has drawn significant media attention regarding the specific obstacle in the Senate. A recent report by WTVA9 News details the objection by Senator Roger Wicker that prevented the bill's passage. The coverage also highlights the billboard campaign launched across the region by [PassTheAct.org](https://www.passtheact.org) to raise awareness about the delay in allowing a vote.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zMYuPw4ELTA>

Senior Chief Shane Junkert, USN (Ret.), is a decorated combat veteran whose awards include Army commendations for joint service deployments. Junkert completed six combat deployments and was medically retired after 18.5 years of service due to combat-related injuries.

"Senator Tommy Tuberville sits on the Senate Armed Services Committee alongside Senator Roger Wicker," Junkert said. "He is in the room where these decisions happen. It is unacceptable for him to watch his colleague from Mississippi block a vote that strips \$21.3 million a year from Alabama veterans. We need him to fight for his constituents, not his committee seating chart."

The scope of the loss in Alabama

According to recent figures compiled by veteran advocacy groups, 1,482 combat-injured, medically retired veterans in Alabama are affected by the offset the Major Star Act is designed to end. With an average loss of approximately \$1,200 per month per household, Alabama veterans are losing an estimated \$1,778,400 every month, or more than \$21.3 million annually.

On a weekly basis, that amounts to roughly \$300 per household—money typically used for groceries, fuel, prescriptions, utilities, rent, or school expenses.

"This is \$300 a week that is being drained from Huntsville, Montgomery, and Mobile," Junkert said. "Senator Britt and Senator Tuberville often speak about supporting the military. The most effective way to support them right now is to ensure the government stops confiscating the retirement pay of those who came home injured."

Alabama's role in national defense

Alabama is a critical hub for military aviation and missile defense, home to Redstone Arsenal, Fort Novosel (formerly Fort Rucker), and Maxwell Air Force Base. The state trains the Army's pilots and

manages the nation's missile defense programs.

Many of the veterans affected by the offset trained, deployed, or served through these Alabama installations before returning home with combat injuries that ended their military careers early.

"Alabama trains the aviators and builds the missiles that defend this country," Junkert said. "The veterans who served in those units held up their end of the contract. It is shameful that the Senate is using budget gimmicks to avoid holding up theirs."

What the offset does

The Major Star Act applies to a specific group of veterans: those medically retired under Chapter 61 due to combat-related injuries who did not reach 20 years of service. By law, they are military retirees. In practice, many see their Department of Defense retired pay reduced to zero.

Under current law, these veterans must waive retired pay dollar for dollar when they receive VA disability compensation. As a result, the VA payment replaces—rather than supplements—the retirement earned through years of service.

"If a construction worker falls off a roof and breaks their back, they don't lose their pension just because they collect disability. They get both," Junkert said. "Retired pay is for the work they did. Disability pay is for the permanent damage to their health. Merging the two is an accounting trick that hurts real people."

The Major Star Act would end this offset for that narrow group. It does not create a new benefit or expand VA eligibility. It simply allows combat-injured medical retirees to receive both forms of compensation, consistent with how many other retirees are already treated.

Senate action and next steps

In December 2025, Senator Richard Blumenthal filed S.Amdt. 4056, seeking to attach the full Major Star Act to a must-pass defense funding bill. Supporters say inclusion of the amendment in the final defense package would force a recorded vote and move the issue toward resolution.

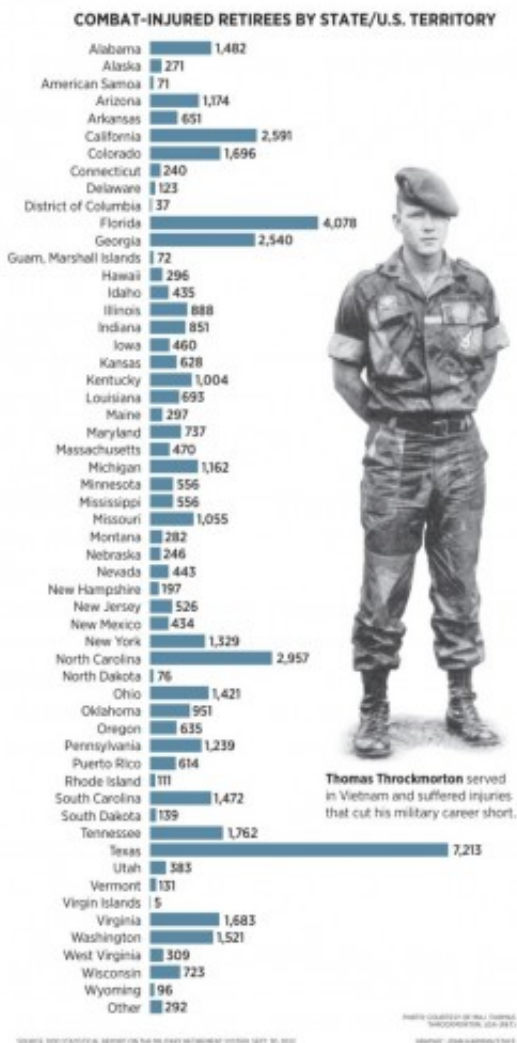
"S.Amdt. 4056 is where every senator—including Senators Tuberville and Britt—has to decide where they stand," Junkert said. "Supporting it restores \$1.7 million a month to Alabama families. Silence just keeps sending the bill to the veterans."

A question for Alabama senators

"If you represent Alabama, you know there are 1,482 combat-injured retirees living with this offset," Junkert said. "Why is the delegation allowing a single objection from Mississippi to strip \$21.3 million a year from the Alabama economy? It is time to go on the record."

About 54KVeterans.org

[54KVeterans.org](https://www.54KVeterans.org) is a grassroots coalition of combat-injured veterans dedicated to passing the Major Richard Star Act. The organization is led by Senior Chief Shane Junkert, USN (Ret.), a decorated combat veteran who completed six combat deployments during 18.5 years of service before being medically retired due to combat-related injuries. The coalition advocates on behalf of approximately 54,000 veterans nationwide affected by the Chapter 61 retirement offset.



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[See on IssueWire](#)