

1,696 Combat-Injured Colorado Veterans Lose \$2.03 Million Monthly as Major Star Act Stalls in U.S. Senate

Advocates urge Sens. Bennet and Hickenlooper to bypass Wicker objection and support S.Amdt. 4056 for 1,696 veterans.

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

"The thing is why, if the compensation receipt ... will

Colorado Springs, Colorado Jan 1, 2026 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Colorado's economy is losing more than \$24.4 million annually due to a federal retirement offset that remains unresolved in the Senate. Following a procedural objection that halted the Major Richard Star Act in October, veterans advocates are now calling on Senators Michael Bennet and John Hickenlooper to back a new legislative vehicle, S.Amdt. 4056, to finally deliver relief to 1,696 local retirees.

The offset, which reduces military retired pay for combat-injured veterans who also receive disability compensation, drains approximately \$2.03 million from the Colorado economy every month.

The Cost of Inaction For the 1,696 affected Colorado families, the legislative stalemate is not a theoretical loss—it is a tangible reduction of roughly \$300 per week. This covers essentials such as groceries, fuel, prescriptions, and rent.

"If a private company withheld a pension simply because an employee got hurt on the job, it would be unacceptable," said Senior Chief Shane Junkert, USN (Ret.), a decorated combat veteran and founder of 54KVeterans.org. "When the government does it to combat veterans, it is currently called 'policy.' We are asking Senators Bennet and Hickenlooper to help change that policy for the 1,696 Coloradans who have already paid enough."

Colorado's Role in National Defense Advocates highlight that Colorado is a premier hub for U.S. military and space operations. Fort Carson is one of the Army's most requested duty stations, while Peterson and Schriever Space Force Bases command the ultimate high ground for national security. The U.S. Air Force Academy trains the future leaders of the air and space forces.

"These veterans defended the highest ground from Space Force bases and deployed from Fort Carson to the toughest combat zones," Junkert said. "It is a matter of fulfilling the contract signed when they enlisted. When they return home injured, they should not have to fight their own government to receive the retirement they earned."

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>

Breaking the Gridlock On October 8, 2025, the Major Richard Star Act was poised to pass via unanimous consent until a single objection on the Senate floor halted the measure. This objection prevented a recorded vote.

Advocates emphasize that the objection rests on the argument that concurrent receipt is a "double benefit"—a claim strongly disputed by veterans' organizations. They note that military retired pay and VA disability compensation are separate entitlements: one for service rendered, the other for injuries sustained.

A Clear Choice for Colorado Senators

Supporters argue this moment represents a decisive accountability test for the Colorado delegation. With the defense appropriations bill (H.R. 4016) moving forward, Senators Bennet and Hickenlooper face a direct choice: publicly support S.Amdt. 4056 to attach the fix to the must-pass defense bill, or allow the single objection from October to stand. The latter path would mean continuing the \$24.4 million annual loss to Colorado households.

“This money isn’t a bonus; it is the difference between a full grocery cart and putting items back on the shelf,” Junkert added. “Why is the delegation allowing a single objection to keep \$24.4 million a year out of the Colorado economy? It is time to go on the record.”

About 54KVeterans.org

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 combat veteran who completed six deployments. Junkert leads the effort to restore full vested retirement pay for the 54,000 veterans currently subject to the Chapter 61 offset.



**THE WOUNDED VETERAN TAX:
BLEEDING COLORADO VETERANS DRY**

**\$24,422,400
YEARLY LOSS**


**\$2,035,200
MONTHLY LOSS**


**1,696
COLORADO
VETS AFFECTED**


Senator Roger Wicker blocked the
Major Richard Star Act on Oct 8, 2025.
This “Wounded Warrior Tax” siphons
millions from our state economy.

**COLORADO VETERANS
DESERVE THEIR FULL
RETIREMENT PAY.**

DEMAND ACTION. SIGN THE PETITION: change.org/54KVeterans

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