

## **California Loses \$37.3 Million Annually as Senate Inaction Leaves Combat-Injured Veterans Without Earned Retirement**

Advocates urge Senators Padilla and Schiff to support S.Amdt. 4056 to restore retirement pay for 2,591 veterans

# **THE WOUNDED VETERAN TAX: BLEEDING CALIFORNIA VETERANS DRY**



# **\$37,310,400 YEARLY LOSS**



**\$3,109,200**  
**MONTHLY LOSS**



**2,591**  
**CALIFORNIA  
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.

## **CALIFORNIA VETERANS DESERVE THEIR FULL RETIREMENT PAY.**

**DEMAND ACTION. SIGN THE PETITION: [change.org/54KVeterans](https://change.org/54KVeterans)**

**San Diego, California Jan 1, 2026 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com))** - California's economy is losing more than \$37 million annually because the U.S. Senate has not acted to correct a federal retirement offset affecting combat-injured, medically retired veterans, according to data released by veteran advocacy groups. The stalled legislation has left thousands of California families financially impacted.

There are currently 2,591 combat-injured, medically retired veterans in California affected by the offset. Under current law, veterans forced into early medical retirement due to combat injuries must waive their Department of Defense retired pay dollar-for-dollar to receive VA disability compensation.

Using a conservative estimate of \$1,200 per month in lost retired pay per veteran, California loses approximately \$3,109,200 per month, totaling \$37,310,400 annually—money that could support households and local economies across the state.

"This isn't just a line item in a budget," said Senior Chief Shane Junkert, USN (Ret.), a decorated combat veteran leading the 54KVeterans.org advocacy campaign. "This is about \$300 a week that 2,591 California families earned through service and sacrifice, which the Senate is refusing to let them keep. For many, that \$1,200 a month can determine whether a family keeps a roof over its head."

### California's Role in National Defense

California is home to some of the nation's most strategic military hubs. San Diego anchors major Navy and Marine Corps infrastructure. Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton has sent generations of Marines into combat. Travis Air Force Base and other installations support global airlift, logistics, and readiness.

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

"When California provides the bases, the deployments, and the families who carry the load, the retirement combat-injured veterans earned should not be treated as optional," Junkert said. "This is part of military readiness, not charity."

### The Major Richard Star Act

The Major Richard Star Act would correct this problem for a narrowly defined group of veterans: those medically retired under Chapter 61 due to combat-related injuries before reaching 20 years of service. The bill does not create a new benefit or expand VA eligibility. It simply allows these veterans to receive both the retired pay they earned through service and the VA disability compensation tied to their injuries—an arrangement already available to many 20-year retirees.

In a 2021 Memorial Day column, Senator Roger Wicker of Mississippi described himself as a cosponsor of the Major Star Act, calling it a commonsense fix to an unfair retirement offset. Advocates note, however, that the legislation later stalled following an objection during Senate floor consideration. Recent media coverage has highlighted the objection and a billboard campaign launched by veterans to draw public attention to the stalled bill.



<https://youtu.be/zMYuPw4ELTA?si=Fy2EsseWt1ChaRX4>

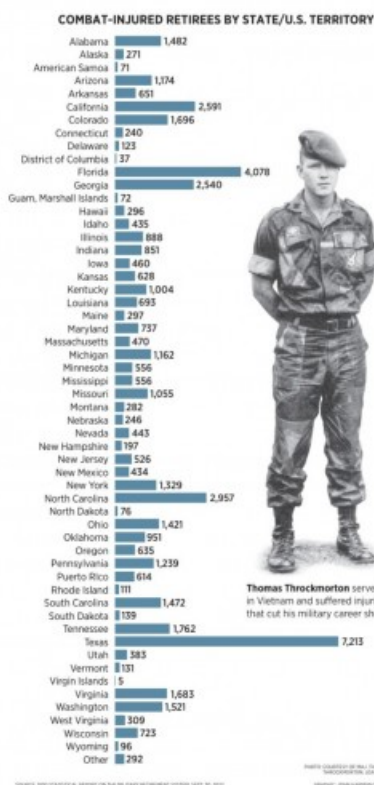
## Next Legislative Steps

Advocates are urging California Senators Alex Padilla and Adam Schiff to publicly support S.Amdt. 4056, which would carry the Major Richard Star Act language as part of must-pass defense funding legislation, forcing senators to take an on-the-record position.

"California has one of the largest veteran populations in the country," Junkert said. "When you cut veterans' retirement pay, you hurt the entire state. California's senators should be fighting for that \$37 million a year, not sitting quietly while it's taken from families who already paid the price of service."

About [54KVeterans.org](http://54KVeterans.org)

[54KVeterans.org](http://54KVeterans.org) is a grassroots coalition of combat-injured veterans dedicated to passing the Major Richard Star Act and ending the Chapter 61 retirement offset. The organization advocates on behalf of approximately 54,000 combat-injured, medically retired veterans nationwide who currently lose earned military retirement pay because of the offset.



Comb  
Span

Thomas Throckmorton served in Vietnam and suffered injuries that cut his military career short. He healed again to arms fire. The helicopter was thrown on 24 places bullet wounds. "Well, the doctor quit surgery. I serve a few premature. "I never finished the duration of retirement pay. After were cut short. While Co for comb special co come clo ton stress. "The thin is why, if compens cept ... w

**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](http://change.org/54KVeterans) #MajorStarAct #VeteranBetrayal

## Media Contact

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Source : 54K Veterans

[See on IssueWire](#)