

Legislative Promotion #4 | April 2023

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Our Program Year is drawing to a close, but our work isn't over. Two important bills from the previous congressional session were recently reintroduced and we need to dedicate ourselves to getting them over the finish line.

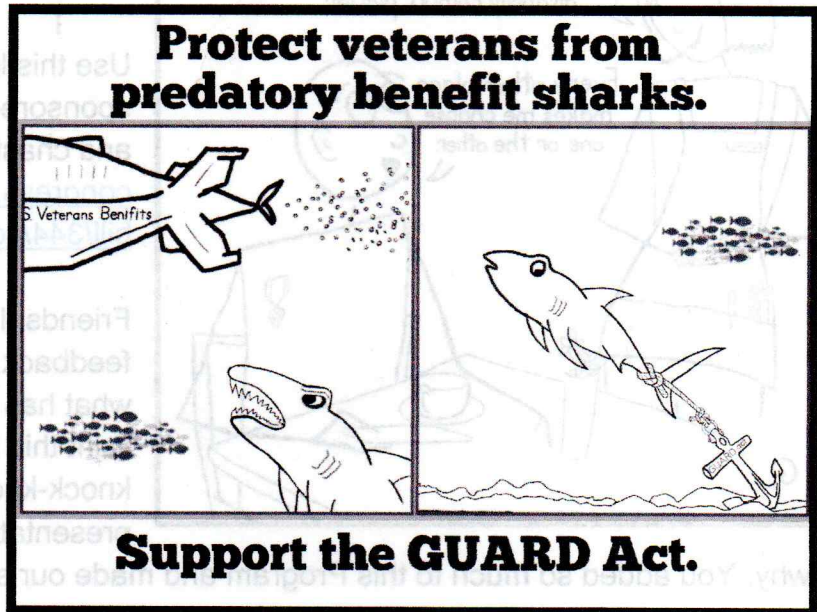
The Guard VA Benefits Act (H.R. 1139) protects veterans from unaccredited lawyers and other agents who charge money to help veterans draw their benefits.

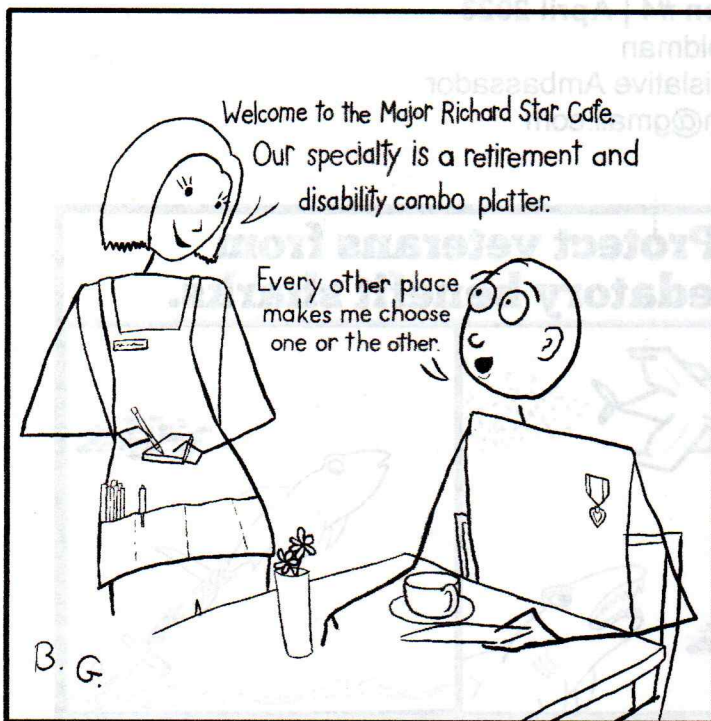
As of 3/17/2023, it is still in the House Committee on Veterans

Affairs, so if your Department has representatives on the committee, encourage them to vote yes. The bill has 74 co-sponsors. Use this link to see if your congressperson is among them. If not, you know what to do. congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/1139/cosponsors?s=1&r=2#withdrawnCosponsorsToggle.

Mike Bost (R-Ill.-12) is chairman of the HCVA and he has yet to co-sponsor the bill. When he does, more will follow because he is very influential. I hope those of you in Illinois contact him. Also, Kevin Hern (R-Okla.-1) added his name to the bill but removed it six days later. If Oklahoma wants to ask him about his change of heart, let me know his answer because I am curious.

The Major Richard Star Act (S.344) is another bill that should have passed last but didn't. It was reintroduced by Jon Tester (D-Mont.) on February 9. Currently, disabled veterans with fewer than 20 years of creditable service have their retirement pay reduced dollar for dollar when they receive disability compensation. This is all kinds of wrong. The Major Richard Star Act fixes this mistake so that disabled veterans don't have to choose.





It is still in the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs. Contact your representatives who serve on the committee and let them know that the VFW endorsed it this time, endorsed it last time and they should as well.

Use this link to see if your elected leaders co-sponsored the Star Act. Thank them if they did and chastise them if they didn't.

congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/344/cosponsors.

Friends, I have gotten a lot of positive feedback, and a few surprise hugs, because of what has been accomplished on the legislative front this Program Year. You and your poems, knock-knock jokes, photographs, SOI presentations and dedication is the reason

why. You added so much to this Program and made our successes possible.

You can go to any cemetery and see a person's life summed up with the year of birth, a dash and the year of death. To us, that dash represents, in part, a tremendous commitment to creating an America that treats veterans and service members with respect and gratitude. You have all made my dash a lot more meaningful and fun.

Much love to you all.