

Legislative Report

The past two years have been challenging with legislation both on the federal and state level, but change is on the way.

Federal Update

At this time, the 118th Congress has passed very few veterans bills, compared to previous congressional sessions. To view what bills have been passed, click [here](#).

Two important bills, which DAV supports that have stalled, are the Major Richard Starr Act and the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act

The Major Richard Star Act expands the eligibility of military retirees to concurrently receive veterans disability compensation alongside their retired pay or combat-related special compensation (CRSC). It specifically includes disability retirees with less than 20 years of service who are eligible for CRSC.

The bill is supported by more than two-thirds of the 118th Congress. It has 326 cosponsors in the House and 73 cosponsors in the Senate. Rep. Mark Pocan, Rep. Tom Tiffany, and Rep. Derrick Van Orden are cosponsors in the House and Sen. Tammy Baldwin is a cosponsor in the Senate.

The House version was reported out of committee with unanimous consent.

Recently, DAV along with a coalition of Military Service Organizations (MSOs) and Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) have met with congressional leaders, urging passage of this legislation. A DAV-CAN Alert was released on April 11, 2023, generating 29,937 actions. If you have not taken Action on the Major Richard Star Act, please do so by clicking [here](#).

H.R. 8371, the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act is an omnibus bill which contains many of DAV's legislative priorities. It was the result of negotiations between the House and Senate VA committees.

Currently, three of the four integers are in agreement. They are VA Senate Chair Jon Tester, Senate VA Ranking Member Jerry Moran, and House VA Chair

Mike Bost. It is House VA Ranking Member Mark Takano who has some concerns about the Community Care provision contained in the bill. This impasse has stalled further movement. For more specific information on both bills, click [here](#).

Hopefully, an accord can be reached by all parties and the impasse will be resolved before the August recess which begins on the second.

State Update

It has been a long, frustrating six years for the American Legion, DAV, and VFW as we watched our top Legislative Priority fail to be enacted by three consecutive Legislatures. This priority is:

- Eligibility Expansion of the Wisconsin Veterans and Surviving Spouses Property Tax Credit.

Some progress was made during the current Session, but not enough to have it enacted. The Assembly bill was voted out of committee unanimously and passed the Assembly 96-0. This was due mainly to the herculean efforts of the bill's author, Rep. James Edming.

Sadly, it met resistance in the Senate Majority Caucus. Although it was voted out of committee, Senate leadership failed to bring it to the floor for a vote.

Despite this disappointment, we feel that the next Legislature will be more receptive, thanks to the implementation of 'Fair Maps.'

For now, we request all our members and supporters to ask any candidate seeking a state office to publicly say what their position is on expanding eligibility for the Wisconsin Veterans and Surviving Spouses Property Tax Credit.

This will be extremely important. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation with this request.

With your help, we are optimistic that this priority will finally be enacted in the next Legislative Session.