

## Concurrent Receipt

### VFW's Concerns:

The VFW has long argued that retired pay and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) service-connected disability compensation are fundamentally different benefits, earned for different reasons. Military retired pay is earned by 20 or more years of service in the United States Armed Forces, allowing retirees to maintain their standard of living while attempting to enter the civilian job market for the first time in the middle of their prime working years.

Service-connected disability compensation is a benefit meant to supplement a veteran's lost earning potential as a result of the disabilities he or she incurred while in service. However, military retirees who are less than 50 percent service-connected disabled are required to offset their retiree pay with the amount of VA disability compensation they receive.

Since military retirement pay cannot be passed on to a survivor, military retirees opt to pay for the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP), which is an insurance that helps provide for their surviving family members. The survivors of military retirees who die from a service-connected injury are unjustly forced to endure a dollar-for-dollar offset of their SBP payments and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, which is granted to survivors of the brave men and women who make the ultimate sacrifice or die from wounds they sustained in service to our nation.

The only purpose for these two offsets is to balance the federal budget on the backs of America's disabled veterans and their survivors. They are different benefits paid by two separate government entities for separate reasons.

### The VFW urges Congress to:

- Pass H.R. 303 or S. 208, the *Retired Pay Restoration Act*, which would enable disabled retirees to concurrently receive the retirement pay and VA disability compensation they have earned and deserve, without offset.
- Pass H.R. 553, the *Military Surviving Spouses Equity Act*, or S. 622, the *Military Widow's Tax Elimination Act of 2019*, which would honor the sacrifices of our nation's heroes by ensuring their survivors are able to maintain a modest quality of life, without having to unjustly offset their benefits.