VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

VFW Urges POTUS to Support Repeal of Concurrent Receipt Policy

VFW National Commander Tim Borland writes letter to the White House asking for leadership on the issue

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WASHINGTON — In a letter sent to the White House, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) National Commander Tim Borland urged President Biden to support the repeal of concurrent receipt policy, which denies veterans receiving both retirement pay and VA compensation if they were forced to retire early from military service because of battlefield injury or illness.

“I write to request your urgent support in ensuring our nation's veterans receive the benefits they have earned by defending the ideals our nation holds sacred,” opened Borland in his letter addressing the policy. “This policy is nothing more than a way to save money on the backs of veterans.”

As it stands the current compensation rule imposes what is known as an offset, requiring veterans forfeit all or part of one benefit to pay for or pay back another. Congress justifies the policy as a way to prevent veterans from "double-dipping” from the federal government, a justification which Borland says is erroneous.

“Military retirement pay is earned for years of vested service, while VA disability compensation is awarded as supplementary income for reduced earning potential of disabled veterans who incur lifelong illnesses and injuries from their service,” wrote Borland. “These are two fundamentally different benefits earned for two entirely different reasons.”

The Major Richard Star Act (H. R. 1282/S. 344), which would provide total offset relief to veterans who suffered combat injuries or illnesses who were medically retired with less than 20 years of service, garnered overwhelming bipartisan and bicameral support from members of the 117th Congress. Despite this, the bill did not get enough votes to make it to

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the president's desk.

"It has become clear that political will is lacking, warranting the White House's leadership," wrote Borland. "The VFW — and by extension the entire veteran community — is looking to you, President Biden, to lead from the front on this issue."

The letter concluded by pressing the President to make repealing the concurrent receipt policy one of his legislative priorities in the fiscal year 2024 Department of Defense budget request.

"No veteran should question the value of their service to our country due to an unethical budget gimmick," wrote Borland. "By repealing concurrent receipt, you will let them know that Every Veteran Counts."

Read the official letter sent to President Biden.