VFWA NEW MEXICO
LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM
Lukas Gersich Program Chair 2026-2027

Promotional October 2026

VFW Auxiliary National Ambassador - Kim McWilliams
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Greetings New Mexicans,

Big news for the Richard Star Act! The bill now has enough signatures to be put on the floor for a vote in Congress!

Reaching 218 signatures freezes the petition and places the discharge motion on the House Calendar, where it must sit for seven legislative days before it can be called up. With the House leaving for recess after today, that window won't open until members return in November. When it does, a signer can bring the motion to the floor, and if adopted, the House proceeds directly to a vote on the Major Richard Star Act.

The bill has drawn overwhelming bipartisan support, with 340 cosponsors in the House and 80 in the Senate.

Under existing law, veterans must choose between Combat-Related Special Compensation and full retirement benefits; the Major Richard Star Act would allow them to receive both, as these veterans have earned.

In my opinion, forcing wounded veterans to choose between one form of disability compensation when they should be granted both is a travesty and a disgrace to all that are affected. There are 59,000 + veterans who are forced to make this choice of compensation. As stated by one of my affected family members, is the difference of $1,400+ in compensation. Not small potatoes…..

If you have any questions or would like to research more, please feel free to call me at 505-395-6393 or email me at ljgersich@gmail.com.

Thank you for your time,

Luke Gersich
Legislative Chairman
Department of New Mexico