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## *House of Representatives*

# MILITARY RETIREES ARE WAITING--LET'S FINISH THE JOB!

### **HON. BOB FILNER**

OF CALIFORNIA  
IN THE HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I rise today to introduce a bill to eliminate the Disabled Veterans Tax and to provide immediate concurrent receipt of military retired pay and VA disability compensation to all deserving disabled military retirees.

The "Immediate and Full Repeal of the Disabled Veterans Tax Act of 2005 (H.R. 2368) does exactly what it says—it eliminates the years of waiting before all disabled military retirees receive all the retired pay and compensation they have earned and deserve.

For the past several years, our Nation's veterans waged a long and determined campaign to eliminate the Disabled Veterans Tax. As my colleagues know, we were partially successful. But only partially.

The laws that we passed make veterans with a disability rating of 50 percent to 90 percent wait for ten years before their tax is completely eliminated. A great number of these

veterans are elderly and, unfortunately, may not live to see that day.

Even worse, fully two thirds of America's disabled veterans, with a rating less than 50 percent, have been left behind and will continue to be taxed as before—nearly 400,000 veterans! Despite the actions of Congress last year, the Disabled Veterans Tax is alive and well.

Our Democratic Leader, NANCY PELOSI, recently stated: "On the battlefield, our soldiers pledge to leave no one behind. As a Nation, let it be our pledge that when they return home, we will leave no veteran behind. The Disabled Veterans Tax breaks that promise."

Some of the veterans left behind include:

A veteran of the Kuwait theater who had a below-the-knee amputation after being hit by a drunk driver while jogging near the Pentagon to maintain physical fitness.

A retiree who cannot work on a family farm because of pain, numbness and osteoarthritis of both feet due to exposure to cold during noncombatant military service.

A veteran who lost an eye when an air hose accidentally detached from an airplane being worked on and who cannot work as an airline pilot.

A female retiree who has weekly panic attacks and chronic sleep disturbances as the result of a sexual assault which occurred while on active duty.

My friends and colleagues, Congress did just okay by taking the first steps towards eliminating the Disabled Veterans Tax—I would give us a grade of C-, but we did not do A work.

During my years in Congress, I cannot recall more than or two other issues on which I have received so many letters, e-mails and phone calls. Our veterans have been telling us that this is an important issue to them. They deserve that we do A work.

I understand that there are costs to concurrent receipt. But I also understand that the now-disabled veterans did not hesitate when called to duty. Many have returned home with disabilities they have had to lived with ever since. How can we doubt the imperative that we keep our promise and give them what they deserve? They earned their military retired pay. They deserve their VA disability compensation.

We cannot make them wait any longer for justice to prevail!