

Rep. Bilirakis Introduces Legislation to Ensure Proper Benefits for Veterans

WASHINGTON (24 September) – On Wednesday, U.S. Rep. Gus M. Bilirakis (R-Fla.) introduced H.R. 7011 to ensure that all eligible combat disabled military retirees are able to collect Combat-Related Special Compensation.

Earlier this year, the Department of Defense (DOD) began implementing a new law based on Bilirakis's bill H.R. 89, that expanded eligibility for Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) to disabled military retirees with less than 20 years of service. DOD is now accepting applications for CRSC from combat-disabled servicemembers who retired for medical reasons or retired under the Temporary Early Retirement Authority during the 1990s force reduction.

While thousands of disabled military retirees will benefit from the new law, some will remain unable to receive their CRSC benefit because of an unanticipated glitch in the statutory payment formula included in Public Law 110-181. This glitch mainly impacts disabled retirees who have received a high percentage disability rating from the Department of Veterans Affairs and a lower combat-related disability rating from the Department of Defense.

Bilirakis's bill, the Combat-Related Special Compensation Technical Corrections Act, will correct the statutory formula to provide that all eligible combat-disabled military retirees can receive the Combat-Related Special Compensation to which they are entitled. The bill has been referred to the House Committee on Armed Services where it awaits consideration.

Representative Bilirakis is a member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs and Chairman of the Republican Policy Committee Veterans' Affairs Task Force