

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SJM 8013

As Passed House
March 2, 1994

Brief Description: Petitioning the president on behalf of disabled veterans.

Sponsors: Senators Winsley, M. Rasmussen and Oke.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
State Government, February 23, 1994, DP.
Passed House, March 2, 1994, 95-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members:
Representatives Anderson, Chair; Veloria, Vice Chair; Reams,
Ranking Minority Member; L. Thomas, Assistant Ranking
Minority Member; Campbell; Conway; Dyer; King and Pruitt.

Staff: Bonnie Austin (786-7135).

Background: Under current federal law, veterans with a service-connected disability and with 20 or more years of military service cannot receive concurrently both their full retirement pay and full disability compensation. Such veterans must choose to receive either their retirement pay or disability compensation, or they must waive an amount of retirement pay equal to the amount of their disability compensation.

A number of measures have been introduced in the United States Congress which would allow disabled military retirees to receive concurrently their retirement pay and their disability compensation benefits.

Summary of Bill: The United States Congress is requested to amend existing federal law to permit career military retirees with service-connected disabilities to receive concurrently their full retirement pay and their full disability compensation.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: Current federal law discriminates against disabled retired veterans. Since they must choose between

retirement pay and disability pay, they are forced to pay for their own disability. This especially hurts officers of lower rank who are affected by downsizing. There are many sponsors to the proposed federal legislation; it is a serious effort.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Senator Shirley Winsley, prime sponsor (pro); Beau Bergeron, Washington Department of Veteran Affairs (pro); Keith Sherman, Washington Department of Veteran Affairs (pro); and Sergeant Major Kidd, Washington Department of Veteran Affairs (pro).