

The Star Act Alliance

★ Mississippi Toolkit to Support the Major Richard Star Act



Together, Lets Pass the Major Richard Star Act

WHY YOUR VOICE MATTERS

This fight isn't just for veterans — it's for all of us who believe in fairness. More than 500 Mississippi veterans injured in combat are being denied the benefits they earned.

This toolkit helps you speak out in favor of the Major Richard Star Act and call on Senator Roger Wicker, who publicly opposed the bill on the Senate floor, to support the bill.

Thank you for using your voice and standing with Mississippi veterans.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1: Letters to the Editor Instructions

Section 2: Social Media Instructions

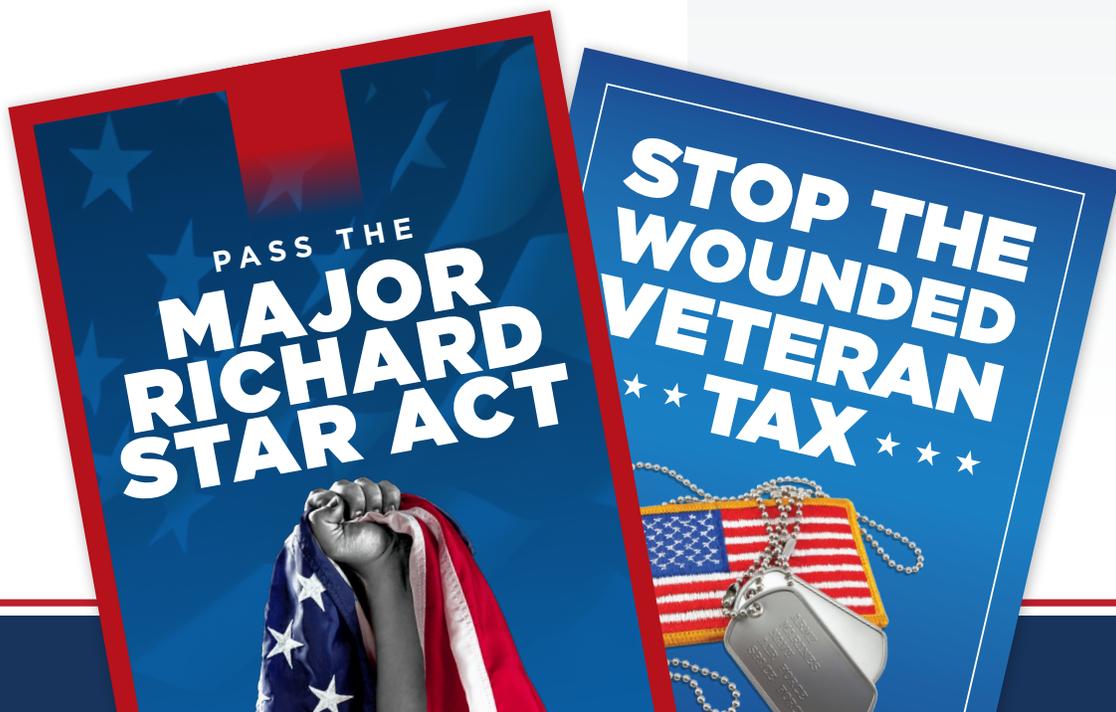
Section 3: Video Message Instructions

Section 4: Mississippi Media Outlet Contacts

Section 5: Letters to the Editor Templates

Section 6: Social Media Templates

Section 7: Video Message Templates



The Star Act Alliance

★ Mississippi Toolkit to Support the Major Richard Star Act



SECTION 1

Letters to the Editor: Step-by-Step Instructions

- 1. Pick a newspaper** — Choose your hometown paper or statewide daily. Be sure to use the right email or form for that media outlet (see Section 3).
- 2. Choose your letter** — Copy and paste text into the online form or email body (see Section 4). Feel free to change any content, but make sure you keep the focus on the passage of the bill.
- 3. Include your info** — Provide your name, hometown, phone number (for verification), and email. Your email and/or phone number won't be published.
- 4. Personalize/tell them why it matters** — A personal sentence (e.g., "I served in ...") strengthens your case. See the "Personalizing Your Letter" section.
- 5. Submit your letter.**
- 6. Let us know.** Email info@staractalliance.org and include your message and which outlet you sent it to.
- 7. Expect a call or email for verification.** Editors may contact you briefly to confirm your identity.
- 8. Be patient but persistent** — Wait 7-10 days. If you don't hear back, send a polite follow-up. "Hi, I'm checking on the status of a letter I submitted on [date]. Just wanted to confirm you received it."
- 9. Submit a letter to only one media outlet at a time.** If you've followed up and it's still not published, then feel free to submit to another outlet.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Stay respectful and fact-based.
- Avoid attacks or profanity.
- Make your ask clear:
Pass the Major Richard Star Act.

PERSONALIZING YOUR LETTER

Service mention

- Example: "I served 10 years in the Army," or "I served three tours of duty in Afghanistan."

Mississippi hometown

- Example: "As a veteran from Hattiesburg," or "In my hometown of Meridian."

Faith/family tie

- Example: "As a Christian and a father of two," or "As a Gold Star parent."

Just pick **one** — it makes your letter more relatable and powerful.

The Star Act Alliance

★ Mississippi Toolkit to Support the Major Richard Star Act



SECTION 2

Social Media: Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Choose a social media post (see Section 5).

Optional: Change it to fit your voice, or create your own post. Just make sure to use the same information and perspective.

2. Cut and paste into your social media platform.

3. ALWAYS use a photo or image with your post.

Using images draws attention to your post. Click [here](#) to download two of the general Major Richard Star Act posts that you are always free to use (scroll down to the bottom of the page).

4. Include the hashtag #MajorRichardStarAct or #endthewoundedveterantax in your post.

The template social media posts in Section 5 all include #MajorRichardStarAct.

5. Use both personal and organizational accounts (if appropriate) to post, like, and share content. If you don't have your own call-to-action page to use in your post, you can link to staractalliance.org/action.

6. Feel free to post different social media messages. And post often, even daily if you are able.

The Star Act Alliance

★ Mississippi Toolkit to Support the Major Richard Star Act



SECTION 3

Record a Personal Video Message in Support of the Bill: Step-by-Step Instructions

A powerful way to amplify your support of the Major Richard Star Act is to create a short, “selfie” video talking about the bill and its impact. It doesn’t need to be polished — what matters is authenticity. Speak from the heart. It will make all the difference.

There are three sample scripts below, but you are strongly encouraged to personalize each one. Share what’s most important to you. Talk about how Senator Wicker’s action — blocking the Major Richard Star Act — made you feel. Call for passage of the bill now.

- 1. Outline your key points.** You don’t need a full script. Natural is better, but do whatever is most comfortable.
- 2. Aim to speak for roughly 30 – 45 seconds.**
- 3. Find a quiet place to record.** Do a quick test to check sound and background noise.
- 4. Use good lighting.** Avoid having a window or lamp behind you. Natural light is always best.
- 5. Make sure your background is clean, simple, and not distracting.**
- 6. Hold the phone vertically and keep it as steady as possible.** You can also prop it against something solid or even use a tripod.
- 7. Look directly into the camera lens, not at yourself.** Keep your face centered in the frame.
- 8. Record and speak naturally.** Don’t worry about minor mistakes. Again, authentic is better than perfect!
- 9. Share on social media – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.** Tag @SenatorWicker and use #MajorRichardStarAct.
- 10. Send us your video link.** Email info@staractalliance.org so we can help amplify your message.

The Star Act Alliance

★ Mississippi Toolkit to Support the Major Richard Star Act



SECTION 4

Mississippi Media Outlets

If you discover issues with any of these links, or have a link for a media outlet we haven't posted here, please email us at info@staractalliance.org

- **Bolivar Bullet** (Daily email for Cleveland and Bolivar County)
<https://bolivarbullet.com/send-us-a-letter-to-the-editor/>
- **Brookhaven Daily Leader**
<https://dailyleader.com/services/letters-to-editor/>
- **Commercial Dispatch** (Service Columbus and Starkville)
voice@cdispatch.com
- **Daily Corinthian**
https://www.dailycorinthian.com/site/forms/online_services/letter_editor/
- **Delta Democrat Times**
<https://www.ddtonline.com/submit-letter-to-editor>
- **DeSota Times-Tribune**
https://www.desototimes.com/site/forms/online_services/letter_editor/
- **Greenwood Commonwealth**
https://www.gwcommonwealth.com/letter_to_the_editor
- **Gulfport Sun Herald**
<https://www.sunherald.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/submit-letter/>
- **Hattiesburg American**
<https://static.hattiesburgamerican.com/submitletter/>
- **Jackson Clarion-Ledger**
letters@jackson.gannett.com OR submit via mobile at:
<https://c1ezh681.caspio.com/dp.asp?AppKey=70d44000d5e7c41fedee414cb32b>
- **Laurel Leader-Call**
https://www.leader-call.com/site/forms/online_services/letter_editor/

The Star Act Alliance

★ Mississippi Toolkit to Support the Major Richard Star Act



SECTION 4

Mississippi Media Outlets (CONTINUED)

- **McComb Enterprise-Journal**
https://www.enterprise-journal.com/letter_to_the_editor
- **Meridian Star**
editor@themeridianstar.com
- **Mississippi Free Press**
<https://www.mississippifreepress.org/contact/>
- **Mississippi Today**
bharrison@mississippitoday.org
- **Monroe Journal**
https://www.djournal.com/site/forms/submit_letter_to_the_editor/letter_editor/
- **Natchez Democrat**
<https://www.natchezdemocrat.com/submission-forms/submit-a-letter-to-the-editor-ab43ef2f>
- **Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal**
https://www.djournal.com/site/forms/online_services/letter_editor/
- **Oxford Eagle**
<https://oxfordeagle.com/submit/letters-to-editor/>
- **Picayune Item**
<https://picayuneitem.com/services/letters-to-editor/>
- **Star-Herald** (Serving Attala County)
<https://www.starherald.net/submit-letter-to-editor-1>
- **Vicksburg Post**
news@vicksburgpost.com
- **Wilkamite Record**
info@wilkamiterecord.com

The Star Act Alliance

★ Mississippi Toolkit to Support the Major Richard Star Act



SECTION 5

Template Letters to the Editor

Letter Option 1 of 3:

This Isn't "Double-Dipping." It's Justice.

Mississippi prides itself on supporting our troops, yet more than 550 Mississippi combat veterans, and more than 54,000 across the country, are being denied the benefits they earned through service and sacrifice. The Major Richard Star Act would fix this injustice, but Senator Wicker continues to block the bill.

The bill allows veterans forced to medically retire due to combat-related injuries to receive their full retirement pay and disability compensation. Currently, these veterans have their retirement pay reduced by their disability compensation. But these are not the same benefits. One is for years of service, while the other is compensation for wounds sustained in combat. Calling it "double-dipping," as Senator Wicker said, is an insult to the service and sacrifices of these heroes.

It's time for Senator Wicker to prioritize the veterans who sacrificed for our country. Pass the Major Richard Star Act now.

The Star Act Alliance

★ Mississippi Toolkit to Support the Major Richard Star Act



SECTION 5

Template Letters to the Editor

Letter Option 2 of 3:

We Can Fix This Today

If Congress passed the Major Richard Star Act tomorrow, more than 54,000 veterans across the country who were forced to medically retire because of combat-related injuries, including over 550 in Mississippi, would finally receive the full benefits they earned in war.

This isn't a hypothetical situation — it's real money, real families, and real hardship.

Yet Senator Wicker continues to block this bipartisan bill, which has nearly 400 cosponsors across both sides of the aisle in Congress. That's unacceptable.

The senator has long claimed to stand with veterans, and in 2004, he even supported similar reforms. He even cosponsored this exact same bill a few years ago. So why abandon wounded warriors now?

The Major Richard Star Act is simple fairness. These veterans served and sacrificed, and now just want what they earned. Every other member of Congress from Mississippi gets it and has cosponsored the bill. It's time Senator Wicker does too.

The Star Act Alliance

★ Mississippi Toolkit to Support the Major Richard Star Act



SECTION 5

Template Letters to the Editor

Letter Option 3 of 3:

When Our Wounded Veterans Come Home, They Need Our Support

I've been a fan of Senator Wicker for years, but what I heard him say on the Senate floor recently disturbed me greatly.

I served my country proudly in [BRANCH OF SERVICE] for [NUMBER] years. I made it out okay, but I watched fellow soldiers lose limbs, experience traumatic brain injuries, and suffer from PTSD and many other injuries.

These soldiers come home expecting the full support of a grateful nation but get told their retirement benefits are going to be reduced, dollar-for-dollar, by the amount of their disability pay. That means some barely get anything in retirement pay!

Yet, Senator Wicker objected to the Major Richard Star Act, a bill that would give more than 54,000 veterans, including more than 500 here in Mississippi, forced to medically retire due to combat injuries, their full retirement benefits. He said these soldiers are "double-dipping" into veteran benefits, but he knows better.

Retirement pay honors years of service already sacrificed in defense of this great nation. Disability compensation compensates for income lost to service-related injuries.

Senator Wicker, I know you support veterans. It's time to keep the promise we made to our troops and pass the Major Richard Star Act.

The Star Act Alliance

★ Mississippi Toolkit to Support the Major Richard Star Act



SECTION 6

Template Social Media Posts

1. Let's be real. @SenatorWicker has been very good on veterans' issues. Which is why his flip-flop on veterans receiving both their retirement and disability pay is so confusing. You've got to fix this, Senator! Pass the #MajorRichardStarAct
2. If @SenatorWicker says receiving both retirement and disability benefits is now "double-dipping," does that mean he thinks vets are breaking the law if they receive both? Seriously? #MajorRichardStarAct
3. So @SenatorWicker voted in 2003 to help veterans receive their full disability and retirement pay, sponsored the #MajorRichardStarAct to help 50,000+ combat-injured veterans receive the same, and now opposes it? Vets deserve better!
4. 2003: @SenatorWicker  injured vets' pay
2025: @SenatorWicker  injured vets' pay
There's only one side, Senator. Support veterans. Pass the #MajorRichardStarAct
5. @SenatorWicker: Champion of injured veterans... in 2003. Senator Wicker: An obstacle for combat-injured veterans...in 2025. Why are you flip-flopping on those who served? #MajorRichardStarAct
6. Mississippi veterans earned both their military retirement pay and VA disability compensation. Yet @SenatorWicker is blocking the Major Richard Star Act, leaving thousands waiting for benefits they earned, including hundreds in MS. Tell him to get on board!
7. Every Representative and Senator in Mississippi's Congressional delegation supports the #MajorRichardStarAct - EXCEPT one: @SenatorWicker. He also prevented the bill from even coming to a vote. Time to stand up for veterans, Sen. Wicker!
8. More than 54,000 veterans, including hundreds in Mississippi, risked everything — limbs, health, years of their lives — for our country. Denying earned benefits is more than unfair — it's a betrayal, @SenatorWicker. #MajorRichardStarAct
9. Support for the #MajorRichardStarAct is bipartisan. @SenHydeSmith is already on board. So are 75 other Senators. @SenatorWicker: It's time to honor your past support and do right by veterans. MS veterans deserve better!
10. Veterans who were injured in combat and had to medically retire deserve their full benefits. Looking at you @SenatorWicker — pass the #MajorRichardStarAct to make this happen.

The Star Act Alliance

★ Mississippi Toolkit to Support the Major Richard Star Act



SECTION 7

Template Video Scripts

1. Hi, I'm NAME, a MILITARY BRANCH veteran in Mississippi, and I was forced to medically retire due to combat-related injuries.

Senator Wicker, when you decided to block passage of the Major Richard Star Act, you insulted my service and impacted my ability to care for my family and me.

I earned my retirement AND disability payment through my sacrifice. I wanted to continue serving, but my injury prevented me from doing that. Now you're using that injury as an excuse to prevent me from receiving my full retirement.

That's no way to treat me and the more than 500 veterans in Mississippi in the same situation. Stop blocking the Major Richard Star Act and get it passed this year!

2. This is NAME, a MILITARY BRANCH veteran in Mississippi.

Senator Wicker, you've always been supportive of veterans — until now.

When you blocked passage of the Major Richard Star Act, you hurt more than 54,000 of my brothers and sisters across the country, including more than 500 here in our state.

They were forced to retire due to combat-related injuries, but are not receiving their full retirement benefits. Do you think that's ok?

Why have you decided to turn your back on the men and women who signed up to serve?

Senator Wicker, enough excuses. It's time to get behind the Major Richard Star Act. Pass the bill now!

3. I'm NAME, a SUPPORTER/SPOUSE OF VETERAN/OTHER here in Mississippi.

Senator Wicker, I wish you could sit across the table from some of the more than 500 Mississippi veterans you hurt by blocking passage of the Major Richard Star Act.

These are men and women who did their duty without hesitation.

Most wanted to continue serving, but they were forced to medically retire because of their injuries.

They shouldn't have to fight their own senator to receive what they rightfully earned — retirement pay AND disability pay.

Please stop standing in the way of our veterans. They've sacrificed enough already. It's time to pass the Major Richard Star Act.