Legislation Details (With Text)

File #:	Res 1065-2003	**Version:**	*	**Name:**	Improve benefits for veterans and members of the Armed Forces (S.392, H.R. 303)
Type:	Resolution			**Status:**	Adopted
				In control:	Committee on General Welfare
On agenda:	9/30/2003				
Enactment date:				**Enactment #:**	

Title: Resolution calling upon the United States Congress to adopt House of Representatives Bill 303 and Senate Bill 392, which would permit retired members of the Armed Forces, who have a service-connected disability, to receive both retirement pay and disability compensation; and further calling upon the United States Congress to adopt House of Representatives Bill 2569, which, in addition to permitting retired members of the Armed Forces who have a service-connected disability to receive both retirement pay and disability compensation, would also improve other benefits for veterans and members of the Armed Forces.

Sponsors: Michael C. Nelson, James Sanders, Jr., Alan J. Gerson, Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr., Tony Avella, Gale A. Brewer, Yvette D. Clarke, Leroy G. Comrie, Jr., Lewis A. Fidler, James F. Gennaro, Vincent J. Gentile, Robert Jackson, Allan W. Jennings, Jr., Christine C. Quinn, Helen Sears, Albert Vann, David I. Weprin, John C. Liu, Melinda R. Katz, Sara M. Gonzalez

Indexes:

Attachments: 1. Committee Report, 2. Hearing Transcript, 3. Hearing Transcript - Stated Meeting 11/6

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
9/30/2003	*	City Council	Introduced by Council	
9/30/2003	*	City Council	Referred to Comm by Council	
11/6/2003	*	City Council	Approved, by Council	Pass
11/6/2003	*	Committee on General Welfare	Hearing Held by Committee	
11/6/2003	*	Committee on General Welfare	Approved by Committee	Pass

Res. No. 1065

Resolution calling upon the United States Congress to adopt House of Representatives Bill 303 and Senate Bill 392, which would permit retired members of the Armed Forces, who have a service-connected disability, to receive both retirement pay and disability compensation; and further calling upon the United States Congress to adopt House of Representatives Bill 2569, which, in addition to permitting retired members of the Armed Forces who have a service-connected disability to receive both retirement pay and disability compensation, would also improve other benefits for veterans and members of the Armed Forces.

By Council Members Nelson, Sanders, Gerson, Addabbo, Avella, Brewer, Clarke, Comrie, Fidler, Gennaro, Gentile, Jackson, Jennings, Quinn, Sears, Vann, Weprin, Liu, Katz and Gonzalez

Whereas, According to the Department of Veterans Affairs ("VA"), there are currently over 25,000,000 honorably discharged veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States; and

Whereas, Thousands of American soldiers are currently risking their lives overseas in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom; and

Whereas, According to United States Representative Chet Edwards, recent actions this year by Congress and the Administration send a message to our Armed Forces and veterans that they are low on the list of national priorities; and

Whereas, For example, on March 21, 2003, eight minutes after passing a resolution saluting our troops in Iraq, House Republicans voted to cut veterans benefits by $28 billion over 10 years; and

Whereas, According to a June 24, 2003 speech by Representative Edwards, the House Budget Committee Republicans, despite public protests from veterans' organizations, quietly re-implemented a $10 billion cut in veterans' health care and benefits for war-wounded veterans; and

Whereas, Therefore, in order to restore faith within our Armed Forces and among veterans that they are a priority to our nation and to fulfill our nation's commitment to the people who fight for our country, a number of bills have been introduced in Congress; and

Whereas, The first set of such bills introduced were House of Representatives Bill 303 ("H.R. 303"), by Representative Michael Bilirakis and

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Senate Bill 392 ("S. 392"), by Senator Harry Reid, and such bills are both entitled "Retired Pay Restoration Act of 2003" ("RPRA"); and
Whereas, H.R. 303 currently has 354 cosponsors and S. 392 has 65 cosponsors; and
Whereas, Since nationwide there are currently more than 500,000 disabled military retirees who must waive a portion of their retired pay in order to receive disability compensation from the VA, RPRA seeks to rectify this problem by permitting retired members of the Armed Forces who have a service-connected disability to receive both retirement pay and disability compensation from the VA for their disability; and
Whereas, Additionally, Representative Edwards has proposed House of Representatives Bill 2569, entitled "Salute to Veterans and the Armed Forces Act of 2003", which, while broader than the RPRA, would also permit retired members of the Armed Forces who have a service-connected disability to receive both retirement pay and disability compensation; and
Whereas, The "Salute to Veterans and the Armed Forces Act of 2003" would also increase the amount of basic educational assistance for members of the selected reserve by giving a one-time bonus of $1,000 for certain service in connection with Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom, and would authorize additional funding for veterans medical care; and
Whereas, The "Salute to Veterans and the Armed Forces Act of 2003" would also require the VA Secretary to prepare an annual outreach plan which would include, among other things, a description of efforts to identify veterans who are not enrolled in the VA for benefits and information on how to apply for benefits; and
Whereas, Supporting the "Retired Pay Restoration Act of 2003" and the "Salute to Veterans and the Armed Forces Act of 2003", would have the effect of encouraging America's service men and women to continue to pursue careers in the Armed Forces, because they would be assured that they are a priority to the nation and they would be adequately taken care of during and after their service; now, therefore, be it
Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the United States Congress to adopt House of Representatives Bill 303 and Senate Bill 392, which would permit retired members of the Armed Forces, who have a service-connected disability, to receive both retirement pay and disability compensation; and, be it further
Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the United States Congress to adopt House of Representatives Bill 2569, which, in addition to permitting retired members of the Armed Forces who have a service-connected disability to receive both retirement pay and disability compensation, would also improve other benefits for veterans and members of the Armed Forces,

GRS
9/23/03
LS Nos. 3044 & 3035

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