

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

General Daniel R. Hokanson  
National Guard Bureau  
111 S. George Mason Dr.  
Arlington, VA 22204

November 14, 2023

Dear General Hokanson,

We are writing to inquire about the recent report that the National Guard has not paid more than 12,000 soldiers and veterans the bonuses they were promised for joining. Although there are many concerning aspects raised by that report, we are most troubled by a seemingly ineffective system to track and process payments and a lack of recourse for soldiers and veterans.

The report details the difficulties surrounding the Army National Guard Incentive Management System, otherwise known as GIMS. Perhaps most troubling is that the report suggests the system has crashed twice within a five-year period, leading to two 10-month long outages. It even seems, according to the report, that these outages – together comprising nearly two years – led to a manual process whereby staff tracked payments on dry-erase boards, drastically raising the potential for both delays and errors.

Not only are we shocked to read of such a process on the front-end, but we are also deeply concerned by the seeming lack of recourse for soldiers and veterans on the back-end. The National Guard maintains that first payments of enlistment bonuses within 30-days after completing initial service training are considered on-time. Yet, the National Guard also confirmed that the average for doing so is actually six months. This discrepancy adds further confusion to an already seemingly disjointed process that lacks codification and a clear way forward for soldiers and veterans seeking the money that they deserve.

In light of this reporting, we request that you answer the following questions regarding the enlistment bonuses:

1. What action is the National Guard actively taking to rectify these problems for both current soldiers and veterans?
2. What is the status of the incentive oversight teams that the National Guard stood up last year to address some of the concerns regarding GIMS? Are you seeing a positive effect?
3. Why does the National Guard not have a standing policy to issue bonuses, including appropriate timelines for payments or explanations for why a bonus could be suspended? Is this issue under review and, if not, why?
4. What additional steps are you taking to ensure that these challenges do not happen again?

Thank you for your answers to these questions, and we look forward to working with you to ensure our soldiers and veterans are paid what they are owed.

Sincerely,



Ruben Gallego  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Trent Kelly  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Michael Waltz  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS