

Disabled soldier asked to give money back

by UPI

PITTSBURGH -- The plight of a Pittsburgh soldier disabled in Iraq highlights the U.S. Army policy of asking for part of signing bonuses back if commitments aren't fulfilled. The issue came to light when Jordan Fox told KDKA-TV, Pittsburgh, his role in Iraq ended when a roadside bomb destroyed his right eye and he was shipped home. He had been paid a \$10,000 signing bonus as a sniper, but got a letter from the Department of Defense saying he had to repay \$3,000 of the bonus as he only completed two-thirds of his three-month minimum service. A Pentagon spokesman later told the broadcaster the bill sent to Fox was a mistake. "He has nothing to pay now," said Maj. Nathan Banks. Fox said he was relieved, and plans to push for other disabled veterans. "Hopefully this will turn into change for not only me but many other soldiers that have lost limbs, become permanently deaf," Fox said. In Washington, Rep. Jason Altmire, D-Pa., told the broadcaster he has already proposed a bill that would guarantee soldiers receive full benefit of bonuses, even if they are disabled prior to fulfilling their commitments.

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