

415 Liberty Hall Road
Goose Creek, SC 29445

March 11, 2015

U.S. Congressman: Sanford D. Bishop Jr.
18 Ninth Street, Suite 201
Columbus, GA 31901

Dear Congressman Sanford D. Bishop Jr.,

This letter is to inquire about a situation and mishandling of care and treatment for my brother, Sergeant Sam Joshua Lucas who worked at Fort Benning GA as a National Guard Active Duty Operations Support (ADOS) Liaison on Sand Hill.

To provide you a little background, Sam completed his undergraduate work receiving a Bachelor's in Computer Science (2007) and furthered his education by receiving a Master's in Business Administration (May 2011) but was still not satisfied with his career choices. He came home from College and informed his family that he wanted to go into the Army National Guard Reserve. The family looked at him in disbelief, and then the next thing we know, he was off to basic training. He was excited and honored to have the opportunity to serve his country. Upon completion of Basic training and graduating from Fort Benning in December of 2012, within a week he was told that he was being deployed. He had to report in January 2013 as he had to go for additional training due to the fact that he was being deployed overseas. The family still in shock, accepted his deployment, as the military was what my brother wanted to do. My brother is a born fighter and when he expressed to me that he would be a part of the infantry group, I thought that it was so appropriate, as he always defended what was right and now he had the chance to do it for our country! Then, I thought that it was my brother's chance to be the best that he could for his family, community, and most importantly his country!

My brother served for 18 months Operation Enduring Freedom with Alpha Company 4th 118th IN BN (out of Moncks Corner, SC) and then with Alpha Company 109th IN BN (out of PA). Returning in August of 2013, taking his 30 day leave, and yet again ready to start again another assignment for our government. He informed his family that he was offered a position, Active Duty Status, at Fort Benning GA starting in October 2013 as a National Guard Active Duty Operations Support (ADOS) Liaison on Sand Hill. I believed at that point, my brother finally found something that fulfilled what was missing in his life! He could express his passion for people and how to really serve others by giving the military families that he would now work for, his all. As he grew and learned about his new position, I was given the opportunity to meet some of the persons that my brother worked with and they too expressed the passion that my brother displayed and how well he was with people. At that point I was so proud of my brother!

As time passed by, when I would go and visit my brother, I did notice something different about my brother but could not put my finger on it until one day I noticed that he was in pain. My healthy baby brother was experiencing pain that he could not describe. He indicated that he was experiencing periodic minor pain that "run" through his entire body and there was no other way to explain it. He said it was no big deal and brushed it off and continued to do what he had to do, as he would not let the pain get to him as he pressed on

no matter what, not even mentioning the pain that he was experiencing most of the times. It was not until one day I went to visit him that I saw the pain that he was experiencing and at the moment, I began to wonder if something had happen to my brother when he was deployed and he just did not want to tell the family. When I questioned him about it, he just said he experience pain, like cramps throughout his body, at random, with no warning signs, but he was okay. I then began to question him as to what he was doing about it. He again, indicated that he was okay and continued to endure the random episodes.

As more time went by, the pains worsen. By that time he was forced to go to the emergency room to find out what was happening to him. His wife and daughter frighten, afraid that something was happening but did not know what to think or do. His wife would call our parents who would then pray and be in constant contact with her to make sure my brother was okay. It seemed like as time passed, the episodes were more frequent and the pain seemed to be more severe. The episodes would appear, more frightening to his wife and daughter as they would see the cramps and spasms moving throughout his body with shortness of breaths, and not able to do anything for him but wait for the episode to pass or attempt to take him to the emergency room. It has been very stressful on this wife and daughter as there has been many times that his wife would miss work and the daughter was late to school due to his condition/episodes. There has been times when the episodes came so frequent that it was touch and go as his wife did not know when an episode was going to happen nor how long the episode would last; therefore, his wife has been forced to call our parents, who live in South Carolina, and they would travel "seven hours" to be there in the event that something happen. At that point, our parents would stay for extended amounts of time to assist when his wife was not available due to work and to assist with care of their daughter. My parents would have to schedule medical appointments in Georgia in order to be available to my brothers needs.

After several trips to the emergency room, the doctors trying to determine what was causing this to my brother, and attending several specialty doctor appointments, Sam was diagnosed with a condition called Cramp-Fasciculation syndrome. Cramp-fasciculation syndrome is a rare condition characterized by muscle pain, cramps, twitching, spasms and other abnormal sensations that occur mainly in the limbs. Sam and his doctors are currently still trying to find the right medication that will work to treat this diagnosis. Furthermore, the most bothersome thing for me is that he has had an allergic reaction to several medications already, which has affected other organs in his body - his liver, kidney and heart.

Through this trial period of medications and treatment, he continuously has to go back and forth to the doctor (at least 2-3 times per week), leaving him not able to work and financially support his family, specifically his wife and daughter. Not only does this put financial stress on his wife, it puts a financial strain on his elderly parents who frequently travel to visit due to the not knowing whether their son is going to make it or have an episode that is deadly. Through all of this, my brother, Sam continues to fight this condition, knowing that there is no cure and he tries to make the best of his situation!

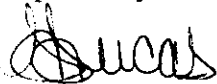
I ask myself and you, "Why, why does the government fail their soldier's when they are no longer a benefit to them - when they sacrifice and give there all to their country when they serve?" That is a question that I am sure goes through my brother, Sam's thoughts frequently when he goes through the pain. My brother took his job and made it a part of his

family. There was nothing he would not do to help, whether it was a biological family member, church family member, or military family member, he would go above and beyond to help anyone in need!

My brother is only 29 years old, the prime of his life, unable to work due to his condition and the medication he has to take, only to be discharged from his active duty position due to a medical condition that occurred while under the care and command of the United States Army National Guard Bureau! Before being discharge he fought long and hard to beat his condition, trying to continue his job of helping soldiers and providing support for their family while they too had to work for our government. My brother would escort One Star and Two Star General for the National Guard around on a monthly basis while enduring pain, and never complaining! Moreover, in less than one month time, the National Guard Bureau took all that my brother had! The government took his job, his manhood (since he cannot work and support his family), and his passion to help and serve families in need in the military! Again I ask, Why, why, why, won't the government that my brother gave his all for not do the same in return! My brother was pushed out by the government due to a condition he had no control over. I hear stories of this all the time ("the government don't help you when you are not of any service to them anymore"), but little did I know nor really realize how true that statement was, but can attest to it now as my brother is battling the government to get help!

In closing, I am writing this letter to see if there is anything that can be done to assist my brother and his family as he has requested to be released to the Warrior Transition Center and be compensated for loss time. He has been denied acceptance into the Warrior Transition Center program and is the process of appealing this determination. As for being compensated, my brother is still fighting for loss of time and wages since he has been out of work. Despite all that he endures, my brother, Sam, still respects the military, has followed the chain of command at Fort Benning as well as in South Carolina as he fights for what he believes is right and due him! Currently nothing my brother has attempted has worked in his favor, but I hoping that after you review this letter you will support and request that proper care and compensation for my brother be approved as we continue to fight the battle of the Cramp-fasciculation syndrome that he now has to live with the rest of his life.

Respectfully,



Shenequia Lucas, MSW
Medical University of South Carolina

Cc: Gov. Nathan Deal of Georgia
Representative Carolyn Hugley
Gov. Nikki Haley of South Carolina
Congressman Tim Scott of South Carolina
Representative Joseph Jefferson Jr.
Representative Wendell Gilliard