# [***SOLDIER WANTS ARMY TO PAY AS PROMISED;***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:47MX-1W00-0094-D1HN-00000-00&context=1516831) [***SHE SEEKS CHECKS FOR DRILLS, BONUS***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:47MX-1W00-0094-D1HN-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Byline:** Bill Baskervill, The Associated Press

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**Body**

Christina Scypion enlisted in the Army to make her young son proud and to join the fight against terrorism.

The rigors of basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C., did not deter the 5-foot, 98-pound woman, even though she suffered painful stress fractures of her right foot and right hip two weeks before graduating.

"Everybody told me, 'You're not going to make it,' " she said. "I threw my crutches away and I did it," including marching 14 miles with a 60-pound pack and a 7.5-pound M-16 rifle during a field exercise.

Five months later, the 19-year-old private is using the same steely resolve to do battle with the Army itself. She said she hasn't received her enlistment bonus or two paychecks for weekend drills, a total of about $1,800.

"Maybe to a lot of people that's not a lot of money," she said. Her home phone has been disconnected, her ***cell-phone*** service canceled, and "my 15-month-old son did not have any gifts from his parents" for Christmas because she has not been paid, Scypion said.

"If people thought this kind of thing was happening, who would sign up and fight for the country?" she said during an interview at her parents' home in Woodbridge.

The Army Reserve Command said her paychecks for October and November drills were deposited directly into her bank account in December but that the paperwork for her $1,500 enlistment bonus was lost.

Scypion said the paychecks were sent to the wrong bank, one she had specified before going to basic training. She said she canceled the first account and delivered a direct-deposit slip for her new account to her reserve unit at Fort Belvoir on Nov. 26, specifying the bank to which her checks should be sent.

Army Reserve spokesman Joe Hanley said Tuesday that delays are not unusual in receiving a government check. "Everybody in the government gets paid on a deferred basis. She came into the unit in October, and she got paid in mid-December. I was kind of surprised they paid her that quickly," he said.

"That's ridiculous because if that was the case, everybody there would be complaining about not being paid," said Scypion, a member of the 9th Theater Support Command. "There were people who checked in at the same time [mid-October] as me, and they got paid in October."

Hanley said the paperwork for her enlistment bonus was submitted Nov. 1, "and no one can seem to find it." He said she should receive the money within two weeks.

"Financial things are slow now because we are in the process of mobilizing" thousands of troops for a possible war against Iraq, he said.

Under the enlistment contract she signed with the Army, Scypion is to receive a $3,000 bonus, half of which was to be paid after she completed advanced training Oct. 4. The remainder will be paid after the second and fourth years of her eight-year service commitment.

Scypion said she always wanted to be a soldier, even as a little girl, and that the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, persuaded her to enlist.

She also wanted her son to have a soldier mom. "I wanted him to say, 'My mom is in the Army, and she fights for our country.' "

Scypion, who plans to start college in February and is looking for a civilian job, said she is proud to be an Army cook. "The job I have . . . is one of the most important jobs. Without food and water, nobody could fight."

Leaving her son with her husband, Scypion left for boot camp May 20 and completed basic training July 25 as a member of B Company, 2nd Battalion, 13th Infantry Regiment, 1st Basic Combat Training Brigade. Immediately after basic, she started training as a cook at the Army Quartermaster School at Fort Lee, completing the course Oct. 4.

She said she had no trouble getting paychecks while in basic and advanced training. It was only after she left active duty and was assigned to her Army Reserve unit that the problems started.

"I called on a repeated and daily basis and was reprimanded on a number of occasions for jumping the chain of command and becoming upset when I was not getting paid," she said.

Said Hanley: "Any soldier who reports for duty and performs with her unit deserves to be paid."

**Graphic**

PHOTO

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