

Tully Rinckey PLLC client Maj. Auld discusses his case on ABC's WHAM-13.

Local veteran battles for his health care

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Rochester, N.Y. – For more than 30 years, Major James Auld served in the U.S. Armed Forces, most recently in Afghanistan and Kuwait, but now his biggest battle may be the Army bureaucracy. Since returning from Kuwait in 2013, Auld has been faced with multiple surgeries and has been treated for various ailments, but in April, while being treated at Fort Drum, Auld was told he was being discharged from the Army and the army hospital. It turns out, despite a long list of surgeries and ailments from his tour of duty, Auld's request to extend what the Army calls his mandatory removal date was denied. "It's been frustrating, I can't sleep at night," Auld said, referring to the medical bills he's been forced to take over. Auld is a 49 year old husband and father of 3 children. "It's just a feeling that I was left behind [by the Army] and I did everything I was asked to do." His injuries and ailments from his service have left him unable to work, making it that much more difficult for Auld to take care of his treatment, and the medical bills. "My family made a lot of sacrifices, my kids went without a father for years," he said. "To be left like this overnight, it's frustrating." Auld has made various attempts to appeal the decision that forced him out of the military, but those efforts have proven futile so far. "The National Guard thought they could help me out, but in the end there was nothing they could really do," Auld added. "The care I received at Fort Drum is outstanding, but the administrative issues have been frustrating." After hitting several dead-ends, Auld sought legal help, and his attorney has been trying to deal with the U.S. Army Medical Command department, based out of Houston, Texas. "I think my attorney contacted them, but they've sort of fallen off the face of the earth," he said. "I also contacted someone from the Department of the Army this week who started down another avenue to try and get me back on active duty." Auld has also reached out to Representative Louise Slaughter (D, NY-25) for assistance. Rep. Louise Slaughter's office confirmed to 13WHAM News that it's actively trying to get Major Auld the treatment he deserves, and offered the following statement to 13WHAM News: "Congresswoman Slaughter remains committed to ensuring Mr. Auld and all those who wear the uniform of the United States are treated fairly by their government and that injuries sustained while defending our country are covered. Rest assured we are taking action on behalf of Mr. Auld but due to privacy laws, our office does not routinely comment on open constituent cases."

