



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF NAVAL RECORDS
701 S. COURTHOUSE ROAD, SUITE 1001
ARLINGTON, VA 22204-2490

█
Docket No. 586-23
Ref: Signature Date



Dear Petitioner:

This is in reference to your application for correction of your naval record pursuant to Section 1552 of Title 10, United States Code. After careful and conscientious consideration of relevant portions of your naval record and your application, the Board for Correction of Naval Records (Board) found the evidence submitted insufficient to establish the existence of probable material error or injustice. Consequently, your application has been denied.

Although your application was not filed in a timely manner, the Board found it in the interest of justice to waive the statute of limitations and consider your application on its merits. A three-member panel of the Board, sitting in executive session, considered your application on 1 February 2023. The names and votes of the panel members will be furnished upon request. Your allegations of error and injustice were reviewed in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures applicable to the proceedings of the Board. Documentary material considered by the Board consisted of your application together with all material submitted in support thereof, relevant portions of your naval record, and applicable statutes, regulations, and policies, to include the 25 July 2018 guidance from the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness regarding equity, injustice or clemency determinations (Wilkie Memo).

You enlisted in the U.S Marine Corps and began a period of active duty on 10 November 1982. Upon entry onto active duty, you were granted a waiver for illegal use of a controlled substance while in the Delayed Entry Program. You received non-judicial punishment (NJP), on 29 July 1983, for 29 days unauthorized absence (UA). You then received your second NJP, on 21 January 1986, for wrongful use of marijuana. As a result, the Commanding Officer (CO) made his recommendation to the Separation Authority (SA) that you be discharged for drug abuse and be assigned an Other Than Honorable (OTH) characterization. The SA accepted the recommendation and directed you be discharged. You were so discharged on 2 June 1986.

The Board carefully considered all potentially mitigating factors to determine whether the interests of justice warrant relief in your case in accordance with the Wilkie Memo. These included, but were not limited to, your contention that your characterization of service was upgraded by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to Honorable and you are requesting a new

DD Form 214 to reflect their change. For purposes of clemency and equity consideration, the Board noted you provided no supporting documentation describing post-service accomplishments or advocacy letters.

After thorough review, the Board concluded these potentially mitigating factors were insufficient to warrant relief. Specifically, the Board determined that your misconduct, as evidenced by your two NJPs, outweighed these mitigating factors. In making this finding, the Board considered the seriousness of your misconduct and the fact it included a drug offense. The Board determined that illegal drug use by a service member is contrary to military core values and policy, renders such members unfit for duty, and poses an unnecessary risk to the safety of their fellow service members. The Board noted that marijuana use in any form is still against Department of Defense regulations and not permitted for recreational use while serving in the military. Further, the Board concluded that your discharge was proper and equitable under standards of law and discipline and that the discharge accurately reflects your conduct during your period of service, which was terminated by your separation with an OTH. Finally, the Board noted that VA eligibility determinations for health care, disability compensation, and other VA-administered benefits are for internal VA purposes only. Such VA eligibility determinations, disability ratings, and/or discharge classifications are not binding on the Department of the Navy and have no bearing on previous active duty service discharge characterizations. As a result, the Board concluded your conduct constituted a significant departure from that expected of a Marine and continues to warrant an OTH. Even in light of the Wilkie Memo and reviewing the record holistically, the Board did not find evidence of an error or injustice that warrants granting you the relief you requested or granting relief as a matter of clemency or equity. Accordingly, given the totality of the circumstances, the Board determined that your request does not merit relief.

You are entitled to have the Board reconsider its decision upon submission of new matters, which will require you to complete and submit a new DD Form 149. New matters are those not previously presented to or considered by the Board. In this regard, it is important to keep in mind that a presumption of regularity attaches to all official records. Consequently, when applying for a correction of an official naval record, the burden is on the applicant to demonstrate the existence of probable material error or injustice.

Sincerely,

2/12/2023

█

Executive Director

Signed by: █