



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

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Docket No. 9779-24
Ref: Signature Date

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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 21 January 2025. 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).

The Board determined that your personal appearance, with or without counsel, would not materially add to their understanding of the issues involved. Therefore, the Board determined that a personal appearance was not necessary and considered your case based on the evidence of record.

You enlisted in the Marine Corps and commenced active duty on 19 June 1973. On 21 July 1974, you received non-judicial punishment (NJP) for one day of unauthorized absence (UA). Between 10 August 1974 and 25 August 1974, you were issued three administrative remarks (Page 13) counselings concerning letters of indebtedness received from a clothing and jewelry store. On 19 February 1975, you received NJP for two days of UA. On 3 March 1975, you received NJP for disobeying a lawful order. On 14 April 1975, you commenced a period of UA that ended on 10 March 1976. On 24 March 1976, you commenced another period of UA that ended on 8 April 1976.

Upon your return, you submitted a written request for an undesirable discharge in order to avoid trial by court-martial for your periods of UA. Prior to submitting this request, you conferred with a qualified military lawyer at which time you were advised of your rights and warned of the

probable adverse consequences of accepting such a discharge. Your request was granted and your commanding officer was directed to issue you an under Other Than Honorable conditions (OTH) discharge. On 13 May 1976, you were so discharged.

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 desire to change your discharge characterization of service and your contention that you have bladder cancer. Additionally, the Board noted you checked the "Other Mental Health" box on your application but chose not to respond to the Board's request for supporting evidence of your claim. For purposes of clemency and equity consideration, the Board noted you did not provide supporting documentation describing post-service accomplishments or advocacy letters.

After thorough review, the Board concluded your potentially mitigating factors were insufficient to warrant relief. Specifically, the Board determined that your misconduct, as evidenced by your NJPs and request for separation in lieu of trial by court-martial, outweighed these mitigating factors. In making this finding, the Board considered the seriousness of your misconduct and the likely negative impact your repeated misconduct and extended UA had on the good order and discipline of your command. The Board noted that you were given multiple opportunities to address your conduct issues, but you continued to commit misconduct; which ultimately led to your OTH discharge. Finally, the Board also noted that the misconduct that led to your request to be discharged in lieu of trial by court-martial was substantial and determined that you already received a large measure of clemency when the convening authority agreed to administratively separate you in lieu of trial by court-martial; thereby sparing you the stigma of a court-martial conviction and possible punitive discharge.

As a result, the Board determined that there was no impropriety or inequity in your discharge and concluded that your misconduct and disregard for good order and discipline clearly merited your discharge. 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,

2/14/2025

