



Docket No. 9824-24
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 22 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).

You enlisted in the Navy and began a period of active duty on 3 June 1997. On 22 May 1998, you were convicted by civilian authorities of reckless driving. On 16 November 2000, you received non-judicial punishment (NJP) for wrongful use of marijuana. Consequently, you were notified that you were being recommended for administrative discharge from the Navy by reason of misconduct due to drug abuse. You waived your right to consult with military counsel and to present your case to an administrative discharge board. The commanding officer (CO) forwarded your administrative separation package to the separation authority recommending your administrative discharge from the Navy. As part of the CO's recommendation, he stated in pertinent part:

[Petitioner] has demonstrated a complete disregard for the rules and regulations which govern the conduct of members of the armed forces. The Navy's policy with regard to drug abuse is clear and it is apparent by [Petitioner's] actions that he is unable to continue his service in the U.S. Navy. His actions are incompatible with

naval service and prejudicial to good order and discipline. I strongly recommend that [Petitioner] be separated from the Navy with an Other Than Honorable discharge.

The separation authority approved the recommendation, and you were so discharged on 15 December 2000.

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 upgrade your discharge character of service and contentions that you carelessly and irresponsibly smoked marijuana, your reckless and negligent decision has deeply impacted your life and your family, your decision has prevented you from utilizing your GI Bill and obtaining benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and it has also limited you from declaring veteran status on your employment applications and resume. You further assert it would be a great honor to restore dignity, honor, and benefits associated with having your discharge amended. For purposes of clemency and equity consideration, the Board noted you submitted a personal statement but no 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 NJP and civil conviction, outweighed these mitigating factors. In making this finding, the Board considered the seriousness of your misconduct and the fact it involved 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. Additionally, 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. The Board also considered the likely negative effect your misconduct had on the good order and discipline of your command. Further, the Board found that your misconduct was intentional and made you unsuitable for continued naval service. Furthermore, the Board also determined that the evidence of record did not demonstrate that you were not responsible for your conduct or that you should otherwise not be held accountable for your actions. Finally, absent a material error or injustice, the Board declined to summarily upgrade a discharge solely for the purpose of facilitating veterans' benefits or enhancing educational or employment opportunities.

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 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,

2/12/2025

