



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF NAVAL RECORDS
2 NAVY ANNEX
WASHINGTON DC 20370-5100

CRS
Docket No: 8299-98
27 May 1999

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

This is in reference to your application for correction of your naval record pursuant to the provisions of Title 10, United States Code, Section 1552.

A three-member panel of the Board for Correction of Naval Records, sitting in executive session, considered your application on 26 May 1999. Your allegations of error and injustice were reviewed in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures applicable to the proceedings of this Board. Documentary material considered by the Board consisted of your application, together with all material submitted in support thereof, your naval record and applicable statutes, regulations and policies.

After careful and conscientious consideration of the entire record, the Board found that the evidence submitted was insufficient to establish the existence of probable material error or injustice.

The Board found that you enlisted in the Naval Reserve on 19 January 1988 at age 18. You reported to active duty on 12 August 1988. The record reflects that from 16 December 1989 to 20 February 1990 you were an unauthorized absentee for 64 days. While the request is not in your record, it is presumed that you submitted a written request for an other than honorable discharge in order to avoid trial by court-martial for the foregoing offense. It is also presumed that prior to submitting this request and in accordance with applicable directives, 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. The Board found that your request was granted and, as a result of this action, you were spared the stigma of a court-martial conviction and potential penalties of a punitive discharge and confinement at hard labor. The record clearly shows that on 12 April 1990 you received an other than honorable discharge for the good of the service in order to escape trial.

In its review of your application the Board carefully weighed all potentially mitigating factors, such as your youth and immaturity and the contention that your alcohol abuse contributed to your misconduct. However, the Board found these factors were not sufficient to warrant recharacterization of your discharge given your request for discharge to avoid trial for an unauthorized absence of about two months. The Board believed that considerable clemency was extended to you when your request to avoid trial by court-martial was approved since by this action, you escaped the possibility of confinement at hard labor and a punitive discharge. Further, the Board concluded that you received the benefit of your bargain when your request for discharge was granted and should not be permitted to change it now. In this regard, alcohol abuse does not excuse misconduct. Therefore, the Board concluded that your discharge was proper as issued and no change is warranted. Accordingly, your application has been denied. The names and votes of the members of the panel will be furnished upon request.

It is regretted that the circumstances of your case are such that favorable action cannot be taken. You are entitled to have the Board reconsider its decision upon submission of new and material evidence or other matter not previously 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,

W. DEAN PFEIFFER
Executive Director