

NEWS

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Christopher J. Christie, U.S. Attorney

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Former Atlantic City Mayor Admits Defrauding The Veterans Benefits Administration

(More)

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CAMDEN – The former mayor of Atlantic City pleaded guilty today to defrauding the United States Department of Veterans Affairs of approximately \$25,000 in benefits, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

Robert W. Levy, Sr., 60, of Atlantic City, who resigned as mayor on Oct. 10, admitted before U.S. District Judge Jerome B. Simandle that he made false and fraudulent statements and representations concerning his military service during the application process for veteran's benefits to the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), which is a component of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

“As a Vietnam veteran, Mr. Levy must have recognized the dishonor his fraudulent actions would bring upon himself,” said Christie. “It is a sad turn of events for someone who seems to have otherwise honorably served his country and community.”

At his plea hearing, Levy admitted that in January 2003 he submitted an application that contained false and fraudulent statements to the VBA in support of his claim for financial benefits. Levy admitted that he falsely claimed that he twice was abandoned during battle by his South Vietnamese troops and left alone in the jungle for several weeks, which caused him to suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Levy admitted that he falsely stated that he was awarded the Combat Infantryman Badge and the Parachutist's Badge.

Furthermore, Levy falsely claimed that he had successfully completed Airborne School and that during the course of his military service successfully parachuted up to 100 times. Levy admitted that he falsely claimed to have injured his shoulder during Airborne School and while participating in military operations. Levy stated that he never completed Airborne School and that he never parachuted from an aircraft during his military service.

According to the Information to which Levy pleaded guilty, his false claims allowed him to fraudulently obtain approximately \$24,683 in compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The charge carries a statutory maximum penalty of 5 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000. However, under the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, Levy faces a probable sentencing range of between zero and 6 months in federal prison. Judge Simandle, however, has wide discretion and can impose a sentence within, above or below that range. Sentencing is scheduled for Feb. 15.

Christie credited the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Inspector General, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Jeffery G. Hughes, North East Field Office, with the investigation leading to the guilty plea.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jason M. Richardson of the Criminal Division in Camden.

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Defense Attorney: Edwin Jacobs, Esq. Atlantic City