



Department of Justice

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District of Massachusetts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 9, 2008
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LAWRENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ARRESTED ON CHARGES OF FALSELY CLAIMING TO BE A MARINE VETERAN BY POSSESSING AND USING A PHONY MILITARY DISCHARGE DOCUMENT

Lawrence, MA... A recently elected Lawrence School Committee member was arrested this morning on a federal complaint and appeared before U.S. Magistrate Judge Joyce L. Alexander for his initial appearance at 10:30 a.m.

United States Attorney Michael J. Sullivan and Warren T. Bamford, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation - New England Field Division, announced the arrest of **JAMES F. STOKES**, age 63, of 101 Boxford Street, Lawrence, Massachusetts.

STOKES is currently charged in a one count complaint with using, unlawfully possessing and exhibiting a forged, counterfeited and altered military discharge document known as a form DD-214. By using this document, **STOKES** falsely claimed to be a veteran of the United States Marine Corps who had received numerous awards, including a Purple Heart Medal. As currently charged, **STOKES** faces a maximum punishment of one year in prison and a \$100,000 fine.

"Falsely claiming Veteran status and bogus claims of receiving military awards or medals is an affront to each and every man and woman who has served our Country as part of our Armed Services," said United States Attorney Michael J. Sullivan.

The case resulted from an investigation conducted by the FBI and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Brian T. Kelly in Sullivan's Public Corruption and Special Prosecutions Unit.

The details contained in the Complaint are allegations. The defendants are presumed to be innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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