

New York woman wins \$1.12m after arrest for snapping military base for website

- Deputy sheriff allegedly said he wanted to make an example of 'right-wingers'
- Jailed for four days and misdemeanor trespass charge was dismissed



📷 US troops in Kuwait. Photographer Nancy Genovese was arrested for taking photos at a National Guard base for a 'Support Our Troops' website. Photograph: Mark Wilson/AFP/Getty Images

A New York woman who claimed she was falsely arrested outside an Air National Guard base for taking photographs for a “Support Our Troops” website has been awarded \$1.12m in compensatory damages, her attorney said on Friday.

“What they took from this woman cannot be measured in money,” said prominent Long Island civil rights attorney Frederick Brewington. “There is no reason to treat another human the way they treated her.”

He said Suffolk County sheriff’s deputies humiliated Nancy Genovese after arresting her in July 2009 while she took photographs of a decorative helicopter on display outside the Gabreski Airport Air National Guard base in Westhampton Beach on eastern Long Island. A deputy sheriff allegedly said he would arrest her for terrorism to make an example of other “right-wingers”, according to Brewington.

“Ms Genovese was subjected to a level of abuse because they did not share the same political views as she did and saw this as an excuse to deny her even the most basic civil rights,” said Brewington.

The jury award on Thursday was for compensatory damages. It will now consider punitive damages.

A spokeswoman for Suffolk County declined to comment, citing the ongoing litigation.

Genovese, 58, of East Quogue, was jailed for four days before posting \$50,000 bail. The charge, on a misdemeanor count of criminal trespass, was dismissed in November 2009.

During her time in the Suffolk County jail, Brewington claimed Genovese was subjected to humiliation and was strip-searched.

Genovese said in a statement provided by Brewington that she was relieved that “the jury heard the truth and that I now have had the chance to clear my name. If this can happen to me, and officers can abuse their power like this, I can only imagine how other people who are not as fortunate as me have been treated.”