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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: September 14, 2018
Re: Ray Walters
Parole Denied

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Ray Walters, age 73, formerly of Modesto, was found unsuitable for parole during a September 11, 2018, hearing of the State Board of Parole Hearings held at Solano State Prison in Vacaville, California. Deputy District Attorney Merrill Hoult appeared at the hearing on behalf of the People.

Walters was convicted of second-degree murder for the November 17, 1991 shooting death of his neighbor, Randy Fernandes. Walters confronted the unarmed victim in front of Walters's home in the early morning hours and shot him in the chest without provocation. Walters then went inside and went to sleep without calling the police for assistance. Walters was an alcoholic who reportedly carried a .38 caliber revolver during confrontations with neighbors. He had been overheard at least once expressing his dislike of the victim and his intention to shoot Fernandes if their disagreements continued.

Deputy District Attorney Hoult asked the Board of Parole Hearings to deny parole since Walters currently poses a high risk of danger to society. Hoult argued that Walters lacked insight into what caused him to commit this senseless murder and that he has not shown remorse for his actions.

Walters told the Board that he acted in self-defense and claimed he should be released because of his advanced age. The Board found that Walters's statements about the murder were not credible and noted that Walters has failed to meaningfully take part in self-help and alcohol abuse programs while incarcerated. Because Walters continues to display the same thinking and attitudes today as he did at the time of the murder without any demonstrable progress, the Board found that Walters poses an unreasonable risk to public safety and denied his parole for 3 years.

Walters is serving an 18-years-to-life prison sentence. He has previously been denied parole three times. At his last hearing on February 28, 2017, Walters was denied parole for three years. Walters was permitted to advance his parole hearing date to September 11, 2018 because of changes in the law that now allow inmates or the Board to advance hearings.

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