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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: August 12, 2019
Re: Richard Lee Woods
Three Strikes inmate denied parole

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Richard Lee Woods, age 57, of Oakdale, was found unsuitable for parole during an August 6, 2019, hearing of the State Board of Parole Hearings held at Valley State Prison in Chowchilla. Deputy District Attorney Jeff Mangar appeared at the hearing representing the People.

In 1983, Woods and his brother-in-law broke into a home in Oakdale occupied by a single female. Woods, who was armed with a handgun, "hog tied" the victim, demanded money and sexually assaulted her. Afterwards, Woods used his gun to hit the victim in the back of the head before fleeing the home with stolen jewelry and cash. At the time, he was on probation for a previous crime. A Stanislaus County jury convicted Woods of residential burglary, robbery and sexual assault. He was sentenced to serve 17 years in state prison. Woods was released in 1992. He violated parole nine months later by failing to attend a mandatory outpatient clinic, lying to police, and being an accessory to a robbery. In total, Woods violated his parole six times.

In May of 1997, while still on supervised release, Woods took clothing from a Modesto department store but was caught by security after a foot pursuit. A jury convicted Woods of commercial burglary. Due to California's "Three Strikes" law being enacted in 1993, Woods was sentenced to a 25 years-to-life prison term based upon his prior felony convictions. The passage of Proposition 36, which limited the "Three Strikes" law, did not apply to Woods due to his prior sexual assault conviction.

Since 1997, Woods has repeatedly violated prison rules by failing to report to his work assignment, not grooming, fighting, disrespecting staff, assaulting a cell mate, and possessing homemade alcohol.

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During the parole hearing, when asked what he learned from his group therapy classes in prison, Woods told the Commissioners that he learned “stuff” but could not recall anything specific. He also could not demonstrate any realistic parole plans other than being released back to Oakdale nor did he have a relapse prevention plan for substance abuse or stress management.

Deputy District Attorney Mangar urged the Board to deny parole citing Woods’s history of non-compliance both in and out of prison custody. Mangar highlighted Woods’s lack of insight into his life-long pattern of criminality nor what triggered his violence towards women. The Board of Parole Hearings agreed and denied parole for five years.

This was Woods’s first parole hearing. Although denied was parole for five years, Woods can accelerate his next parole hearing due to recent changes in the law.

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