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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: November 24, 2020
Re: Eddie Lee Patterson
Career Criminal granted parole

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Eddie Lee Patterson, age 53, of Modesto, was granted parole during a November 3, 2020, hearing of the State Board of Parole Hearings held at High Desert State Prison. Deputy District Attorney Fawn Smolak appeared at the hearing on behalf of the People.

On August 29, 1996, Patterson robbed a convenience store in Ceres by telling the clerk "Give me everything in the register or I'm going to smoke you." No weapon was seen or displayed. After obtaining approximately \$50 from the clerk, Patterson left the store.

On September 5, 1996, Patterson again robbed the same convenience store in Ceres. This time, Patterson had covered his face in an attempt to avoid being identified. He placed his hand near his waist as if he had a gun and told the clerk "Give me the cash." After getting only \$25, Patterson left the store.

On October 17, 1996, Ceres detectives investigating the robberies arrested Patterson. At the time, Patterson was on parole for robbery out of Santa Clara County, but had run away from his San Jose parole agent in May 1996. When interviewed, Patterson gave his brother's name "Gregory," denied committing the robberies, denied absconding from parole or having ever been to state prison. When presented with the fact that his brother was still in state prison, Patterson admitted lying. When questioned about the robberies, Patterson said that since he was a three-strike candidate, he would not admit to having committed the crimes even if he had been the perpetrator.

On July 14, 1997, Patterson was convicted of robbery and admitted having prior "strike" convictions for residential burglary in 1985 and robbery in 1992. He was sentenced to serve 25 years to life in state prison.

On June 12, 2018, Patterson had his first parole consideration hearing. Patterson told the board that he was heavily into crack cocaine at the time, that he was a "product of my environment" and offered no other reasons for his continuing criminality since childhood. The Commissioners holding the hearing found that Patterson had little to no insight into the reasons why he chose the

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criminal lifestyle, had not created an individualized relapse prevention plan to avoid re-offending if released and his parole plans were insufficient, making him an unreasonable risk of danger to the community if released. Patterson was denied parole for a period of three years.

During Patterson's second parole consideration hearing on November 3, 2020, Deputy District Attorney Fawn Smolak argued against Patterson's release on parole based on the violent nature of his crimes, his history of substance abuse, his lack of insight into his criminality and his history of prison rule violations, one as recent as 2014.

The Board deliberated for approximately 20 minutes before granting Patterson parole. In reaching their decision, the Board stated that Patterson's relapse prevention plan and his recently developed insight into the causes and effect of his substance abuse since his last hearing made him suitable for parole.

Patterson has been in prison custody almost 23 years.

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