



Office of the District Attorney Stanislaus County

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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: August 24, 2021
Re: Eddie Lee Patterson
Serial Robbery Inmate Denied Parole

For More Information Contact:

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Eddie Lee Patterson, age 55, of Modesto, was found unsuitable for parole during an August 18, 2021 hearing of the State Board of Parole Hearings held at the California Correctional Center in Susanville. Deputy District Attorney Melissa Chichportich 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.

One week later on September 5, 1996, Patterson went back to the same Ceres convenience store. This time he covered his face to avoid being identified. He placed his hand near his waist to simulate having a gun and told the clerk "Give me the cash." After getting only \$25, Patterson left the store.

At the time of the Ceres robberies, Patterson was on parole having been previously convicted and sentenced to state prison for robbery in Santa Clara County. In May of 1996, he ran away from his parole agent who then had a warrant issued for his arrest.

On October 17, 1996, Ceres Police detectives arrested Patterson for both crimes. When interviewed, Patterson identified himself as his brother "Gregory." He denied committing either of the robberies and denied absconding from parole or having ever been to state prison. When detectives were able to show him that his brother was in state prison at the time, Patterson admitted lying about his first name. When questioned specifically about the robberies in Ceres, Patterson told detectives that he knew he was a candidate for a life sentence under California's "Three Strikes" law. He told them that he would not admit to having committed the crimes even if he had been the perpetrator.

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On July 14, 1997, Patterson appeared before Judge Al Girolami and pled guilty to one count of second-degree robbery. He also admitted having three prior "Strike" convictions from Santa Clara County, two for residential burglary in 1985 and one for robbery in 1992. Patterson was then sentenced to serve 25 years-to-life in state prison under the "Three Strikes" law.

On June 12, 2018, Patterson had his first parole consideration hearing. During the 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 Board found Patterson had little to no insight into the reasons why he chose a criminal lifestyle, that he had not created an individualized relapse prevention plan to avoid re-offending if released and that his parole plans were insufficient. They also found that he posed an unreasonable risk of danger to the community if released and denied parole for three years.

On November 3, 2020, Patterson had his second parole consideration hearing. At this hearing, the People argued against Patterson's release on parole based on his prior violent criminal history, his history of controlled substance abuse, his lack of insight into why he committed his crimes and his history of prison rule violations. After hearing the arguments of both prosecution and defense counsel, the Board granted Patterson's release on parole finding that his relapse prevention plan and recently developed insight into the causes and effects of his substance abuse since his last hearing made him suitable. Within one month of that decision, while Patterson was still in prison custody, he was found guilty of delaying a peace officer in December of 2020 and his release on parole was rescinded.

Last week, on August 18, 2021, Patterson appeared before the Board for his third parole consideration hearing. Prosecutor Chichportich argued against Patterson's release and asked that parole be denied for a period of five years based on Patterson's history of prison rule violations, reminding the Board that the most recent violation occurred less than a year earlier and that his release would pose an unreasonable risk to public safety. Although the Board of Parole Hearings agreed Patterson was currently unsuitable for parole, they only denied parole for a period of three years.

Patterson will be scheduled for another hearing in 2024. That date may be advanced if the Board believes there have been any changed circumstances that justify holding the hearing sooner.

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