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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: August 12, 2008
Re: Parole Denied for Kathleen O'Connell

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Kathleen O'Connell of Modesto was found unsuitable for parole after a scheduled hearing by the State Board of Parole Hearings conducted at the Central California Women's Facility in Chowchilla. Assistant District Attorney Carol Shipley appeared at the hearing to argue for continued confinement based on the callousness of the crime which continues to affect the victims' lives as well as O'Connell's lack of post-incarceration planning. The members of the Board of Parole Hearings agreed and denied parole for two years.

O'Connell was convicted of two counts of attempted murder with an enhancement in each count for inflicting great bodily injury. The charges arose out of events that occurred on February 4, 1993 in the City of Modesto. O'Connell wanted to end her life as well as the lives of her two daughters (ages 3 years and 2 years) so they would not suffer in life as she had. O'Connell pulled the gas line from behind the stove in her residence with the plan that the gas would fill the house and would render both her and her daughters unconscious and eventually kill them. After a few hours when nothing appeared to have occurred, O'Connell turned on a light switch which then ignited the gas. O'Connell escaped through the bathroom window while a neighbor rescued her children. The children received 2nd and 3rd degree burns over fifty percent of their bodies.

O'Connell had previously been denied parole in 2006. She will be scheduled for another hearing in 2010.

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