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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: August 27, 2014
Re: Benson Neal Denied Parole

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Benson Neal of Modesto was found unsuitable for parole at an August 22, 2014 hearing of the State Board of Parole Hearings (BPH) at California State Prison – Solano, where Neal is incarcerated. Deputy District Attorney John B. Goulart appeared at the hearing and argued for continued confinement based on the callous disregard for life exhibited by Neal, his lack of insight into what motivated him to commit murder and his lack of parole plans. The Board of Parole Hearings denied parole for three years, citing these factors and also Neal's record of discipline in prison which includes a conviction for heroin possession in 2000.

In 1983, Neal was convicted of first degree murder while armed with a firearm, first degree burglary and robbery and is serving a 26 years to life prison sentence. When he has completed this sentence, he then will have to serve an eight-year prison sentence imposed in 2000 for his heroin possession conviction. This was Neal's fifth parole hearing.

On June 6, 1982, Neal, Frank Aleo, Frank Ford, and Sharon Poma conspired to rob Dixon Flinders at his Modesto home. They went to Mr. Flinders' home and announced themselves as drug enforcement agents at the front door. They then kicked the door open and Frank Ford fired a single round from a .22 caliber revolver into Mr. Flinders' chest, killing him. Sharon Pitts, then 19, was present in the home and witnessed the murder. Neal and his co-responsibles then ransacked Mr. Flinders' home. They expected to find a large amount of cash but instead came away with only some sea shells, a cassette player for a car, a rifle and \$100.

The BPH decision will be final in 120 days and can then be reviewed by the Governor.

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