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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: February 20, 2019
Re: Phillip Wade Knight
Attempted cop-killer granted parole

For More Information Contact:

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Phillip Wade Knight, age 67, of Modesto, was found suitable for parole during a February 13, 2019 hearing of the State Board of Parole Hearings at Folsom State Prison. Deputy District Attorney Wendell Emerson appeared at the hearing on behalf of the People and argued before the Board against Knight's release.

On March 29, 1996, Knight and several co-conspirators planned to rob a local Modesto business. They brought guns, disguises, rope and duct tape so they could tie up any store employees. As they were watching the target in preparation for the robbery, employees of a nearby local business observed them and called the police to report their suspicious behavior. When police arrived, Knight fired a sawed-off shotgun at the first officer who approached him but missed. He later admitted that he was attempting to kill the officer. Knight fled, shooting at the next officer who confronted him. Officers returned fire and hit Knight multiple times before he collapsed and was apprehended.

In 1998, Knight was convicted by a Stanislaus County jury of attempted first-degree murder of a police officer, conspiracy to commit robbery, assault with a firearm on a peace officer, and being a felon in possession of a firearm. He was sentenced to serve 16 years to life in state prison.

At the parole hearing on February 13th, prosecutor Wendell Emerson argued to the board that Knight should not be released on parole because he continued to pose an unreasonable risk to the community if he were to be released. The Board disagreed and granted parole.

This was Knight's third parole hearing. He had previously been denied parole in 2016 and 2017.

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