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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: August 7, 2020
Re: Phinehas Lamont Parker
Violent felon denied parole

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Phinehas Lamont Parker, age 48, of Modesto, was found unsuitable for parole during an August 4, 2020, hearing of the State Board of Parole Hearings conducted at Folsom State Prison in Represa, California. Deputy District Attorney Monroe Tyler appeared at the hearing on behalf of the People.

On March 9, 1997, at approximately 3:00 A.M., Parker and an unknown co-responsible broke into a house in Modesto. Two adult victims were sleeping in the house with their six children, including an infant daughter who was sleeping in the room with them. Parker, armed with a firearm, was wearing a mask with a bandana over his face and a pair of black work boots. Both suspects held the victims at gunpoint and demanded money. The co-responsible pointed his weapon at the infant daughter and threatened to kill her. Parker threatened to kill the male victim if he did not open his safe. After telling him he was unable to open the safe, Parker pulled cash from the victim's pockets and then shot him in the face from a distance of five or six feet. The bullet passed through the victim's cheekbone, broke his collarbone, and lodged in his left armpit. As Parker re-aimed to shoot again, the female victim escaped out a window and ran to a neighbor's house, where she called 911. Both suspects fled. Although seriously wounded, the male victim survived the shooting.

On March 12 and again on March 14, 1997, Parker's girlfriend and later wife, Clarissa Hurtado, sold jewelry stolen from the home to a local pawn shop. When detectives served a search warrant on Hurtado's home, they found a pair of black work boots similar to those worn by the shooter. The boots were sent to the California Department of Justice Crime Laboratory and a forensic examination found dried blood that matched the victim. Parker was arrested and charged with several felony crimes.

While in custody awaiting trial, Parker was recorded during jail visits telling Hurtado what to say during trial – making up a story regarding how she obtained the stolen jewelry and the colors of the gems. When they realized they were being recorded, Hurtado and Parker began holding written messages up against the visiting room glass to avoid law enforcement hearing what they were

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planning. When investigators confronted Hurtado after one of the visits, she struggled with them and ate the paper in her possession before they could recover it.

Parker was convicted by a Stanislaus County jury on April 26, 1999 of premeditated attempted murder, residential burglary, assault with a deadly weapon and home-invasion robbery with enhancements for causing great bodily injury and using a firearm. On June 18, 1999, he was sentenced to serve a total of 38-years-to-life in state prison.

Parker is a member of the “Crips” criminal street gang. While in prison, Parker has committed multiple rule violations including possession of a cellphone and positive urinalysis for drugs. As a minor, he helped his fellow gang members dispose of a gun used in a drive-by shooting in Santa Clara county. He was sentenced to serve time in the California Youth Authority for that offense.

During the hearing, Deputy District Attorney Tyler argued for a 5-year parole denial based on the continuing safety risk that Parker poses to the community if released and his lack of genuine insight into the crime. The Board of Parole hearings agreed that Parker poses a current danger, but denied parole for only 3 years. The Board could have denied parole for 3, 5, 7, 10 or 15 years.

Originally, Parker’s first parole hearing was set for January 4, 2030. However, because he was only 25 years old when he committed this offense, he now qualifies as a “youthful offender” and is eligible for earlier parole hearings.

This was Parker’s second parole hearing after having been denied parole for 3 years in 2019.

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