



# Office of the District Attorney Stanislaus County

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release**

Date: March 4, 2024  
Re: David Garza  
Convicted Killer Denied Parole

### **For More Information Contact:**

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**Modesto, California** - Stanislaus County District Attorney Jeff Laugero announced today that David Garza, age 35, of Modesto was found unsuitable for parole during a December 14, 2023, hearing of the State Board of Parole Hearings held at Avenal State Prison in Avenal. Deputy District Attorney Holly MacKinnon appeared at the hearing on behalf of the People.

On July 4, 2009, 33-year-old Rene Navarro and his friends returned to his residence after attending a family gathering. Mr. Navarro and one of his friends were talking at the rear of his vehicle with the garage door open. David Garza and two other males were walking down the street when an intoxicated Garza fired a gun nine times at the residence, claiming he thought the home was abandoned. Mr. Navarro's friend heard the gunshots being fired at the residence and turned to see Mr. Navarro lying on the ground in his driveway in a pool of blood. Mr. Navarro was transported to the hospital and was placed on life support, but never regained consciousness.

On April 28, 2010, Garza pled guilty to felony voluntary manslaughter and an enhancement for use of a firearm. Garza was sentenced on May 25, 2010, to 21 years in state prison.

A prison psychologist who interviewed Garza prior to the parole hearing gave the opinion that he currently posed a moderate risk for future violence if he were to be released into the community. Garza has committed numerous rule violations over the past 14 years. While serving his current term he was convicted of possession of a deadly weapon by a prisoner in 2013 and was sentenced to an additional four-year term in state prison.

Prosecutor MacKinnon asked the Board to deny Garza parole due to his need for continued rehabilitation, additional substance abuse and gang programming and more well-defined parole plans. MacKinnon argued that the callousness of the killing combined with his lack of sufficient insight required more than the few years of rehabilitative programming that Garza had completed.

After deliberations, the Board denied parole for a period of three years. Garza was 20 years old at the time of the killing, requiring the Board to give great weight to the fact that he qualified as a

“Youthful Offender.” The Board found those factors were outweighed by the fact that Garza continued to associate with negative peers for years in prison, continued to violate rules, and lacked sufficient internalization of the programming he had completed. The Board encouraged Garza to participate in more programming.

This was Garza’s first parole hearing. He will be eligible for another parole hearing in 2026 although that date may be advanced if he can demonstrate to the board a change in circumstances.

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