

*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security*



PAROLE BOARD

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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

**LADALE STRANGE
W46659**

TYPE OF HEARING: Review Hearing
DATE OF HEARING: May 11, 2021
DATE OF DECISION: December 30, 2021

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS: Gloriann Moroney, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Sheila Dupre, Tina Hurley, Colette Santa

DECISION OF THE BOARD: After careful consideration of all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying offense, the age of the inmate at the time of offense, criminal record, institutional record, the inmate's testimony at the hearing, and the views of the public as expressed at the hearing or in written submissions to the Board, we conclude by unanimous vote that the inmate is not a suitable candidate for parole. Parole is denied with a review in four years from the date of the hearing.

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On June 1, 1989, in Hampden Superior Court, LaDale Strange pleaded guilty to two counts of rape of a child with force. Mr. Strange was sentenced to two concurrent terms of life in prison with the possibility of parole for these offenses. On that same date, Mr. Strange pleaded guilty to three counts of kidnapping and two counts of assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon and was sentenced to a concurrent term of 8 to 10 years.

On March 13, 1988, in Holyoke, LaDale Strange led an 8-year-old boy into the basement of a vacant apartment building, forced him to disrobe at knifepoint, and then proceeded to rape him. After slicing the child on his arm and leg, Mr. Strange threatened to kill him when he attempted to flee. On April 6, 1988, Mr. Strange lured another 8-year-old child into an alley in Holyoke. He tied the child to a fence while he attempted to unlock a storage door. Mr. Strange then forced the child into the storage area, threatened him with a gun, and ordered him to disrobe. Mr. Strange fled the scene when a noise startled him, which allowed the partially

clothed child to escape. The child provided Holyoke police with a description of his attacker. On April 11, 1988, Mr. Strange lured yet another young boy into the basement of an apartment building in Holyoke. He threatened the child and ordered him to disrobe. When the child refused, Mr. Strange beat the boy, first with his hand, and then with a brick he discovered nearby. When the child lost consciousness from blows to the head, Mr. Strange sodomized him with a piece of window molding. After Mr. Strange fled, the child was discovered several hours later by a maintenance worker; he suffered permanent, life-altering injuries.

After receiving several tips from the community, Holyoke police detained Mr. Strange for questioning on April 14, 1988. He admitted to all three crimes and was placed under arrest the same day. Mr. Strange was 17-years-old at the time of these offenses.

II. PAROLE HEARING ON MAY 11, 2021

LaDale Strange, now 51-years-old, appeared before the Parole Board on May 11, 2021, for a review hearing. He was represented by Attorney Michael Nam Krane. Mr. Strange was denied parole after his initial hearing in 2003, and after his review hearings in 2006 and 2011. Mr. Strange voluntarily postponed his 2016 review hearing. In his opening statement to the Board, Mr. Strange apologized to his victims and their families, as well as the community, for his actions. He further acknowledged the adverse effects of his crimes on the victims' lives. During the hearing, Mr. Strange accepted responsibility and admitted that he sought out his victims with the intent to have intercourse with them. Mr. Strange explained that he took out his anger at his own abusive family on the children he victimized. Upon further questioning by the Board, Mr. Strange admitted to having a sexual attraction to children at the time of his crimes.

Mr. Strange reported that he suffered both physical and sexual abuse throughout his childhood. He was sexually abused by multiple older males and learned to use sexual activity as a coping mechanism. Mr. Strange stated that, at the time of the governing offenses, he was residing with his great-grandmother, who was physically and mentally abusive towards him. Mr. Strange completed the Sex Offender Treatment Program in 2016, after being previously denied parole, and remains engaged in SOTP. Mr. Strange claims that, after completing the program, he was no longer interested in children. The Board questioned Mr. Strange, however, about a test administered in 2016, which indicated a positive arousal response to deviant sexual scenes. Mr. Strange stated that he was "confused" by the results and remained confident in his ability to use "interventions" to remove himself from any situation involving a child. Mr. Strange further reported that the Restorative Justice Program and Alternatives to Violence program has enabled him to understand his emotions and develop empathy.

The Board considered a victim's letter in opposition to parole, which was read to the Board at the hearing. The Board considered a statement from Hampden County Assistant District Attorney Howard Safford in opposition to parole. The Board also considered the testimony of several friends and associates of Mr. Strange in support of parole. The Board considered the testimony of Janice Hrabovsky, an independent clinical forensic social worker, and the written report of Dr. Leonard Bard.

III. DECISION

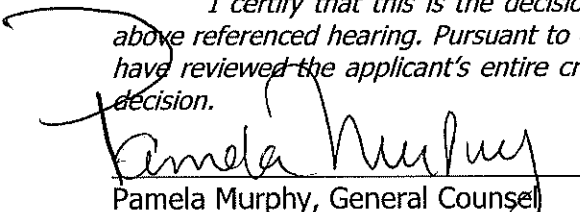
The Board is of the opinion that LaDale Strange has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society. Mr. Strange, during a 4-week period in March 1988, committed a series of sexual assaults on 3 young boys between the ages of 7 and 8. One of the boys suffered permanent and life-altering injuries. While Mr. Strange has engaged in SOTP, recent reports reflect concern regarding

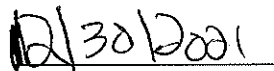
sexual deviance. The Board considered the evaluation of Dr. Bard, along with documentation and reports from the Treatment Center, in rendering its decision. His participation in SOTP has been inconsistent, but the Board notes he completed it in 2016. Mr. Strange should continue with SOTP maintenance and identifying his triggers and risks to reoffend.

The applicable standard used by the Board to assess a candidate for parole is: "Parole Board Members shall only grant a parole permit if they are of the opinion that there is a reasonable probability that, if such offender is released, the offender will live and remain at liberty without violating the law and that release is not incompatible with the welfare of society." 120 C.M.R. 300.04. In forming this opinion, the Board has taken into consideration Mr. Strange's institutional behavior, as well as his participation in available work, educational, and treatment programs during the period of his incarceration. The Board has also considered a risk and needs assessment and whether risk reduction programs could effectively minimize Mr. Strange's risk of recidivism. After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Strange's case, the Board is of the unanimous opinion that LaDale Strange is not rehabilitated and, therefore, does not merit parole at this time.

Mr. Strange's next appearance before the Board will take place in four years from the date of this hearing. During the interim, the Board encourages Mr. Strange to continue working toward his full rehabilitation.

I certify that this is the decision and reasons of the Massachusetts Parole Board regarding the above referenced hearing. Pursuant to G.L. c. 127, § 130, I further certify that all voting Board Members have reviewed the applicant's entire criminal record. This signature does not indicate authorship of the decision.


Pamela Murphy, General Counsel


Date