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**PAROLE BOARD**

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Chair

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**RECORD OF DECISION**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

**MAKEDA HIGGINS**  
**F/K/A TREVOR HIGGINS<sup>1</sup>**

**W103636**

**TYPE OF HEARING:** Initial Hearing

**DATE OF HEARING:** December 3, 2024

**DATE OF DECISION:** March 27, 2025

**PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS:** Edith J. Alexander, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Sarah B. Coughlin, Tina M. Hurley, James Kelcourse, Rafael Ortiz

**VOTE:** Parole is granted to Interstate Compact Pennsylvania.<sup>2</sup>

**PROCEDURAL HISTORY:** On November 19, 2013, following a jury trial in Suffolk Superior Court, Trevor Higgins (N/K/A Makeda Higgins) was convicted of murder in the second-degree for the death of Carl Bonnie. She was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole. On that same date, she was also convicted of possession of a firearm without an FID card. On December 3, 2024, Ms. Higgins appeared before the Board for an initial hearing. She was represented by student attorneys Teagan Langseth-Depaolis and Hala Baradi from the Northeastern University School of Law under the supervision of Attorney Patrica Garin. The Board's decision fully incorporates by reference the entire video recording of Ms. Higgins' December 3, 2024 hearing.

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:** On November 12, 2009, 35-year-old Trevor Higgins (N/K/A Makeda Higgins), along with accomplice Gregory Knight Jr., shot and killed 39-year-old Carl Bonnie in Dorchester. Mr. Knight had arranged to meet and purchase cocaine from the victim at Mr. Knight's father's home in Dorchester. At about 10:45 am, Carl Bonnie texted Mr. Knight that he was outside the home. Mr. Knight told him the doorbell did not work and to go upstairs. As

<sup>1</sup> The individual self-identifies by the name "Makeda" and uses the preferred pronouns of She/Her/Hers

<sup>2</sup> 3 Board members voted to deny parole with a review in 1 year.

Carl Bonnie walked into the home, a loud bang was heard by Mr. Knight's father's girlfriend and their other roommate, who were both home at the time. The other roommate opened the door and saw legs on the ground and a person, whose face was obstructed by the door, holding a rifle. The father's girlfriend followed Ms. Higgins from the apartment and saw her walking with a limp down the street, though earlier she was not. She returned to her apartment to call police and noticed the victim's body on the floor.

On November 16, 2009, Mr. Knight was arrested at her apartment in Lewiston, Maine. When police performed a protective sweep of the apartment, they found Ms. Higgins hiding in a closet underneath a pile of clothes. Ms. Higgins initially identified herself by a false name. She was released the next day. On November 20, 2009, when police returned with an arrest warrant for Ms. Higgins, a neighbor told them that a black male had jumped out the window of the apartment. The police found her on the fire escape of a nearby house. After she was arrested, Ms. Higgins called another person. Ms. Higgins told her that that she had been arrested for murder and that she was her alibi.

**APPLICABLE STANDARD:** Parole "[p]ermits shall be granted only if the Board is of the opinion, after consideration of a risk and needs assessment, that there is a reasonable probability that, if the prisoner is released with appropriate conditions and community supervision, the prisoner will live and remain at liberty without violating the law and that release is not incompatible with the welfare of society." M.G.L. c. 127, § 130. In making this determination, the Board takes into consideration an inmate's institutional behavior, their participation in available work, educational, and treatment programs during the period of incarceration, and whether risk reduction programs could effectively minimize the inmate's risk of recidivism. M.G.L. c. 127, § 130. The Board also considers all relevant facts, including the nature of the underlying offense, the age of the inmate at the time of the offense, the criminal record, the institutional record, the inmate's testimony at the hearing, and the views of the public as expressed at the hearing and/or in written submissions to the Board (if applicable).

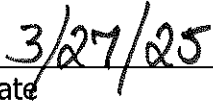
**DECISION OF THE BOARD:** This was Ms. Higgins' first appearance before the Parole Board. Ms. Higgins (who now identifies as Makeda) has been incarcerated for 35 years. Ms. Higgins was illiterate when she entered prison and taught herself to read and write. Ms. Higgins has invested in self-development and completed numerous programs to address her need areas and precipitant to her criminal history. Ms. Higgins presented with insight into how her adverse childhood experiences impacted her development, anger, and decision making. Ms. Higgins has established a strong support system that includes family and a re-entry program to address her specific needs, including acceptance to the Travis Intersex nonbinary and gender non-conforming service program. The Board considered public testimony in rendering its decision. Members of Ms. Higgins' family provided testimony in support of parole. Suffolk County Assistant District Attorney Ian MacLean provided testimony made in opposition to parole. The Board concludes that Trevor "Makeda" Higgins has demonstrated a level of rehabilitation that would make her release compatible with the welfare of society.

**SPECIAL CONDITIONS:** Approve home plans before release; Release to Interstate Compact Pennsylvania; Waive work for 2 weeks; Electronic Monitoring at Parole Officer discretion; Supervise for drugs; testing in accordance with Agency policy; Supervise for liquor abstinence; testing in accordance with Agency policy; Must take prescribed medication; Report to assigned MA Parole Office on day of release; No contact with victim(s)' family; Must have substance

abuse evaluation and must comply with recommended treatment plan; Must have mental health counseling for adjustment.

*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.*

  
Tina M. Hurley, Chair

  
Date