



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security



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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

TAM BUI  
W52436

**TYPE OF HEARING:** Initial Hearing

**DATE OF HEARING:** November 18, 2025

**DATE OF DECISION:** June 8, 2026

**PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS:** Edith J. Alexander, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Sarah B. Coughlin, Angelo Gomez Jr., James Kelcourse, Rafael Ortiz<sup>1</sup>

**VOTE:** Parole is denied with a review in 4 years from the date of the hearing.

**PROCEDURAL HISTORY:** On April 2, 1992, following a jury trial in Middlesex County Superior Court, Tam Bui was convicted of two counts of murder in the first-degree for the deaths of Ngoc Le and Dixie Poulin. He was sentenced to consecutive terms of life in prison without the possibility of parole. On that same date, he was also convicted of armed robbery and was sentenced to a term of 19-20 years to be served concurrently with his first life term.

Mr. Bui became parole eligible following the Supreme Judicial Court's decision in Commonwealth v. Mattis, 493 Mass. 216 (2024), where the court held that sentencing individuals who were ages 18 through 20 at the time of the offense (emerging adults) to life without the possibility of parole is unconstitutional. As a result of the SJC's decision regarding Mr. Bui's first-degree murder convictions, he was re-sentenced to life with the possibility of parole after 15 years.

On November 18, 2025, Mr. Bui appeared before the Board for an initial hearing. He was represented by Robinson & Cole, LLP. The Board's decision fully incorporates by reference the entire video recording of Mr. Bui's November 18, 2025, hearing.

<sup>1</sup> Board Member Bonner was not present for the hearing, but reviewed the video recording of the hearing and the entirety of the file prior to vote.

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:** On November 21, 1989, 34-year-old Ngoc Le and her 15-year-old daughter, Dixie Poulin, were stabbed to death in their Everett apartment. Tam Bui (age 19) and Hung Truong (age 19) had broken into the apartment to rob Ms. Le. The men, armed with a handgun and knife, found Ms. Le alone. While Mr. Bui pointed the gun at Ms. Le, Mr. Truong used duct tape to gag her and bind her legs and arms. When Dixie Poulin arrived home during the commission of the crime, Mr. Truong took possession of the gun and used it to threaten her. He also used duct tape to gag the child and bind her arms and legs. After finding money and jewelry, the two men then stabbed Ms. Le and her daughter. Dixie Poulin was stabbed 12 times in the neck and chest. In addition, she had six lacerations to her head due to blunt force trauma. Ms. Le suffered multiple stab wounds to her neck and chest.

**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.

Where a parole candidate was convicted of first-degree murder for a crime committed when he was ages 18 through 20 years old, the Board considers the “unique aspects” of emerging adulthood that distinguish emerging adult offenders from older offenders. Commonwealth v. Mattis, 493 Mass. 216, 238 (2024). Individuals who were emerging adults at the time of the offense must be afforded a “meaningful opportunity to obtain release based on demonstrated maturity and rehabilitation” and the Board evaluates “the circumstances surrounding the commission of the crime, including the age of the offender, together with all relevant information pertaining to the offender’s character and actions during the intervening years since conviction.” Id. (citing Diatchenko v. District Attorney for the Suffolk Dist., 466 Mass. 655, 674 (2013) (Diatchenko I); Miller v. Alabama, 567 U.S. 460, 471 (2012); Graham v. Florida, 560 U.S. 48, 75 (2010)). Since brain development in emerging adulthood is ongoing, the Board also considers the following factors when evaluating parole candidates who committed the underlying offenses as an emerging adult: 1) a lack of impulse control in emotionally arousing situations; 2) an increased likelihood to engage in risk taking behaviors in pursuit of reward; 3) increased susceptibility to peer influence which makes emerging adults more likely to engage in risky behavior; and 4) an emerging adult’s greater capacity for change. See Mattis, 493 Mass. at 225-229.

**DECISION OF THE BOARD:** Mr. Bui was convicted of 2 counts of first-degree murder and became eligible for a parole hearing after the Mattis decision. The Board did not find Mr. Bui credible and found that he has completed minimal programming. The Board notes Mr. Bui has pursued educational opportunities, but otherwise, has eschewed rehabilitative programming opportunities. Mr. Bui’s re-entry plan relies extensively on family support. Mr. Bui lacks insight and an understanding of the steps he needs to take to address a successful release that would

be compatible with the welfare of society. The Board considered the testimony of Mr. Bui's family members and friends in support of parole. The Board also considered the testimony of the Middlesex County ADA Alicia Walsh in opposition to parole. The Board concludes by unanimous decision that Tam Bui has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitation that would make his release compatible with the welfare of society.

*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.*

  
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Angelo Gómez Jr., Chair

June 8, 2026  
Date