

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

PAROLE BOARD

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RECORD OF DECISION

IN THE MATTER OF

THOMAS CHILDS

W40430

TYPE OF HEARING: **Review Hearing**

DATE OF HEARING: **September 1, 2022**

DATE OF DECISION: **December 1, 2022**

PARTICIPATING BOARD MEMBERS¹: Tina Hurley, Dr. Charlene Bonner, Tonomey Coleman, Dr. Maryanne Galvin, James Kelcourse, Colette Santa

STATEMENT OF THE CASE: On April 26, 1984, after a jury trial in Suffolk Superior Court, Thomas Childs was convicted of first-degree murder in the shooting death of 29-year-old Kostas Efstathiou. Mr. Childs appealed his conviction, and a new trial was ordered. Following a new trial, Mr. Childs was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole.

Mr. Childs appeared for his fourth parole hearing on September 1, 2022, and was represented by Attorney Lloyd MacDonald. Mr. Childs was denied parole after his initial hearing in 2001 and after his review hearings in 2006, 2012, and 2017. The entire video recording of Mr. Childs' September 1, 2022, hearing is fully incorporated by reference to the Board's decision.

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 that the inmate is not a suitable candidate for parole².

¹ Former Chair Gloriann Moroney was no longer a board member at the time of the vote.

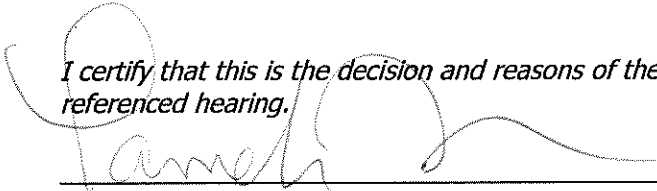
² Four board members voted to deny parole and two board members voted to grant parole.

The Board is of the opinion that Thomas Childs has not demonstrated a level of rehabilitative progress that would make her release compatible with the welfare of society. On August 20, 1983, 42-year-old Mr. Childs shot and killed 29-year-old Kostas Efstathiou. Although Mr. Childs states he accepts responsibility for the murder, he maintains that he did not intentionally kill the victim. At the hearing, Mr. Childs stated that the victim hit Mr. Childs' hand which caused the gun to fire accidentally. The Board notes that the police report states that the bullet entered the victim's mount, penetrated his throat, and lodged in his skull. In its last decision, the Board suggested that Mr. Childs engage in rehabilitative programming. The Board recognizes that Mr. Childs was placed in the medical unit in December 2021. However, he completed no rehabilitative programming prior to this placement. He has not demonstrated that his release is compatible with the welfare of society. Mr. Child should pursue whatever he can, including reading available literature, that addresses victim empathy.

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. Childs' 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. Childs' risk of recidivism. After applying this standard to the circumstances of Mr. Childs' case, the Board is of the opinion that Thomas Childs is not yet rehabilitated and, therefore, does not merit parole at this time.

Mr. Childs's next appearance before the Board will take place in one year from the date of this hearing. During the interim, the Board encourages him to continue working towards his full rehabilitation.

I certify that this is the decision and reasons of the Massachusetts Parole Board regarding the above referenced hearing.


Pamela Murphy, General Counsel

12/1/22
Date