

UNPUBLISHED

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

No. 16-7438

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff - Appellee,

v.

JAMES EARL WALTON,

Defendant - Appellant.

Appeal from the United States District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina, at Elizabeth City. James C. Fox, Senior District Judge. (2:07-cr-00017-F-1)

Submitted: February 23, 2017

Decided: February 28, 2017

Before SHEDD and DIAZ, Circuit Judges, and DAVIS, Senior Circuit Judge.

Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

James Earl Walton, Appellant Pro Se. Eric David Goulian, Seth Morgan Wood, OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY, Raleigh, North Carolina, for Appellee.

Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

James Earl Walton seeks to appeal the district court's order dismissing his 28 U.S.C. § 2255 (2012) motion as unauthorized and successive. The order is not appealable unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of appealability. 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(1)(B) (2012). A certificate of appealability will not issue absent "a substantial showing of the denial of a constitutional right." 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(2) (2012). When the district court denies relief on the merits, a prisoner satisfies this standard by demonstrating that reasonable jurists would find that the district court's assessment of the constitutional claims is debatable or wrong. Slack v. McDaniel, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000); see Miller-El v. Cockrell, 537 U.S. 322, 336-38 (2003). When the district court denies relief on procedural grounds, the prisoner must demonstrate both that the dispositive procedural ruling is debatable, and that the motion states a debatable claim of the denial of a constitutional right. Slack, 529 U.S. at 484-85.

We have independently reviewed the record and conclude that Walton has not made the requisite showing. Additionally, we note that Walton's career offender sentence would not be affected by Johnson v. United States, 135 S. Ct. 2551 (2015), because it was premised on two prior controlled substance convictions. See U.S. Sentencing Guidelines Manual §§ 4B1.1(a), 4B1.2(b) (2007).

Accordingly, we deny a certificate of appealability and dismiss the appeal. We dispense with oral argument because the facts and legal contentions are adequately presented in the materials before this court and argument would not aid the decisional process.

DISMISSED