

**UNPUBLISHED**

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

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**No. 13-7532**

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff - Appellee,

v.

JOSEPH TROY MCCONNELL,

Defendant - Appellant.

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Appeal from the United States District Court for the District of South Carolina, at Columbia. Cameron McGowan Currie, Senior District Judge. (3:02-cr-00548-CMC-15; 3:10-cv-70314-CMC)

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Submitted: December 17, 2013

Decided: December 20, 2013

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Before KING, GREGORY, and WYNN, Circuit Judges.

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Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

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Joseph Troy McConnell, Appellant Pro Se. Beth Drake, Mark C. Moore, Jane Barrett Taylor, Assistant United States Attorneys, Columbia, South Carolina, for Appellee.

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Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

Joseph Troy McConnell seeks to appeal the district court's order treating his motion to reopen the criminal judgment against him as a successive 28 U.S.C.A. § 2255 (West Supp. 2013) motion, and dismissing it because McConnell failed to obtain prefiling authorization from this court. The order is not appealable unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of appealability. 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(1)(B) (2006). 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) (2006). 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 McConnell has not made the requisite showing. Accordingly, we deny a certificate of appealability and dismiss the appeal.

Additionally, McConnell seeks authorization to file a successive § 2255 motion in his informal brief. In order to obtain authorization to file a successive § 2255 motion, however, a prisoner must assert claims based on either:

(1) newly discovered evidence that . . . would be sufficient to establish by clear and convincing evidence that no reasonable factfinder would have found the movant guilty of the offense; or

(2) a new rule of constitutional law, made retroactive to cases on collateral review by the Supreme Court, that was previously unavailable.

28 U.S.C.A. § 2255(h) (West Supp. 2013). McConnell's claims do not satisfy either of these criteria. Therefore, we deny authorization to file a successive § 2255 motion.

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