

**UNPUBLISHED**

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

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**No. 15-6485**

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PAUL ANTHONY RICE, a/k/a Paul Rice,  
  
Petitioner - Appellant,

v.

WARDEN JOHN PATE,  
  
Respondent - Appellee.

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Appeal from the United States District Court for the District of  
South Carolina, at Florence. Mary G. Lewis, District Judge.  
(4:14-cv-00185-MGL)

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Submitted: June 18, 2015

Decided: June 23, 2015

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Before SHEDD, DUNCAN, and AGEE, Circuit Judges.

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Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

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Paul Anthony Rice, Appellant Pro Se. Donald John Zelenka, Senior  
Assistant Attorney General, Melody Jane Brown, Assistant Attorney  
General, Columbia, South Carolina, for Appellee.

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Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

Paul Anthony Rice seeks to appeal the district court's order accepting the recommendation of the magistrate judge and denying relief on his 28 U.S.C. § 2254 (2012) petition. The order is not appealable unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of appealability. 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(1)(A) (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 petition 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 Rice has not made the requisite showing. Accordingly, we deny a certificate of appealability, deny leave to proceed in forma pauperis, deny Rice's motion for transcripts at the government's expense, 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