

**UNPUBLISHED**

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

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**No. 15-7265**

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DEMETRIUS JAROD SMALLS,

Petitioner - Appellant,

v.

JOSEPH MCFADDEN,

Respondent - Appellee.

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Appeal from the United States District Court for the District of South Carolina, at Charleston. Richard Mark Gergel, District Judge. (2:13-cv-02651-RMG)

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Submitted: January 14, 2016

Decided: January 19, 2016

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Before AGEE, WYNN, and FLOYD, Circuit Judges.

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Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

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Demetrius Jarod Smalls, Appellant Pro Se. James Anthony Mabry, Assistant Attorney General, Donald John Zelenka, Senior Assistant Attorney General, Columbia, South Carolina, for Appellee.

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Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

Demetrius Jarod Smalls seeks to appeal the district court's text order denying as moot the motion to dismiss that Smalls filed in his 28 U.S.C. § 2254 (2012) petition. The court previously accepted the recommendation of the magistrate judge and denied relief on Smalls' 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 Smalls has not made the requisite showing. 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