

**UNPUBLISHED**

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

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**No. 16-7501**

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ARSEAN LAMONE HICKS,

Petitioner - Appellant,

v.

HAROLD W. CLARKE,

Respondent - Appellee.

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Appeal from the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, at Richmond. M. Hannah Lauck, District Judge. (3:15-cv-00405-MHL)

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Submitted: March 24, 2017

Decided: March 30, 2017

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Before WILKINSON and WYNN, Circuit Judges, and DAVIS, Senior Circuit Judge.

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Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

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James F. Neale, MCGUIREWOODS, LLP, Charlottesville, Virginia, for Appellant. Alice Theresa Armstrong, OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF VIRGINIA, Richmond, Virginia, for Appellee.

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Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

Arsean Lamone Hicks seeks to appeal the district court's order dismissing his 28 U.S.C. § 2254 (2012) petition as an unauthorized second or successive § 2254 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 Hicks 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