

UNPUBLISHED

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

No. 17-6965

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff - Appellee,

v.

TAVIS LABRON HOUPE,

Defendant - Appellant.

Appeal from the United States District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina, at Greensboro. Catherine C. Eagles, District Judge. (1:15-cr-00193-CCE-1; 1:16-cv-01090-CCE-JEP)

Submitted: November 21, 2017

Decided: November 28, 2017

Before WYNN and THACKER, Circuit Judges, and HAMILTON, Senior Circuit Judge.

Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

Tavis Labron Houpe, Appellant Pro Se. Michael Francis Joseph, Terry Michael Meinecke, Angela Hewlett Miller, Assistant United States Attorneys, Greensboro, North Carolina, for Appellee.

Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

Tavis Labron Houpe seeks to appeal the district court's order adopting the magistrate judge's report and recommendation and denying relief on his 28 U.S.C. § 2255 (2012) motion. 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 Houpe 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