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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

JOE RUDY REYES,	1:10-cv-00637 MJS (HC)
Petitioner,	ORDER DISMISSING PETITION FOR
v.	WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS FOR FAILING
	TO STATE COGNIZABLE CLAIM
	[Doc. 1]
R. LOPEZ, Warden,	
Respondent.	

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Petitioner is a state prisoner proceeding pro se with a petition for writ of habeas corpus under the authority of 28 U.S.C. § 2254. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(c)(1), the parties have consented to the jurisdiction of the United States Magistrate Judge. Local Rule 305(b).

Petitioner filed the instant petition for writ of habeas corpus on April 12, 2010 (Pet., ECF No. 1.) In it he seeks relief based on allegations that he was improperly denied written material considered sexually explicit by the California Department of Corrections. (P. & A. 1, ECF No. 1 at 7.)

**I. DISCUSSION**

**A. Procedural Grounds for Summary Dismissal**

Rule 4 of the Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases provides in pertinent part:

If it plainly appears from the petition and any attached exhibits that the petitioner is not entitled to relief in the district court, the judge must dismiss the petition and direct the clerk to notify the petitioner.

1 The Advisory Committee Notes to Rule 8 indicate that the court may dismiss a  
2 petition for writ of habeas corpus, either on its own motion under Rule 4, pursuant to the  
3 respondent's motion to dismiss, or after an answer to the petition has been filed. A petition  
4 for habeas corpus should not be dismissed without leave to amend unless it appears that  
5 no tenable claim for relief can be pleaded were such leave granted. Jarvis v. Nelson, 440  
6 F.2d 13, 14 (9th Cir. 1971).

7 **B. Failure to State Cognizable Claim**

8 The instant petition must be dismissed because it does not challenge the fact or  
9 duration of Petitioner's confinement. A federal court may only grant a petition for writ of  
10 habeas corpus if the petitioner can show that "he is in custody in violation of the  
11 Constitution . . . ." 28 U.S.C. § 2254(a). A habeas corpus petition is the correct method  
12 for a prisoner to challenge the "legality or duration" of his confinement. Badea v. Cox, 931  
13 F.2d 573, 574 (9th Cir. 1991), *quoting*, Preiser v. Rodriguez, 411 U.S. 475, 485 (1973);  
14 Advisory Committee Notes to Rule 1 of the Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases.

15 In contrast, a civil rights action pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 is the proper method  
16 for a prisoner to challenge the conditions of that confinement. McCarthy v. Bronson, 500  
17 U.S. 136, 141-42 (1991); Preiser, 411 U.S. at 499; Badea, 931 F.2d at 574; Advisory  
18 Committee Notes to Rule 1 of the Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases. "Habeas  
19 jurisdiction is absent, and a § 1983 action proper, where a successful challenge to a prison  
20 condition will not necessarily shorten the prisoner's sentence." Ramirez v. Galaza, 334  
21 F.3d 850, 859 (9th Cir. 2003).

22 Petitioner's claims do not implicate the fact or duration of his confinement. They  
23 seek redress from a decision of California Department of Corrections to deny him access  
24 to material found to be sexually explicit. (Pet.) Petitioner explicitly states that he "does not  
25 challenge his conviction or sentence." (Id. at 1.) Petitioner's claims are not cognizable  
26 grounds for federal habeas corpus relief and must be dismissed.

27 **C. Certificate of Appealability**

28 A state prisoner seeking a writ of habeas corpus has no absolute entitlement to

1 appeal a district court's denial of his petition, and an appeal is only allowed in certain  
2 circumstances. *Miller-El v. Cockrell*, 123 S.Ct. 1029, 1039 (2003). The controlling statute  
3 in determining whether to issue a certificate of appealability is 28 U.S.C. § 2253, which  
4 provides as follows:

5 (a) In a habeas corpus proceeding or a proceeding under section  
6 2255 before a district judge, the final order shall be subject to review, on  
7 appeal, by the court of appeals for the circuit in which the proceeding is  
8 held.

9 (b) There shall be no right of appeal from a final order in a  
10 proceeding to test the validity of a warrant to remove to another district or  
11 place for commitment or trial a person charged with a criminal offense  
12 against the United States, or to test the validity of such person's detention  
13 pending removal proceedings.

14 (c) (1) Unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of  
15 appealability, an appeal may not be taken to the court of  
16 appeals from—

17 (A) the final order in a habeas corpus proceeding in  
18 which the detention complained of arises out of process  
19 issued by a State court; or

20 (B) the final order in a proceeding under section 2255.

21 (2) A certificate of appealability may issue under paragraph  
22 (1) only if the applicant has made a substantial showing of the  
23 denial of a constitutional right.

24 (3) The certificate of appealability under paragraph (1) shall  
25 indicate which specific issue or issues satisfy the showing  
26 required by paragraph (2).

27 If a court denies a petitioner's petition, the court may only issue a certificate of  
28 appealability "if jurists of reason could disagree with the district court's resolution of his  
constitutional claims or that jurists could conclude the issues presented are adequate to  
deserve encouragement to proceed further." *Miller-El*, 123 S.Ct. at 1034; *Slack v.*  
*McDaniel*, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000). While the petitioner is not required to prove the  
merits of his case, he must demonstrate "something more than the absence of frivolity or  
the existence of mere good faith on his . . . part." *Miller-El*, 123 S.Ct. at 1040.

In the present case, the Court finds that reasonable jurists would not find debatable  
or wrong the Court's determination that Petitioner is not entitled to federal habeas corpus

1 relief, nor would they find him deserving of encouragement to proceed further. Petitioner  
2 has not made the required substantial showing of the denial of a constitutional right.  
3 Accordingly, the Court hereby DECLINES to issue a certificate of appealability.

4 **ORDER**

5 Accordingly, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that:

- 6 1. The Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus is DISMISSED with prejudice;  
7 2. The Clerk of Court is DIRECTED to enter judgment; and  
8 3. The Court DECLINES to issue a certificate of appealability.

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16 IT IS SO ORDERED.

17 Dated: July 21, 2010

18 /s/ Michael J. Seng  
19 UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE  
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