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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

| | | |
|---------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| KENNETH P. DESILVA, |) | 1:11-cv-00263-LJO-SKO-HC |
| |) | |
| Petitioner, |) | FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO |
| |) | DISMISS THE PETITION WITHOUT |
| v. |) | LEAVE TO AMEND FOR FAILURE TO |
| |) | STATE A CLAIM COGNIZABLE PURSUANT |
| |) | TO 28 U.S.C. § 2254 (DOC. 1) |
| K. ALLISON, Warden, |) | |
| |) | FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO |
| Respondent. |) | DECLINE TO ISSUE A CERTIFICATE OF |
| |) | APPEALABILITY AND TO DIRECT THE |
| |) | CLERK TO CLOSE THE CASE |

**DEADLINE FOR OBJECTIONS:
THIRTY (30) DAYS**

Petitioner is a state prisoner proceeding pro se and in forma pauperis with a petition for writ of habeas corpus pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2254. The matter has been referred to the Magistrate Judge pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1) and Local Rules 302 and 304. Pending before the Court is the petition, which was filed on February 17, 2011.

I. Screening the Petition

Rule 4 of the Rules Governing § 2254 Cases in the United States District Courts (Habeas Rules) requires the Court to make a preliminary review of each petition for writ of habeas corpus.

1 The Court must summarily dismiss a petition "[i]f it plainly
2 appears from the petition and any attached exhibits that the
3 petitioner is not entitled to relief in the district court...."
4 Habeas Rule 4; O'Bremski v. Maass, 915 F.2d 418, 420 (9th Cir.
5 1990); see also Hendricks v. Vasquez, 908 F.2d 490 (9th Cir.
6 1990). Habeas Rule 2(c) requires that a petition 1) specify all
7 grounds of relief available to the Petitioner; 2) state the facts
8 supporting each ground; and 3) state the relief requested.
9 Notice pleading is not sufficient; rather, the petition must
10 state facts that point to a real possibility of constitutional
11 error. Rule 4, Advisory Committee Notes, 1976 Adoption;
12 O'Bremski v. Maass, 915 F.2d at 420 (quoting Blackledge v.
13 Allison, 431 U.S. 63, 75 n. 7 (1977)). Allegations in a petition
14 that are vague, conclusory, or palpably incredible are subject to
15 summary dismissal. Hendricks v. Vasquez, 908 F.2d 490, 491 (9th
16 Cir. 1990).

17 Further, the Court may dismiss a petition for writ of habeas
18 corpus either on its own motion under Habeas Rule 4, pursuant to
19 the respondent's motion to dismiss, or after an answer to the
20 petition has been filed. Advisory Committee Notes to Habeas Rule
21 8, 1976 Adoption; see, Herbst v. Cook, 260 F.3d 1039, 1042-43
22 (9th Cir. 2001).

23 Petitioner is an inmate of the California Substance Abuse
24 Treatment Facility (CSATF) at Corcoran, California, serving a
25 sentence of fifteen years to life imposed by the Monterey County
26 Superior Court in 1993 pursuant to Petitioner's conviction of
27 second degree murder with the use of a firearm. (Pet. 1.)
28 Petitioner challenges the decision of California's Board of

1 Parole Hearings (BPH) made after a hearing held on October 26,
2 2009, in which Petitioner was found unsuitable for parole for a
3 period of three years. (Pet 6-7, 35, 106-23.) Petitioner raises
4 the following claims: 1) use of "Marcy's Law" to impose a three-
5 year period of denial constitutes an ex post facto law because it
6 increased Petitioner's maximum release date by over two and one-
7 half years; 2) denial of parole for three years constituted
8 double jeopardy because Petitioner was in effect re-sentenced
9 with a more distant release date than had been calculated
10 earlier; and 3) the denial of parole was not supported by any
11 evidence indicating that Petitioner presented or presents an
12 unreasonable risk of danger to the public safety in view of
13 Petitioner's record, rehabilitation, vocational attributes, and
14 low potential for future violence. (Pet. 6-8.)

15 I. Failure to State a Cognizable Ex Post Facto Claim

16 Because the petition was filed after April 24, 1996, the
17 effective date of the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty
18 Act of 1996 (AEDPA), the AEDPA applies in this proceeding. Lindh
19 v. Murphy, 521 U.S. 320, 327 (1997), cert. denied, 522 U.S. 1008
20 (1997); Furman v. Wood, 190 F.3d 1002, 1004 (9th Cir. 1999).

21 A district court may entertain a petition for a writ of
22 habeas corpus by a person in custody pursuant to the judgment of
23 a state court only on the ground that the custody is in violation
24 of the Constitution, laws, or treaties of the United States. 28
25 U.S.C. §§ 2254(a), 2241(c)(3); Williams v. Taylor, 529 U.S. 362,
26 375 n.7 (2000); Wilson v. Corcoran, 562 U.S. -, -, 131 S.Ct. 13,
27 16 (2010) (per curiam).

28 Petitioner alleges that his parole was denied for three

1 years based on the application of "Marcy's Law" (pet. 7). The
2 Court understands this to be a reference to California's
3 Proposition 9, the "Victims' Bill of Rights Act of 2008: Marsy's
4 Law," which on November 4, 2008, effected an amendment of Cal.
5 Pen. Code § 3041.5(b) (3) that resulted in a lengthening of the
6 period between parole suitability hearings.

7 Before Proposition 9 was enacted, Cal. Pen. Code
8 § 3041.5(b) (2) provided that the suitability hearings would
9 generally occur every year, but could occur every two years in
10 cases in which the board found that it was not reasonable to
11 expect parole would be granted in a year and stated the bases for
12 the finding, or every five years if the prisoner had been
13 convicted of murder and the board found that it was not
14 reasonable to expect parole to be granted during the following
15 years and stated the bases for the finding in writing. Cal. Pen.
16 Code § 3041.5(b) (2) (2008); Gilman v. Schwarzenegger, - F.3d -,
17 No. 10-15471, 2011 WL 198435, at *2 (9th Cir. Jan. 24, 2011).
18 Proposition 9 amended Cal. Pen. Code § 3041.5(b) (3) to provide
19 that future parole suitability hearings should be scheduled in
20 fifteen years, ten years, or three, five, or seven-year intervals
21 years unless the board finds by clear and convincing evidence
22 that statutory criteria relevant to release and the safety of the
23 victim and public did not require the greater period of continued
24 imprisonment. Cal. Pen. Code § 3041.5(b) (3) (2010); Gilman v.
25 Schwarzenegger, 2011 WL 198435 at *2.

26 In addition, Proposition 9 amended the law concerning parole
27 deferral periods by authorizing the Board to advance a hearing
28 date in its discretion either sua sponte or at the request of the

1 Petitioner. § 3041.5(b), (d); Gilman v. Schwarzenegger, 2011 WL
2 198435, at *6.

3 The Constitution provides, "No State shall... pass any... ex
4 post facto Law." U.S. Const. art I, § 10. The Ex Post Facto
5 Clause prohibits any law which: 1) makes an act done before the
6 passing of the law, which was innocent when done, criminal; 2)
7 aggravates a crime and makes it greater than it was when it was
8 committed; 3) changes the punishment and inflicts a greater
9 punishment for the crime than when it was committed; or 4) alters
10 the legal rules of evidence and requires less or different
11 testimony to convict the defendant than was required at the time
12 the crime was committed. Carmell v. Texas, 529 U.S. 513, 522
13 (2000). Application of a state regulation retroactively to a
14 defendant violates the Ex Post Facto Clause if the new
15 regulations create a "sufficient risk" of increasing the
16 punishment for the defendant's crimes. Himes v. Thompson, 336
17 F.3d 848, 854 (9th Cir. 2003) (citing Cal. Department of
18 Corrections v. Morales, 514 U.S. 499, 509 (1995)). When the rule
19 or statute does not by its own terms show a significant risk, the
20 petitioner must demonstrate, by evidence drawn from the rule's
21 practical implementation by the agency charged with exercising
22 discretion, that its retroactive application will result in a
23 longer period of incarceration than under the earlier rule.
24 Garner v. Jones, 529 U.S. 244, 250, 255 (2000).

25 Previous amendments to Cal. Pen. Code § 3041.5, which
26 initiated longer periods of time between parole suitability
27 hearings, have been upheld against challenges that they violated
28 the Ex Post Facto Clause. See, e.g., California Department of

1 Corrections v. Morales, 514 U.S. 499, 509 (1995) (where the great
2 majority of prisoners were found unsuitable, a 1982 increase of
3 the maximum period for deferring hearings to five years for
4 offenders who had committed multiple homicides only altered the
5 method of setting a parole release date and did not result in a
6 sufficient risk of increasing the punishment or measure of
7 punishment for the crime in the absence of modification of
8 punishment or of the standards for determining either the initial
9 date for parole eligibility or an inmate's suitability for
10 parole); Watson v. Estelle, 886 F.2d 1093, 1097-98 (9th Cir.
11 1989) (finding no ex post facto violation in applying amended
12 Cal. Pen. Code § 3041.5(b)(2)(A), permitting delay of suitability
13 hearings for several years, to prisoners sentenced to a life term
14 before California's Determinate Sentencing Law was implemented in
15 1977 who otherwise would have been entitled to periodic review of
16 suitability).

17 Similarly, it has been held that a state law permitting the
18 extension of intervals between parole consideration hearings for
19 all prisoners serving life sentences from three to eight years
20 did not violate the Ex Post Facto Clause where expedited parole
21 review was available upon a change of circumstances or receipt of
22 new information warranting an earlier review, and where there was
23 no showing of increased punishment. Under such circumstances,
24 there was no significant risk of extending a prisoner's
25 incarceration. Garner v. Jones, 529 U.S. 244, 249 (2000). The
26 Court recognized that state parole authorities retain broad
27 discretion concerning release and must have flexibility in
28 formulating parole procedures and addressing problems associated

1 with confinement and release. Garner v. Jones, 529 U.S. 244,
2 252-53. Inherent in the discretionary nature of a grant of
3 parole is the need to permit changes in the manner in which the
4 discretion is "informed and then exercised." Garner v. Jones,
5 529 U.S. at 253. Further, the timing of the hearings in Garner
6 depended in part on the parole authority's determination of the
7 likelihood of a future grant of parole. Thus, the result was
8 that parole resources were put to better use, which in turn
9 increased the likelihood of release. Id. at 254. In Garner, the
10 matter was remanded for further proceedings to determine the risk
11 of increased punishment.

12 In Gilman v. Schwarzenegger, - F.3d -, No. 10-15471, 2011 WL
13 198435, at *2 (9th Cir. Jan. 24, 2011), the Ninth Circuit
14 reversed a grant of injunctive relief to plaintiffs in a class
15 action seeking to prevent the BPH from enforcing Proposition 9's
16 amendments that defer parole consideration. The court concluded
17 that the plaintiffs were not likely to succeed on their claim on
18 the merits. Id. at *1, *3-*8. In Gilman, there was no evidence
19 concerning whether or not more frequent parole hearings would
20 result in more frequent grants of parole, as distinct from
21 denials. Id. at *3. Although the changes wrought by Proposition
22 9 were noted to be more extensive than those before the Court in
23 Morales and Garner, advanced hearings, which would remove any
24 possibility of harm, were available upon a change in
25 circumstances or new information. Id. at *6. In the absence of
26 record facts from which it might be inferred that Proposition 9
27 created a significant risk of prolonging the plaintiffs'
28 incarceration, the plaintiffs had not established a likelihood of

1 success on the merits on the ex post facto claim. Id. at *8.

2 Here, Petitioner has not alleged facts warranting a
3 different conclusion. The board concluded that Petitioner posed
4 an unreasonable risk of danger if released, and that denial was
5 for three years, the minimum they could give under Proposition 9.
6 To be found suitable, however, Petitioner would have to stop
7 minimizing his conduct in committing the commitment offense, gain
8 understanding and insight into the factors that caused his
9 conduct, overcome uncontrolled hostility and paranoia, improve
10 his coping skills, obtain a GED, engage in further self-help and
11 therapy, gain understanding of why he used alcohol, and make a
12 full relapse-prevention plan. (Pet. 106-20.)

13 The Court may take judicial notice of court records. Fed.
14 R. Evid. 201(b); United States v. Bernal-Obeso, 989 F.2d 331, 333
15 (9th Cir. 1993); Valerio v. Boise Cascade Corp., 80 F.R.D. 626,
16 635 n.1 (N.D. Cal. 1978), aff'd, 645 F.2d 699 (9th Cir. 1981).

17 The Court takes judicial notice of the docket and specified
18 orders in the class action Gilman v. Fisher, 2:05-cv-00830-LKK-
19 GGH, which is pending in this Court, including the order granting
20 motion for class certification filed on March 4, 2009. (Doc. 182,
21 9:7-15.) This indicates that the Gilman class is made up of
22 California state prisoners who 1) have been sentenced to a term
23 that includes life, 2) are serving sentences that include the
24 possibility of parole, 3) are eligible for parole, and 4) have
25 been denied parole on one or more occasions. The docket further
26 reflects that the Ninth Circuit affirmed the order certifying the
27 class. (Docs. 257, 258.) The Court also takes judicial notice
28 of the order of March 4, 2009, in which the court described the

1 case as including challenges to Proposition 9's amendments to
2 Cal. Pen. Code § 3041.5 based on the Ex Post Facto Clause, and a
3 request for injunctive and declaratory relief against
4 implementation of the changes. (Doc. 182, 5-6.)

5 The relief Petitioner seeks in this petition concerns in
6 part the future scheduling of Petitioner's next suitability
7 hearing and the invalidation of state procedures used to deny
8 parole suitability, matters removed from the fact or duration of
9 confinement. Such types of claims have been held to be
10 cognizable under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 as claims concerning conditions
11 of confinement. Wilkinson v. Dotson, 544 U.S. 74, 82 (2005).
12 Thus, they may fall outside the core of habeas corpus relief.
13 See, Preiser v. Rodriguez, 411 U.S. 475, 485-86 (1973); Nelson v.
14 Campbell, 541 U.S. 637, 643 (2004); Muhammad v. Close, 540 U.S.
15 749, 750 (2004).

16 Further, the relief Petitioner requests overlaps with the
17 relief requested in the Gilman class action. It is established
18 that a plaintiff who is a member of a class action for equitable
19 relief from prison conditions may not maintain an individual suit
20 for equitable relief concerning the same subject matter.
21 Crawford v. Bell, 599 F.2d 890, 891-92 (9th Cir. 1979). This is
22 because it is contrary to the efficient and orderly
23 administration of justice for a court to proceed with an action
24 that would possibly conflict with or interfere with the
25 determination of relief in another pending action, which is
26 proceeding and in which the class has been certified.

27 Here, Petitioner's own allegations reflect that he qualifies
28 as a member of the class in Gilman. The court in Gilman has

1 jurisdiction over same subject matter and may grant the same
2 relief. A court has inherent power to control its docket and the
3 disposition of its cases with economy of time and effort for both
4 the court and the parties. Landis v. North American Co., 299
5 U.S. 248, 254-255 (1936); Ferdik v. Bonzelet, 963 F.2d 1258, 1260
6 (9th Cir. 1992). In the exercise of its inherent discretion,
7 this Court concludes that dismissal of Petitioner's ex post facto
8 claim in this action is appropriate and necessary to avoid
9 interference with the orderly administration of justice. Cf.,
10 Crawford v. Bell, 599 F.2d 890, 892-93; see Bryant v. Haviland,
11 2011 WL 23064, *2-*5 (E.D.Cal. Jan. 4, 2011).

12 A petition for habeas corpus should not be dismissed without
13 leave to amend unless it appears that no tenable claim for relief
14 can be pleaded were such leave granted. Jarvis v. Nelson, 440
15 F.2d 13, 14 (9th Cir. 1971). In view of the allegations of the
16 petition and the pendency of the Gilman class action, amendment
17 of the petition with respect to the ex post facto claim would be
18 futile and unproductive.

19 Accordingly, it will be recommended that the ex post facto
20 claim be dismissed without leave to amend.

21 III. Failure to State a Cognizable Double Jeopardy Claim

22 The Double Jeopardy Clause of the Fifth Amendment protects
23 against not only a second prosecution for the same offense after
24 acquittal or conviction, but also multiple punishments for the
25 same offense. U.S. Const. amend V; Witte v. United States, 515
26 U.S. 389, 395-96 (1995). However, the clause does not require
27 that a "sentence be given a degree of finality that prevents its
28 later increase." United States v. DiFrancesco, 449 U.S. 117, 137

1 (1980). An acquittal and a sentence are critically different.
2 Id. Thus, there is no double jeopardy protection against
3 revocation of probation or parole with imposition of
4 imprisonment. Id. at 137.

5 Likewise, the denial of parole is neither punishment nor
6 imposition or increase of a sentence for double jeopardy
7 purposes; rather, it is an administrative decision to withhold
8 early release. Mahn v. Gunter, 978 F.2d 599, 602 n.7 (10th Cir.
9 1992); Alessi v. Quinlan, 711 F.2d 497, 501 (2d Cir. 1983); Roach
10 v. Board of Pardons and Paroles, State of Arkansas, 503 F.2d
11 1367, 1368 (8th Cir. 1974); United States ex rel. Jacobs v. Barc,
12 141 F.2d 480, 483 (6th Cir. 1944). It is established that the
13 Double Jeopardy Clause does not provide the defendant with the
14 right to know at any specific point in time what the precise
15 limit of his punishment will eventually turn out to be. United
16 States v. DiFrancesco, 499 U.S. at 137.

17 Pursuant to California's sentencing scheme, when a prisoner
18 receives an indeterminate sentence, such as fifteen years to
19 life, the indeterminate sentence is in legal effect a sentence
20 for the maximum term, subject only to the power of the parole
21 authority to set a lesser term; parole is an entirely
22 discretionary matter. Hayward v. Marshall, 603 F.3d 546, 558,
23 561-62 (9th Cir. 2010), overruled on other grounds in Swarthout
24 v. Cooke, 562 U.S. -, 131 S.Ct. 859 (2011). Probation and parole
25 are parts of the original sentence that must be anticipated by a
26 prisoner. United States v. Brown, 59 F.3d 102, 104-05 (9th Cir.
27 1995).

28 Here, Petitioner alleges generally that the denial of his

1 parole violated his rights against double jeopardy. (Pet. 6.)
2 However, Petitioner alleges that he was sentenced to a term of
3 fifteen (15) years to life. (Pet. 6-7.) Thus, the Double
4 Jeopardy Clause was not implicated in the denial of Petitioner's
5 parole.

6 Because it is clear that Petitioner was sentenced to a term
7 that included imprisonment for life, Petitioner could not allege
8 facts to constitute a cognizable claim that the denial of parole
9 violated the Double Jeopardy Clause of the Fifth Amendment, as
10 made binding on the states through the Fourteenth Amendment.
11 Accordingly, this claim should be dismissed without leave to
12 amend.

13 IV. Failure to State a Cognizable Due Process Claim

14 Petitioner alleges that the board's denial of his parole was
15 a denial of his Fourteenth Amendment right to due process of law
16 because numerous suitability factors supported his release, the
17 board failed to articulate evidence to support a rational
18 conclusion that Petitioner posed an unreasonable risk of danger
19 to the public, and the decision was not supported by the
20 requisite modicum of evidence of unsuitability. (Pet. 6-8.)

21 Reference to the transcript of the parole suitability
22 hearing held on October 26, 2009, reflects that Petitioner was
23 present throughout the hearing and made a statement to the board.
24 (Pet. 35-99, 103-04.) Further, Petitioner's attorney was also
25 present and made a statement. (Pet. 38, 99-103.) Petitioner and
26 counsel had an opportunity to review Petitioner's central file
27 and previous transcripts before the hearing. (Pet. 42.) After
28 it made its decision, the board explained to Petitioner that it

1 had denied parole for three years because Petitioner posed an
2 unreasonable risk of danger if released based on the commitment
3 offense, Petitioner's minimization of his responsibility and role
4 in the offense, his limited insight, and his incomplete course of
5 self-help and therapy. (Pet. 106-23.)

6 The Supreme Court has characterized as reasonable the
7 decision of the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit that
8 California law creates a liberty interest in parole protected by
9 the Fourteenth Amendment Due Process Clause, which in turn
10 requires fair procedures with respect to the liberty interest.

11 Swarthout v. Cooke, 562 U.S. -, 131 S.Ct. 859, 861-62 (2011).

12 However, the procedures required for a parole determination are
13 the minimal requirements set forth in Greenholtz v. Inmates of
14 Neb. Penal and Correctional Complex, 442 U.S. 1, 12 (1979).¹

15 Swarthout v. Cooke, 131 S.Ct. 859, 862. In Swarthout, the Court
16 rejected inmates' claims that they were denied a liberty interest
17 because there was an absence of "some evidence" to support the
18 decision to deny parole. The Court stated:

19 There is no right under the Federal Constitution

20
21 ¹In Greenholtz, the Court held that a formal hearing is not required
22 with respect to a decision concerning granting or denying discretionary
23 parole; it is sufficient to permit the inmate to have an opportunity to be
24 heard and to be given a statement of reasons for the decision made. Id. at
25 16. The decision maker is not required to state the evidence relied upon in
26 coming to the decision. Id. at 15-16. The Court reasoned that because there
27 is no constitutional or inherent right of a convicted person to be released
28 conditionally before expiration of a valid sentence, the liberty interest in
discretionary parole is only conditional and thus differs from the liberty
interest of a parolee. Id. at 9. Further, the discretionary decision to
release one on parole does not involve retrospective factual determinations,
as in disciplinary proceedings in prison; instead, it is generally more
discretionary and predictive, and thus procedures designed to elicit specific
facts are unnecessary. Id. at 13. In Greenholtz, the Court held that due
process was satisfied where the inmate received a statement of reasons for the
decision and had an effective opportunity to insure that the records being
considered were his records, and to present any special considerations
demonstrating why he was an appropriate candidate for parole. Id. at 15.

1 to be conditionally released before the expiration of
2 a valid sentence, and the States are under no duty
3 to offer parole to their prisoners. (Citation omitted.)
4 When however, a State creates a liberty interest,
5 the Due Process Clause requires fair procedures for its
6 vindication-and federal courts will review the
7 application of those constitutionally required procedures.
8 In the context of parole, we have held that the procedures
9 required are minimal. In Greenholtz, we found
10 that a prisoner subject to a parole statute similar
11 to California's received adequate process when he
12 was allowed an opportunity to be heard and was provided
13 a statement of the reasons why parole was denied.
14 (Citation omitted.)

15 Swarthout, 131 S.Ct. 859, 862. The Court concluded that the
16 petitioners had received the process that was due:

17 They were allowed to speak at their parole hearings
18 and to contest the evidence against them, were afforded
19 access to their records in advance, and were notified
20 as to the reasons why parole was denied....

21 That should have been the beginning and the end of
22 the federal habeas courts' inquiry into whether
23 [the petitioners] received due process.

24 Swarthout, 131 S.Ct. at 862. The Court in Swarthout expressly
25 noted that California's "some evidence" rule is not a substantive
26 federal requirement, and correct application of California's
27 "some evidence" standard is not required by the federal Due
28 Process Clause. Id. at 862-63.

29 Petitioner asks this Court to engage in the very type of
30 analysis foreclosed by Swarthout. Petitioner does not state
31 facts that point to a real possibility of constitutional error or
32 that otherwise would entitle Petitioner to habeas relief because
33 California's "some evidence" requirement is not a substantive
34 federal requirement. Review of the record for "some evidence" to
35 support the denial of parole is not within the scope of this
36 Court's habeas review under 28 U.S.C. § 2254. Consideration of
37 Petitioner's more specific points concerning the suitability

1 factors in his case would amount to undertaking the very analysis
2 disapproved by the Court in Swarthout.

3 Petitioner cites state law concerning the appropriate weight
4 to be given to evidence. To the extent that Petitioner's claim
5 rests on state law, it is not cognizable on federal habeas
6 corpus. Federal habeas relief is not available to retry a state
7 issue that does not rise to the level of a federal constitutional
8 violation. Wilson v. Corcoran, 562 U.S. - , 131 S.Ct. 13, 16
9 (2010); Estelle v. McGuire, 502 U.S. 62, 67-68 (1991). Alleged
10 errors in the application of state law are not cognizable in
11 federal habeas corpus. Souch v. Schiavo, 289 F.3d 616, 623 (9th
12 Cir. 2002).

13 It appears from the attachments to Petitioner's petition
14 that Petitioner had an opportunity to review in advance and
15 contest the evidence against him and to speak at the hearing.
16 Further, Petitioner received a statement of the reasons for the
17 decision. Federal due process of law does not require that many
18 letters that were written on behalf of Petitioner be read at the
19 hearing. Thus, Petitioner's allegations concerning the board's
20 failure to read his letters at the hearing do not negate the
21 clear documentary showing that Petitioner received all process
22 that was due under the circumstances.

23 The Court, therefore, concludes that Petitioner cannot state
24 facts constituting a cognizable due process claim in connection
25 with the denial of his parole. Accordingly, the Court will
26 recommend that Petitioner's due process claim be dismissed
27 without leave to amend.

28 ///

1 V. Certificate of Appealability

2 Unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of
3 appealability, an appeal may not be taken to the Court of Appeals
4 from the final order in a habeas proceeding in which the
5 detention complained of arises out of process issued by a state
6 court. 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(1)(A); Miller-El v. Cockrell, 537
7 U.S. 322, 336 (2003). A certificate of appealability may issue
8 only if the applicant makes a substantial showing of the denial
9 of a constitutional right. § 2253(c)(2). Under this standard, a
10 petitioner must show that reasonable jurists could debate whether
11 the petition should have been resolved in a different manner or
12 that the issues presented were adequate to deserve encouragement
13 to proceed further. Miller-El v. Cockrell, 537 U.S. at 336
14 (quoting Slack v. McDaniel, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000)). A
15 certificate should issue if the Petitioner shows that jurists of
16 reason would find it debatable whether the petition states a
17 valid claim of the denial of a constitutional right and that
18 jurists of reason would find it debatable whether the district
19 court was correct in any procedural ruling. Slack v. McDaniel,
20 529 U.S. 473, 483-84 (2000). In determining this issue, a court
21 conducts an overview of the claims in the habeas petition,
22 generally assesses their merits, and determines whether the
23 resolution was debatable among jurists of reason or wrong. Id.
24 It is necessary for an applicant to show more than an absence of
25 frivolity or the existence of mere good faith; however, it is not
26 necessary for an applicant to show that the appeal will succeed.
27 Miller-El v. Cockrell, 537 U.S. at 338.

28 A district court must issue or deny a certificate of

1 appealability when it enters a final order adverse to the
2 applicant. Rule 11(a) of the Rules Governing Section 2254 Cases.

3 Here, it does not appear that reasonable jurists could
4 debate whether the petition should have been resolved in a
5 different manner. Petitioner has not made a substantial showing
6 of the denial of a constitutional right. Accordingly, the Court
7 should decline to issue a certificate of appealability.

8 VI. Recommendations

9 Accordingly, it is RECOMMENDED that:

10 1) The petition for writ of habeas corpus be DISMISSED
11 without leave to amend for failure to state a claim cognizable
12 pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2254; and

13 2) The Court DECLINE to issue a certificate of
14 appealability; and

15 3) The Clerk be DIRECTED to close the action because the
16 dismissal will terminate the action.

17 These findings and recommendations are submitted to the
18 United States District Court Judge assigned to the case, pursuant
19 to the provisions of 28 U.S.C. § 636 (b) (1) (B) and Rule 304 of
20 the Local Rules of Practice for the United States District Court,
21 Eastern District of California. Within thirty (30) days after
22 being served with a copy, any party may file written objections
23 with the Court and serve a copy on all parties. Such a document
24 should be captioned "Objections to Magistrate Judge's Findings
25 and Recommendations." Replies to the objections shall be served
26 and filed within fourteen (14) days (plus three (3) days if
27 served by mail) after service of the objections. The Court will
28 then review the Magistrate Judge's ruling pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §

1 636 (b) (1) (C). The parties are advised that failure to file
2 objections within the specified time may waive the right to
3 appeal the District Court's order. Martinez v. Ylst, 951 F.2d
4 1153 (9th Cir. 1991).

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6 IT IS SO ORDERED.

7 **Dated:** April 6, 2011

/s/ Sheila K. Oberto
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

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