

3. The Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus is **DISMISSED WITH PREJUDICE** and without an evidentiary hearing;

4. There is no probable cause to issue a certificate of appealability³; and

5. The Clerk of Court is directed to **CLOSE** the case.

It is so **ORDERED**.

BY THE COURT:

/s/Cynthia M. Rufe

CYNTHIA M. RUFÉ, J.

In asserting a claim that counsel was constitutionally ineffective, a petitioner must establish that “counsel’s representation fell below an objective standard of reasonableness” and that petitioner was prejudiced as a result. *Strickland v. Washington*, 466 U.S. 668, 687-88 (1984). When the state court has squarely addressed the issue of counsel’s representation, “[t]he pivotal question is whether the state court’s application of the *Strickland* standard was unreasonable,” which “is different from asking whether defense counsel’s performance fell below *Strickland*’s standard.” *Grant v. Lockett*, 709 F.3d 224, 231-32 (3d Cir. 2013) (quoting *Harrington v. Richter*, 131 S. Ct. 770, 785 (2011)). Federal habeas courts must “take a highly deferential look at counsel’s performance” under *Strickland*, “through the deferential lens of § 2254(d).” *Id.* at 232 (internal quotation omitted). In applying this doubly deferential standard, the Court cannot conclude that the state court’s application of *Strickland* was unreasonable, particularly in light of the credibility findings made after a full hearing in the PCRA court, and agrees with the thorough analysis set forth in the R&R.

³ Petitioner has not made a substantial showing of the denial of a constitutional right; there is no basis for concluding that “reasonable jurists could debate whether . . . the petition should have been resolved in a different manner or that the issues presented were adequate to deserve encouragement to proceed further.” *Slack v. McDaniel*, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000) (internal citation omitted).