

**INDETERMINATE SENTENCE PAROLE RELEASE REVIEW**  
(Penal Code Section 3041.2)

**RAUL HIGGINS, P-29949**  
Second Degree Murder

**AFFIRM:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MODIFY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**REVERSE:** \_\_\_\_\_   X   \_\_\_\_\_

**STATEMENT OF FACTS**

In 1998, Raul Higgins went to his ex-girlfriend's house, spoke with her, then drove her two children to school. When he returned to her house, they argued, and he strangled her to death.

**DECISION**

I acknowledge Mr. Higgins has made efforts to improve himself in prison. He has participated in self-help programming, including Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and Victim Impact. He has been disciplined once in prison and has received staff commendations for his positive behavior. He earned an associate degree and completed vocational training. I commend Mr. Higgins for taking these positive steps. However, these factors are outweighed by negative factors that demonstrate he remains unsuitable for parole at this time.

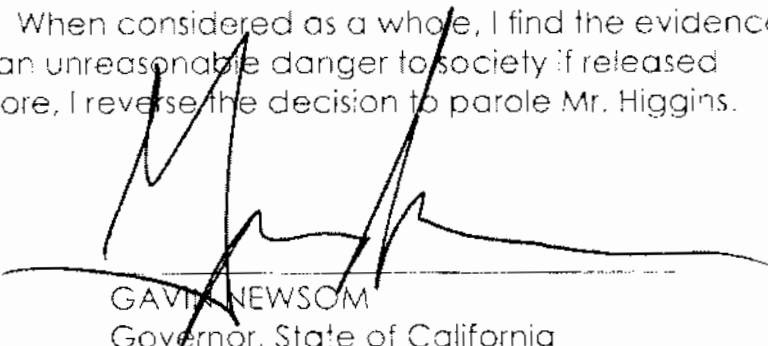
Mr. Higgins's insight into the factors that led him to commit this crime is insufficient. Mr. Higgins told the psychologist that he felt "entitled" to women and viewed them as "possessions," had resentment toward his mother, and felt rejected by the victim. Mr. Higgins added that he has only recently identified desperation and fear of rejection and abandonment as motivators for his violent behavior in the past. At his 2019 parole hearing, Mr. Higgins reported that rejection still makes him feel "very uncomfortable," and that he is still "triggered" and "hurt" by rejection. It appears that Mr. Higgins is still developing his insight into these critical factors that drove him to violently attack his ex-girlfriend. I believe Mr. Higgins must demonstrate a more comprehensive understanding of the causative factors that led him to commit this crime before he can be safely released.

I also have concerns about Mr. Higgins's history of substance abuse and ability to engage in healthy intimate relationships. According to the psychologist who evaluated Mr. Higgins in 2019, Mr. Higgins's "history of relationship problems and substance abuse problems continue to warrant highly relevant concern." Mr. Higgins told the Board he believes his use of Xanax, which he was abusing around the time of the crime, "may have clouded" his decision making. Mr. Higgins told the psychologist that he knows it is likely he may be in another romantic relationship in the future. I am concerned that Mr. Higgins has not yet developed sufficient tools to deal with the stressors in the community that led him to abuse substances and lash out against his ex-girlfriend. I encourage Mr. Higgins to continue to participate in self-help programs to develop a deeper understanding of the risk factors identified by the psychologist so that he can be safely released in the future.

### CONCLUSION

I have considered the evidence in the record that is relevant to whether Mr. Higgins is currently dangerous. When considered as a whole, I find the evidence shows that he currently poses an unreasonable danger to society if released from prison at this time. Therefore, I reverse the decision to parole Mr. Higgins.

Decision Date:  
October 8, 2019



GAVIN NEWSOM  
Governor, State of California

