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Parole Denied to Strike Offender Ronald Ricks
CDC #D07543; Court Case Number SC078288A

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced the California Board of Parole Hearings (BPH) denied release to strike offender Ronald Ricks. On January 23, 2024, BPH found that Ricks continues to pose a current and unreasonable risk to public safety. Representing the District Attorney's Office was Deputy District Attorney Gina Nargie.

At the time of his life crime, Ricks was on parole after serving a 19-year prison sentence for forcible rape and forcible oral copulation at knife point. On May 14, 1999, a law enforcement officer observed Ricks speeding on Highway 178. When the officer attempted to pull Ricks over for speeding, a high-speed chase ensued. Ricks accelerated to speeds over 100mph and swerved in and out of all three lanes of traffic. The high-speed pursuit continued at "M" Street with Ricks driving at 70-80mph on surface streets. At one point during the pursuit, Ricks drove on the sidewalk at "G" Street and continued to run multiple stop signs at high rates of speed. On Elm Street, Ricks' vehicle became disabled, and he fled from law enforcement on foot.

On November 9, 1999, a Kern County Jury found Ricks guilty of one count of felony evading a peace officer and one count of misdemeanor driving on a suspended license. The court found true that Ricks had suffered three prior convictions that qualified under the three-strikes law in California. On December 13, 1999, a Kern County Judge sentenced him to 25 years to life.

On January 23, 2024, the BPH focused on Ricks' institutional behavior. The focus was on his compliance with supervision and authority. In addition, the Board addressed continued concerns related to impulsivity and criminal thinking. Furthermore, the BPH found that Ricks needed to engage in additional programming related to sex offender treatment and criminal thinking before his next parole hearing.

The Kern County District Attorney's Office asked the BPH to deny parole. BPH has the option of denying an inmate parole for a period of 15, 10, 7, 5 or 3 years. Ricks' commissioners issued a three-year denial. As such, Ricks' next parole hearing date could potentially be in 18 months.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented; “It’s important that those who display violent patterns, especially multiple strike offenders, remain behind bars. This parole decision is a win for our community.”