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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Yolo DA Attends Three Lifer Hearings Across the State
Each of the inmates were denied parole**

(Woodland, CA) – April 18, 2019 District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced that on Wednesday, April 17, 2019, three Yolo County prosecutors attended lifer parole hearings in three separate prisons across the state. The Yolo County District Attorney averages less than one lifer hearing a month so having three in a single day is unprecedented.

Convicted murderer Kenneth Buffer was denied parole for a period of five years at Folsom Prison in Sacramento, CA. In March of 1995, Buffer and his co-defendant, Michael Andre Todd, attacked the victim, James Williams, at a home in West Sacramento. Buffer, now 56 years of age, lived in Sacramento at the time. During the trial, witnesses testified that Williams owed Buffer and Todd \$10,000 as a result of drug deal. Buffer severely beat Williams and Todd burned him with a knife that had been heated on a stove. They also poured a caustic liquid on Williams' body which caused severe burns. Buffer later drove Williams, who was nearly dead, to his friends house where he was abandoned in the back seat of his own car. Williams died days later after being taken to the hospital. After the jury convicted both Buffer and Todd, the trial judge sentenced Buffer to 25-years-to-life in prison for the murder. Buffer will be eligible for another hearing in five years but he is eligible to advance that date. The hearing was attended by Chief Deputy District Attorney Jonathan Raven.

Kenneth Smith, who was convicted of murder in September 2000, was denied parole at CSP Solano in Vacaville, CA. Assistant Chief Steve Mount attended this hearing on behalf of the District Attorney's Office. Smith, now 43 years of age, lived in Sacramento at the time. On October 27, 1998, Mr. Smith was despondent over the break up of the

relationship with his girlfriend and mother of his young child. He threatened suicide, talked of driving his car into the river and ultimately tried to end his life by running his car in the closed garage of their Sacramento home. When his girlfriend foiled his attempt by opening the door, he sexually assaulted her in the garage in front of their young child and then drove off, ultimately crossing the Freeport Bridge and turning onto South River Rd. in Yolo County. As Smith was driving southbound at approximately 5:30 a.m., the victim, Bryan Tenney, was driving in his truck northbound, headed into work. Smith intentionally crossed the center line colliding head-on with the victim's work truck. Mr. Tenney was killed as a result of the collision, leaving behind a wife and two sons. When paramedics pulled Smith from the car, he stated that "I was trying to do suicide." The commissioners from the Board of Prison Hearings found that Mr. Smith needed to do more work in exploring the root causes of his domestic violence and impulsive behavior before he could be found to no longer be a danger to society. Smith will be eligible for parole in three years.

The final hearing occurred at the Duel Vocational Institute on Tracy, CA where David Cree was denied parole. Assistant Chief Melinda Aiello attended this hearing on behalf of the District Attorney's Office. Cree, now 39 years of age, lived in Sacramento at the time. On October 8, 1999, after a night of drinking, Cree, along with his co-defendant, were driving around with a sawed-off shotgun with plans to search for the individual that had robbed and stabbed them two months prior. While driving in West Sacramento past the Townhouse Motel, Cree saw two individuals, one of whom slightly resembled the robber. Cree pulled over and Gregory Rowen approached the car. Moments later, the co-defendant shot twice striking Rowen and Jimmie Lee Richardson. Richardson died while Rowen survived the gunshots. The commissioners from the Board of Prison Hearings found that Cree lacks insight into his past criminal conduct and that he needs to work on obtaining a better understanding of what caused his life crime. Cree will be eligible for parole in three years.

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