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PAROLE DENIED FOR DEFENDANT IN 1987 MURDER

Santa Cruz District Attorney Jeff Rosell announced today that Juan Torres was denied parole in a hearing held on March 1, 2017 at Solano State Prison. Torres is serving a life sentence for the 1987 murder of Thomas Tacardon. The victim was shot by Torres outside of the Apple Tree Bar in Watsonville, California.

Assistant District Attorney Erika Ziegenhorn argued against the release of Torres, now 76, in his third bid for parole. Also present at the hearing was Tacardon's family member Kyle Barto, who made a passionate plea for the Parole Board to deny Torres' request for parole. Torres has served 26 years of his sentence.

The Parole Board, after reviewing the crime and Torres' progress while incarcerated, found Torres unsuitable for parole. They determined that Torres continues to pose an unreasonable risk to society if released at this time. The Board also determined that Torres had not fully gained any insight into the crime he committed and currently lacks the tools to succeed outside of institutionalized living. Torres will not be eligible for another parole hearing for 3 years.

District Attorney Rosell said, in response to the Board's decision, "Our office is pleased with the Parole Board's decision to keep Juan Torres behind bars. We feel that justice has been served, and Mr. Torres is being held fully accountable for the crime he committed, and our community is safer as a result."