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August 3, 2017

Board of Parole Hearings
Attn: Nonviolent Parole Review Process
P.O. Box 4036
Sacramento, CA 95812-4036

**Re: Inmate Steven Nels Cossel; CDCR AR9841
Ventura County Superior Court Cases 2012045096, 2015035221, 2013024337
Opposition Letter Due to Board of Parole Hearings August 4, 2017**

Dear Board Members:

This letter is written to recommend denial of early parole for inmate Steven Cossel. This recommendation is based upon:

- 1) The inmate's commitment offenses.
- 2) The inmate's significant criminal history.
- 3) The unreasonable risk of violence to the community if the inmate is released early.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE COMMITMENT OFFENSES

Case 2012045096

On November 8, 2012, Elon A. reported that she was inside her daughter's residence babysitting her grandson. The garage door was left open and at approximately 9:12 a.m., she heard a noise in the garage. When she went to the garage, she saw a male leaning into her son-in-law's vehicle that was parked in the garage. When she yelled, the inmate fled, dropping a bag of loose change he had taken from the vehicle.

During the burglary investigation, a second burglary was reported just one block away. The second victim reported that he left his garage door open between 7:45 a.m. and

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9:00 a.m. During that time, his vehicle had been ransacked and a carton of cigarettes valued at \$70 was missing. He also noticed that several storage cabinets had been rifled through.

Detectives interviewed the inmate on December 28, 2012. The inmate admitted he “might have” burglarized the vehicles but said that he was on drugs at the time. A search of the inmate’s vehicle revealed a pack of Doral cigarettes, the same cigarettes taken from one of the victim’s vehicle. The inmate was convicted of two counts of first-degree residential burglary in violation of Penal Code section 459. He was sentenced to four years in prison.

Case 2013024337

On August 4, 2013, at approximately 5:50 a.m., a witness saw the inmate leaning into a tan Chevy. She thought this behavior was suspicious because there was a bicycle laying on the ground right by the vehicle. The witness could hear the inmate rummaging through the vehicle. She contacted police. Before the police arrived, the inmate fled on his bicycle. Responding officers attempted to detain the inmate. The inmate jumped off his bicycle and fled on foot, jumping over a brick wall into a backyard as officers chased him. The inmate was apprehended and arrested.

Along the path the inmate had traveled, officers found a wallet in the roadway with a Ventura High School identification card in the name of another victim whose truck had been burglarized. Yet another victim reported his car had been rummaged through but it was unclear if anything was missing.

The inmate was convicted of second-degree burglary in violation of Penal Code section 459, and was sentenced to two years in prison.

Case 2015035221

On November 4, 2015, during a prowling investigation, the inmate was contacted. A large amount of property was observed inside the trunk of his vehicle and on the ground under the trunk. A search of the inmate’s person revealed a clear plastic bag containing 8.97 grams of methamphetamine. A search of the trunk revealed a magazine pouch with several loose rounds of .38 caliber ammunition, a digital scale, a CD case, camera equipment, and a motorcycle helmet.

A parole search of the inmate’s residence revealed .3 grams of loose black tar heroin, a digital scale, and foil with burnt lines on it. There were also purses, clothing, numerous cell phones, and other miscellaneous items. Inside one of the bedrooms, officers located a

fully loaded .45 caliber semi-automatic unregistered Glock under a pillow on the bed. Two additional loaded magazines and a box of ammunition were also found along with a purse, wallet, and check belonging to another vehicle theft victim. The inmate was convicted of being a felon in possession of ammunition. He was sentenced to five years four months in prison. Over objection by the people, his prior strike was stricken.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

The inmate has an extensive and escalating criminal history, starting at the age of 12. As a juvenile, the inmate had numerous offenses for petty theft and trespassing, vandalism of a school causing almost \$5,000 in damage, residential burglaries, commercial burglaries (including a "beer run" at age 16), and grand theft. The record reflects numerous efforts of the juvenile system to address his antisocial and criminal behavior.

As an adult, nothing seemed to deter the inmate from a life of crime. The inmate amassed the following record:

On January 5, 2001, the inmate was arrested for a violation of Penal Code section 476, check fraud, and was convicted in May 2001 of Penal Code section 648, counterfeiting.

On April 20, 2001, the inmate was arrested for a violation of Health and Safety Code section 11359(a), possession of marijuana for sale. The inmate was found in possession of five plastic bags of marijuana, totaling 13 grams. He also had \$173 in cash. The inmate's probation term was unsuccessful, and in April 2005 he was sentenced to 16 months in prison, concurrent with another case. He paroled on July 3, 2010.

On February 16, 2003, the inmate was arrested for violation of Penal Code section 487(d), grand theft auto. The inmate offered to retrieve a flashlight from the car of an acquaintance and thereby acquired the keys to the vehicle. When the driver returned to the car, both the inmate and the vehicle were missing. The case was handled in the Malibu Superior Court.

On July 20, 2003, the inmate was arrested for a violation of Penal Code section 470(d), forgery. The inmate attempted to cash a \$250 stolen check at a check cashing business. Two weeks prior, he attempted to cash two checks in the amount of \$550. After failing on probation, he was sentenced to 16 months in prison, concurrent with another case.

On August 22, 2004, the inmate was arrested and later convicted for a violation of Vehicle Code section 2800.1(a), evading an officer, and for being under the influence of a controlled substance.

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On February 25, 2005, the inmate was arrested for possession of marijuana for sale. The inmate was found in possession of two marijuana pipes, several plastic bags, and a gram scale. A bag containing 14.76 grams was found under some bushes where the inmate was standing. In May 2005, he was sentenced to 16 months in prison.

On July 21, 2006, the inmate violated his parole by possessing a dangerous weapon in violation of Penal Code section 12020(a)(1).

On April 25, 2007, the inmate was arrested for parole violations, possession of methamphetamine, first-degree burglary, second-degree burglary, attempted second-degree burglary, receiving stolen property, and attempted petty theft. The inmate was in possession of .61 grams of methamphetamine, a briefcase containing a laptop computer, another briefcase with a stack of credit cards, DVD players, MP3 players, navigational devices, tools, stereos speakers, video games, and cell phones. He pled to possession of stolen property and was sentenced to one year four months in prison.

On April 30, 2007, the inmate was arrested for first-degree burglary, two counts of second-degree burglary, and attempted second-degree burglary for multiple vehicle burglaries. In September 2007, he pled guilty to two counts of second-degree burglary with one prison prior, and was sentenced to one year four months in prison.

On June 16, 2009, the inmate was arrested for and later convicted of a violation of Penal Code section 466, possession of burglary tools.

On August 29, 2010, the inmate was arrested for possession of marijuana for sale. During a parole search, the inmate was found to be in possession of 4.3 grams of marijuana, a marijuana pipe, and \$906 in cash. In his backpack were large containers of 56.5 grams of marijuana, a digital scale, and a cell phone with narcotics-related texts. On July 1, 2011, he was sentenced to two years four months in prison.

On July 16, 2011, the inmate was arrested for a violation of Penal Code section 4573.6, possession of controlled substances in jail. While in custody, the inmate swallowed two balloons, one with cut tobacco, and one with methamphetamine. He was sentenced to two years in prison and released on community supervision on September 28, 2012.

Less than a month later, on November 15, 2012, the inmate was arrested for possession for sale of designated substances and being under the influence of a controlled substance. He was given a chance to rehabilitate pursuant to Proposition 36 but he failed to comply with the terms of the program.

On December 28, 2012, the inmate was arrested for first-degree burglary, possession of burglary tools, and possession for sale of designated substances. In November 2013, the inmate pled guilty to residential burglary and was sentenced to four years in prison. He paroled June 30, 2015.

On August 4, 2013, the inmate was arrested for second-degree burglary and resisting arrest. In November 2013, the inmate pled guilty to second-degree burglary and was sentenced to two years in prison, concurrent to the above sentence. He paroled June 30, 2015.

On November 5, 2015, the inmate was arrested for a burglary, receiving stolen property, possession of methamphetamine for sale, and felon in possession of ammunition. In August 2016, he pled guilty to felon in possession of ammunition and was sentenced to five years four months in prison.

In addition to the above detailed offenses, the inmate has been convicted seven times of being under the influence of, or being in possession of, narcotics. He has three arrests and two convictions for misdemeanor hit and run and has twice been convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The inmate's violations of probation and parole are almost too numerous to count.

DISCUSSION

Granting this inmate early parole will create an unreasonable risk of violence to the public. The inmate's most recent convictions demonstrate he poses a threat to public safety. He entered the victims' garages while they were at home and attempted to flee from pursuing officers. He was found in possession of significant amounts of ammunition and with access to a loaded firearm.

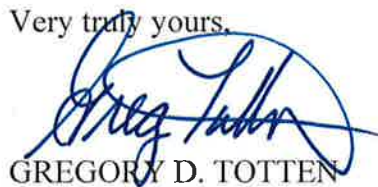
The inmate's lengthy criminal history demonstrates his unwillingness to follow the law and abide by the rules placed upon him, as well as his inability to take advantage of rehabilitative opportunities. There is no evidence to suggest the inmate will curb his criminal ways if released into the community.

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CONCLUSION

The inmate is a habitual and serious offender who poses an unreasonable risk of violence to the community if granted early parole. I respectfully request the Board deny early parole for the inmate.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Greg Totten", is written over a circular blue stamp or seal.

GREGORY D. TOTTEN
District Attorney

GDT:tm

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