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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 Armon Castillo Gevorkian; CDCR AP1333
Ventura County Court Case 2011016590
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 Armon Gevorkian. This recommendation is based upon:

- 1) The inmate's commitment offense.
- 2) The inmate's eight-year crime spree.
- 3) The inmate's excessive taking and denial of victim restitution.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF COMMITMENT OFFENSE

For eight years, from approximately 2003 through 2011, the inmate operated a motorcycle business that was largely fraudulent in nature. The inmate's fraud schemes were as far-reaching as his victim pool, including elder theft, Ponzi schemes, motorcycle theft, car theft, and insurance fraud. In 2013, after three days of witness testimony, the inmate pled guilty to 47 felony counts involving 42 different victims, including eight elders and two corporate victims. His 17-year sentence was a negotiated disposition that was impacted by his refusal to pay restitution prior to sentencing. He admitted special allegations of excessive takings, and was ultimately ordered to pay more than \$1.5 million in victim restitution. The inmate had not paid any restitution at the time he was sentenced to prison.

The victims in this case were outraged by the way the inmate, who they had perceived as a long-standing member of their community, exploited his personal relationship with them and decimated their savings. The inmate's victims filled the courtroom for each appearance and many of them spoke at his sentencing. They collectively demanded that the inmate receive a maximum sentence for his crimes, especially once they realized they would not be able to recoup even a fraction of their lost money.

While several of the inmate's victims lost hundreds of thousands of dollars, most lost between \$10,000 and \$30,000, or cars or motorcycles valued between \$10,000 and \$30,000. For many, these losses represented their life savings. The severity of Gevorkian's criminal conduct arises from the aggregate nature of his crimes: the eight years of his criminal enterprise, the number of victims, the overall financial loss to the victims, and the variety of cons used to steal their money and possessions.

The inmate was sentenced to low term on Count 44, insurance fraud, in violation of Penal Code section 548 (a 2-3-5-year triad). The court gave the inmate low term in order to sentence the inmate to consecutive time for each victim, and for each of the two enhancements. At the time the inmate was sentenced, there were no concerns regarding his eligibility for early release. Given the eight years of criminal conduct, the significant monetary loss, the number of victims, and the substantial harm to the victims and the community, the court would have given the inmate high term on Count 44 had there been an issue of early release at that time.

CRIMINAL HISTORY

In 2010, during the time the inmate was committing the present offenses, he was convicted of possessing a concealed firearm in a motor vehicle, a violation of Penal Code section 12025(a)(1). The inmate was on probation for that crime at the time of his sentencing in this case.

DISCUSSION

California Rules of Court Rule 4.410, sets forth the "[g]eneral objectives in sentencing," including:

- (1) Protecting society;
- (2) Punishing the defendant;
- (3) Encouraging the defendant to lead a law-abiding life in the future and deterring him or her from future offenses;
- (4) Deterring others from criminal conduct by demonstrating its consequences;
- (5) Preventing the defendant from committing new crimes by isolating him or her for the period of incarceration;
- (6) Securing restitution for the victims of crime;
- (7) Achieving uniformity in sentencing; and
- (8) Increasing public safety by reducing recidivism through community-based corrections programs and evidence-based practices.

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These were the factors the trial judge considered in imposing sentence for the inmate's devastating crimes. Every one of these objectives, except securing restitution, favors the inmate serving out his full sentence. Moreover, at sentencing the victims argued in favor of the inmate getting the longest possible sentence knowing that would this would affect their ability to get restitution.

For eight years the inmate made a living lying, cheating, and defrauding the members of his community. He strung his victims along for years, forced them into civil litigation, and financially devastated them. His crimes led to the victims' ruined credit, the break-up of some marriages, and in one instance, stripped away the happiness and security in the last days of his victim's life. The inmate does not know how to live an honest life. If released back into the community, particularly after having served only a small portion of his 17-year sentence, he will return to his life of crime. The inmate will be emboldened; the community will be at risk; the victims will see that their suffering has been discounted; and other criminals will see that this type of crime carries little risk of punishment. Importantly, his conviction for possession of a concealed firearm demonstrates his willingness to do violence.

CONCLUSION

The inmate poses an unreasonable risk 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 blue oval-shaped stamp.

GREGORY D. TOTTON
District Attorney

GDT:mc

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