

# Executive Department

State of California

## COMMUTATION OF SENTENCE

### Thomas Joseph Yackley

In February 1992, Thomas Yackley stabbed Glenn McCarty, Michael Gamble, and David Spragno following an argument at a party. Mr. Gamble and Mr. Spragno died, but Mr. McCarty thankfully survived. On March 3, 1994, the Los Angeles County Superior Court sentenced Mr. Yackley to two consecutive counts of life without the possibility of parole for murder, seven years to life for attempted murder, plus nine years for great bodily injury, weapon, and prior felony enhancements.

In his application for commutation, Mr. Yackley expressed deep remorse for his actions, writing, "I have never forgotten about what happened and the people I hurt." He emphasized that he is a different person today than he was when he committed this crime at 22 years old. He wrote, "Over the past 26 years, I have made it a point to change and become a positive person no matter what comes my way."

Mr. Yackley has been incarcerated for over 26 years and is now 48 years old. There is no doubt that Mr. Yackley has made a serious transformation within prison. He was last disciplined for misconduct 16 years ago. Mr. Yackley has resided on the honor yard since 2003. He earned his GED, is currently enrolled in college classes, and completed vocational training in janitorial services. Mr. Yackley routinely receives exceptional work ratings from his supervisors and participates in Paws For Life, a program that trains rescue dogs. Mr. Yackley participated in self-help programs, including Anger Management, Getting Out by Going In, and Convicts Reaching Out to People. He completed American Sign Language classes and donated artwork to charity.

Mr. Yackley has earned the recognition of institutional staff, many of whom have commended him for his positive rehabilitation and were supportive of release. Debbie Asuncion, the warden at the prison in Lancaster, recommended a commutation of sentence for Mr. Yackley. In 2018, a correctional officer on the honor yard wrote that Mr. Yackley "is dedicated to not only improving himself, but to setting a positive example to his fellow inmates." The officer continued, "His desire to change and remorsefulness appear to be sincere and long-standing. He works well with staff and follows directions without supervision. All things considered, I expect that Mr. Yackley would transition successfully upon release." Another correctional officer on the honor yard commended Mr. Yackley in 2018 on his progress towards an A.A. degree and his leadership in a youth intervention program. The officer wrote, "Because of his efforts, the Convicts Reaching Out to People program will carry on strong, reaching countless youths long after Mr. Yackley returns to the community. He makes a positive difference in many people's lives, and he is to be commended for his efforts." Also in 2018, two correctional officers wrote, "It is clear that the decisions being made by Inmate Yackley are positive, law abiding and free from disrespect or violence." The officers wrote that they "believe that inmate Yackley would be a model citizen."


Additionally, his application was reviewed by the Board of Parole Hearings, who voted at an *en banc* meeting to recommend clemency. The California Supreme Court also made the recommendation required by the California Constitution for a grant of clemency to Mr. Yackley.

For these reasons, I believe that it is appropriate to reduce his sentence so that the Board of Parole Hearings can determine whether he is suitable for parole.


**THEREFORE, I, EDMUND G. BROWN JR.**, Governor of the State of California, by virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the Constitution and statutes of the State of California, do hereby commute the sentence of Thomas Joseph Yackley to a total of 25 years to life.



**IN WITNESS WHEREOF** I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 17<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2018.

  
EDMUND G. BROWN JR.  
Governor of California

**ATTEST:**

  
ALEX PADILLA  
Secretary of State