

**UNPUBLISHED**

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

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**No. 12-6755**

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SAMUEL RICARDO HATCHER, JR.,

Petitioner - Appellant,

v.

GENE M. JOHNSON,

Respondent - Appellee.

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Appeal from the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, at Richmond. Henry E. Hudson, District Judge. (3:12-cv-00270-HEH)

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Submitted: August 13, 2012

Decided: August 16, 2012

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Before MOTZ and SHEDD, Circuit Judges, and HAMILTON, Senior Circuit Judge.

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Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

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Samuel Ricardo Hatcher, Jr., Appellant Pro Se.

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Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

Samuel Ricardo Hatcher, Jr., seeks to appeal the district court's order treating his Fed. R. Civ. P. 60(b) motion as a successive 28 U.S.C. § 2254 (2006) petition, and dismissing it on that basis. The order is not appealable unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of appealability. 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(1)(A) (2006); Reid v. Angelone, 369 F.3d 363, 369 (4th Cir. 2004). A certificate of appealability will not issue absent "a substantial showing of the denial of a constitutional right." 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(2) (2006). When the district court denies relief on the merits, a prisoner satisfies this standard by demonstrating that reasonable jurists would find that the district court's assessment of the constitutional claims is debatable or wrong. Slack v. McDaniel, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000); see Miller-El v. Cockrell, 537 U.S. 322, 336-38 (2003). When the district court denies relief on procedural grounds, the prisoner must demonstrate both that the dispositive procedural ruling is debatable, and that the petition states a debatable claim of the denial of a constitutional right. Slack, 529 U.S. at 484-85.

We have independently reviewed the record and conclude that Hatcher has not made the requisite showing. Accordingly, we deny a certificate of appealability, deny leave to proceed in forma pauperis, and dismiss the appeal.

Additionally, we construe Hatcher's notice of appeal and informal brief as an application to file a second or successive § 2254 petition. See United States v. Winestock, 340 F.3d 200, 208 (4th Cir. 2003). In order to obtain authorization to file a successive § 2254 petition, a prisoner must assert claims based on either: (1) a new rule of constitutional law, previously unavailable, made retroactive by the Supreme Court to cases on collateral review; or (2) newly discovered evidence, not previously discoverable by due diligence, that would be sufficient to establish by clear and convincing evidence that, but for constitutional error, no reasonable factfinder would have found the petitioner guilty of the offense. 28 U.S.C. § 2244(b)(2) (2006). Hatcher's claims do not satisfy either of these criteria. Therefore, we deny authorization to file a successive § 2254 petition.

We dispense with oral argument because the facts and legal contentions are adequately presented in the materials before the court and argument would not aid the decisional process.

DISMISSED