UNPUBLISHED

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

No. 20-6926

CURTIS RAY BROOKS,

        Petitioner - Appellant,

    v.

HAROLD W. CLARKE, Director- V.D.O.C.,

        Respondent - Appellee.

Appeal from the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, at Alexandria. Leonie M. Brinkema, District Judge. (1:20-cv-00595-LMB-TCB)

Submitted: November 16, 2020   Decided: November 20, 2020

Before MOTZ, WYNN, and QUATTLEBAUM, Circuit Judges.

Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

Curtis Ray Brooks, Appellant Pro Se.

Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

Curtis Ray Brooks seeks to appeal the district court's order dismissing his 28 U.S.C. § 2254 petition as an unauthorized, successive § 2254 petition. The order is not appealable unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of appealability. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(1)(A). 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). When, as here, 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. *Gonzalez v. Thaler*, 565 U.S. 134, 140-41 (2012) (citing *Slack v. McDaniel*, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000)).

Limiting our review of the record to the issues raised in Brooks' informal brief, we conclude that Brooks has not made the requisite showing. *See* 4th Cir. R. 34(b); *see also Jackson v. Lightsey*, 775 F.3d 170, 177 (4th Cir. 2014) ("The informal brief is an important document; under Fourth Circuit rules, our review is limited to issues preserved in that brief."). Accordingly, we deny a certificate of appealability, deny Brooks' motion for appointment of counsel, and dismiss the appeal. We dispense with oral argument because the facts and legal contentions are adequately presented in the materials before this court and argument would not aid the decisional process.

DISMISSED