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**For Immediate Release**

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# **Parole Board to Consider Release of Convicted Murderer Mark Rogowski**

## ***Fourth Try by Professional Skateboarder for Parole***

San Diego County District Attorney Summer Stephan announced today that a parole hearing will occur tomorrow for Mark “Gator” Rogowski, 54, who was convicted of rape and murder in 1992. Rogowski is serving a sentence of 31 years-to-life for the murder of Jessica Bergsten.

Rogowski was a nationally known skateboard personality from Carlsbad who rose to prominence in the 1980s. On March 21, 1991, he raped and murdered 22-year old Jessica Bergsten and transported her body to a remote desert area, where her skeletal remains were found several weeks later.

The skater had previously been denied parole in 2011 and 2016 but was granted parole on his third try in December 2019, when a panel of parole hearing officers found that he was suitable for release. Governor Newsom disagreed and reversed the decision in April 2020. He is currently incarcerated at the Richard J. Donovan Correctional Facility in San Diego, where the hearing will be held.

“The family and friends of Jessica Bergsten deserve the continued promise of justice in this case,” DA Summer Stephan said. “Our office has a responsibility to argue strongly against releasing this violent defendant. We handle hundreds of parole hearings each year, doing our best when it’s appropriate to make sure dangerous criminals are not released and crime victims are given a voice.”

At the time of the murder, Rogowski’s girlfriend had broken up with him. In addition, skateboarding was changing from ramps to the street. Rogowski did not think he could do well on street skating and saw his lucrative career coming to an end. He was also upset over his relationship with Bergsten coming to an end. Rogowski hit Bergsten on the head with The Club (a steering wheel locking device), raped her and suffocated her in a surfboard bag. He confessed to the crime several weeks later.

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Deputy District Attorney John Cross will appear on behalf of the People at tomorrow's hearing to argue that Rogowski remains an unreasonable risk of danger to society. One of the victim's family members will also attend the hearing and is expected to provide a victim impact statement regarding the effects of the crime upon their family and the unsuitability of the inmate for parole.

The hearing will take place tomorrow, May 27 at 10:30 a.m. in a closed session that is not accessible to the public.

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*About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office*

*The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue fair and equal justice, and support victims daily across San Diego County.*

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