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GEORGIA

STATE BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES

BIENNIAL REPORT

FISCAL YEARS 1977 AND 1978
JULY 1, 1976 - JUNE 30, 1978

TO

THE GOVERNOR

THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

SUBMITTED BY

JAMES T. MORRIS, CHAIRMAN

J. O. PARTAIN, JR., MEMBER

MRS. MAMIE B. REESE, MEMBER

FLOYD E. BUSBEE, MEMBER

MOBLEY HOWELL, MEMBER

55639

State Board of Pardons and Paroles

JAMES T. MORRIS
Chairman



ROOM 610
800 PEACHTREE STREET
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30308

J. O. Partain, Jr.
Member

Mrs. Mamie B. Reese
Member

Floyd Busbee
Member

Mobley Howell
Member

December 29, 1978

The Honorable George Busbee
Governor of Georgia
and

The Honorable Members of
The Georgia General Assembly
State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia

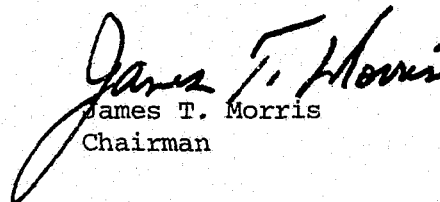
Dear Governor Busbee, Senators, and Representatives:

Submitted herewith is the Biennial Report of the State Board of Pardons and Paroles for Fiscal Years 1977 and 1978. This report summarizes the Board's accomplishments and current undertakings and sums up its clemency decisions.

With your continued assistance the Board is intent on continuing the progress made, especially in this past biennium, to increase the Board's efficiency and effectiveness. Primary movers in this direction are the development of parole rating guidelines and the enactment of the 1977 Law which returned parole supervision authority to the Parole Board.

One hundred eighty-three employees, united again under one administration, comprise the parole team serving Georgia. When they implement parole rating guidelines, the results will be even more prompt, consistent, soundly based, and explainable decisions -- in the Citizens' best interests.

Respectfully submitted,


James T. Morris
Chairman

NCJRS

JAN 25 1979

ACQUISITION

BIENNIAL REPORT

FISCAL YEARS 1977 and 1978
July 1, 1976, to June 30, 1978

Far-reaching improvements for Georgia parole were realized or brought closer to reality by the State Board of Pardons and Paroles during the biennium ending June 30, 1978. Two stand out above all others. Nearing completion is number one, the development of parole rating guidelines to enhance fairness and consistency in and dispel the mystery from parole decision making. Number two, an accomplished reform thanks to the General Assembly and Governor George Busbee, is the return of parole supervision to the Parole Board.

Parole Rating Guidelines Emerge from Experience

The Parole Board's philosophy is that the more serious an inmate's offense, the longer he should be imprisoned, and that the greater the probability he may violate parole, the less likely he will be paroled. The parole rating guidelines system now being developed incorporates this philosophy. More significantly, it presents it in chart form so that the inmate and other concerned persons may see how and why the Board arrives at its decision. Finally, the guidelines help assure that inmates with similar histories serving for similar offenses will be imprisoned for similar lengths of time.

Guideline development began in February 1978 when the Board received a U.S. Labor Department grant to study the relationship between work history and parole success for offenders age 16 to 21. The Board chose to study, in addition to this work relationship, all the other factors pertinent to the parole decision. From the Board's records of paroles and revocations and the characteristics and histories of parolees came the foundation data on which were constructed parole rating guidelines for young inmates.

The grant was renewed for a year and its scope widened in October 1978 to allow extension of the study to inmates of all ages and to refine the findings by pilot testing the guidelines. Judging from the progress made so far, it is anticipated that the use of parole rating guidelines will begin in July 1979 for all felony inmates entering prison with non-life sentences.

The Board wanted its guidelines to emphasize the nature of the offense as being the parole decision's most important element, which it always has been. Accordingly, the guidelines are structured around a list of offenses ranked by the five Members according to offense severity.

A second list contains the other significant factors which have been traditionally considered, such as prior criminal record and drug-abuse history. An inmate's parole risk level is determined by adding variously weighted unfavorable criminal and social characteristics, which increase his chances of becoming a parole failure. Each risk level corresponds with a parole failure rate, which has been computed after careful research of parolee records.

A guidelines chart guides the Board to determine how long an inmate with a certain offense-severity level, parole risk level, and court-imposed sentence length should serve in prison. Importantly, the plan is to tell the inmate early in his sentence exactly where he stands.

The detailed procedure for the July 1979 beginning has not yet been formulated, but it is intended to have a felony inmate interviewed within weeks after he enters a State prison. The Board expects to complete its regular investigations into his criminal and social history within a few months. Then it plans within nine months to tell him whether to expect parole, when he may expect it, and show him, using the guidelines chart, why. If an inmate is given a tentative parole release date, it will be stressed to him that the parole will be postponed or cancelled if his prison record is not satisfactory.

Some inmates who are serving for very serious offenses and/or who are part of a group with a high failure rate will be told that they will complete their sentences without parole. Thus they and their families will be spared the repeated dashing of hopes at consideration times. (The guidelines will not be applied to inmates serving life sentences.)

Other inmates with more favorable guideline results will have uncertainty removed for them also by being told they may expect to return home at a specified time.

Because no chart can encompass all possible circumstances surrounding a parole decision, sometimes there will be a case in which the Board, in rendering its decision, decides to depart from guidelines. In such case the openness will continue via the requirement that any deviation from the guidelines will be justified in a written statement of the Board's reasons.

Putting into effect a parole rating guidelines system in July 1979 will have a jolting impact throughout Georgia on parole officer workloads. At present most pre-parole investigations are completed by parole officers only after the inmates have served long enough to be near their time of parole eligibility. In July 1979 these regular investigations of parole-eligible inmates will continue. However, total investigations suddenly will almost be doubled by the added requirement to launch immediate investigations of entering inmates to provide the facts for early guideline decisions. A prerequisite to make the guidelines system possible is the providing of additional qualified parole officers.

The guidelines' most visible result will be to open to public scrutiny the parole decision process. When operational, the system should reveal and regulate the consistent exercise of discretion in paroling offenders and should provide for them an intelligently administered alternative to further incarceration.

Board Regains Parole Supervision Authority

July 1, 1977, was the date the Parole Board was allowed to go back to supervising its parolees after a five-year interruption. The General Assembly, which passed the restoration legislation, and Governor George Busbee, who signed it into law, brought an unsuccessful experiment to an end.

It was acknowledged that for reasons of efficiency and accountability, the field staff which provides supervision and counseling of parolees should be employees of the releasing and revoking Board and not employees of a separate Department.

Preparing the way for passage of the reform was the Parole Supervision Transfer Agreement between the Department of Offender Rehabilitation and the State Board of Pardons and Paroles. Signed February 21, 1977, it gave the two agencies' approval to the transfer of parole officers and clerical staff from the Department to the Board.

On December 1, 1978, field staff consisted of 92 parole officer positions and 38 secretaries serving the State from 27 offices. Welded into an efficient organization, they were handling a heavy workload with excellent results.

A project now underway in the Field Operations Division is rewriting the field procedures manual, and plans for the future include establishment of an in-service training program.

Board Acts on Two Death Cases

Fiscal Year 1978 saw action taken on two death sentence cases, the first such cases to be considered since 1970. On September 28, 1977, the Board commuted the death sentence of Charles Harris Hill to 99 years. On May 18, 1978, the Board declined to commute the death sentence of Horace William Dix.

Career Ladder Formed for Field Officers

A career ladder for field parole officers was funded in the State Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 1978, which was passed by the General Assembly and signed into law by Governor George Busbee.

Instituted July 1, 1977, the career ladder included a two-pay-grade increase for parole officers. Their starting pay-grade was increased to 16 (new pay-grade 26) and ascending field positions were established up to pay-grade 19 (new pay-grade 32), which is for five area supervisors.

Members Re-elect James T. Morris Chairman

In accordance with the Constitutional provision for the Board chairman to be elected annually, the Members elected James T. Morris as chairman effective October 1, 1977, and re-elected him to another one-year term in 1978.

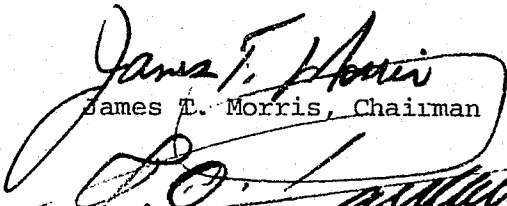
Mobley Howell Appointed to Board

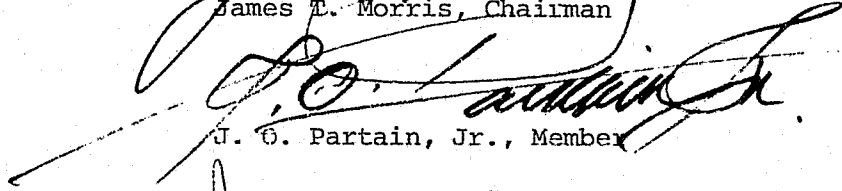
Mobley Howell of Blakely was appointed a Board member by Governor George Busbee effective November 14, 1977. He replaced Cecil C. McCall, who resigned to accept an appointment by President Carter to be chairman of the United States Commission on Paroles.

Mr. Howell completed the remainder of Mr. McCall's term of office in January 1978 and was appointed by the Governor to a new seven-year term.

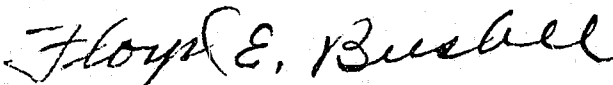
In response, the Board on May 30, 1978, agreed to reconsider cases which had recently been denied parole by a three-to-two decision and to give special consideration to inmates who were scheduled for discharge within six months. Resulting releases during the summer of 1978 totaled approximately 900.

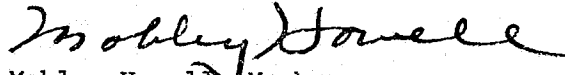
Respectfully submitted,


James E. Morris, Chairman


J. G. Partain, Jr., Member


Mrs. Mamie B. Reese, Member


Floyd E. Busbee, Member


Mobley Howell, Member

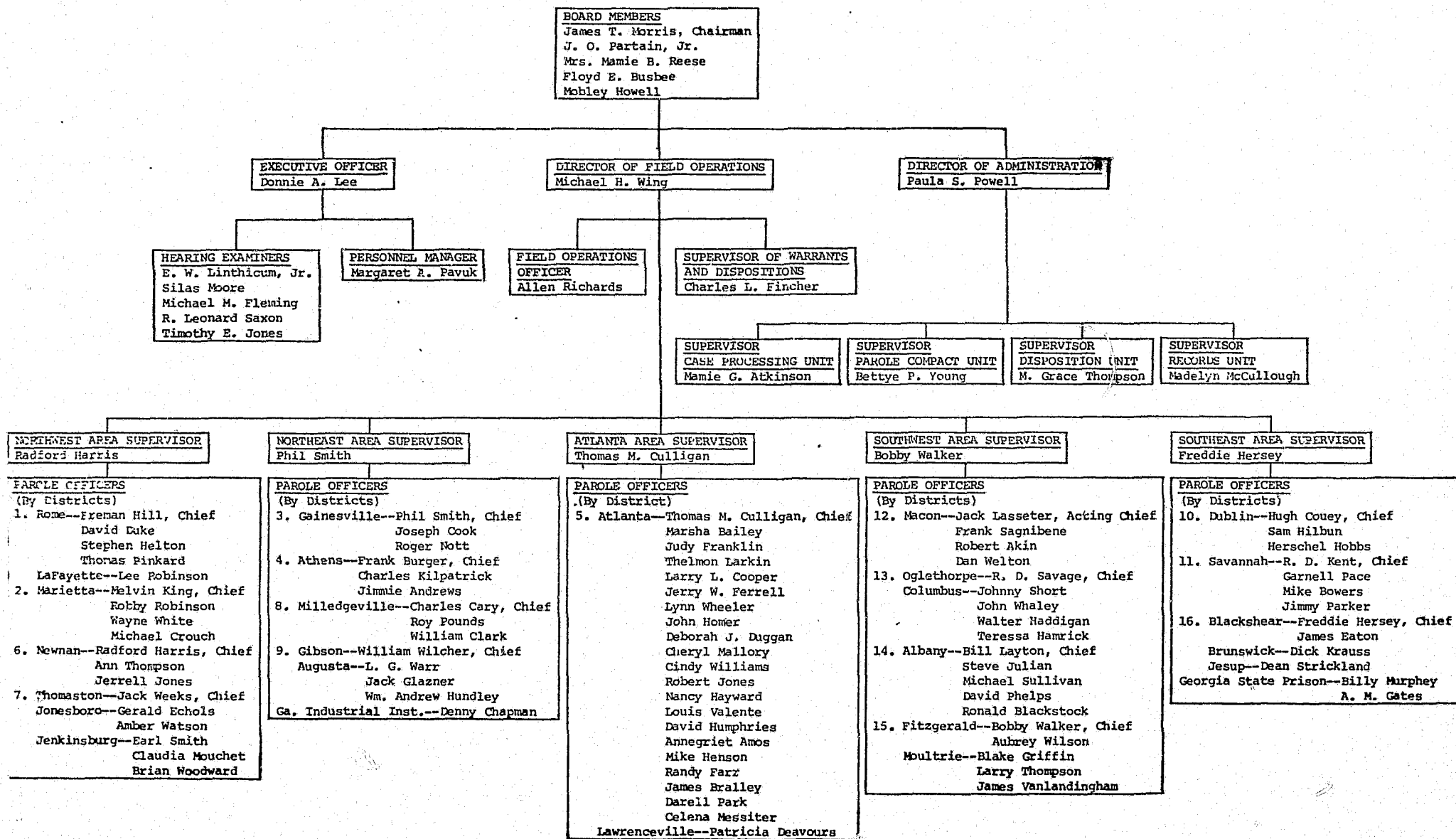
GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES

STATISTICAL SUMMARY

<u>Activity for Fiscal Year Ending</u>	<u>June 30, 1977</u>	<u>June 30, 1978</u>
Commutation of Sentence to Time Served	20	28
Conditional Transfer to Detainer	73	85
Parole	2075	2624
Parole-Reprieve	320	0
Remission to Probation	37	15
Reprieve and Conditional Commutation (Early Release)	515	346
Youthful Offender Conditional Release	467	540
Special December 1977 Commutation for Inmates Close to Discharge		144
Order Rescinding Revocation of Parole	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Release Actions by Board	3508	3782
Cancellation of Parole-Reprieve	7	0
Revocation of Early Release	4	3
Revocation of Parole	120	215
Revocation of Youthful Offender Conditional Release	228	163
Revocation of Remission to Probation	2	0
Cancellation of Commutation Order	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Returns to Prison by Board	362	381
Discharge from Parole	1765	2326
Youthful Offender Unconditional Release	257	242
Full Pardon	3	1
First Offender Pardon	190	156
Restoration of Civil and Political Rights	1467	1599
Ten-Year Pardon	11	7
Other Parole Cases Reviewed	4354	4630
Commutation of Pre-Trial Confinement	8	2
Medical and Compassionate Reprieve (Short Duration)	130	140
Commutation Reducing Sentence Without Release	47	29
Family Interviews in Board Chambers	2028	1828
Inmate Interviews at Institutions	856	1244
Preliminary Hearings Held	118	61
Final Hearings Held	284	223
Death Sentences Commuted	0	1
Death Sentences Upheld	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Total Other Actions by Board	11,518	12,490
TOTAL BOARD ACTIVITY	<u>15,388</u>	<u>16,653</u>
Total Inmates at End of Fiscal Year	11,464	11,949
Total Number on Supervised Release at End of Fiscal Year	3,324	3,152

State Board of Pardons and Paroles

December 1, 1978



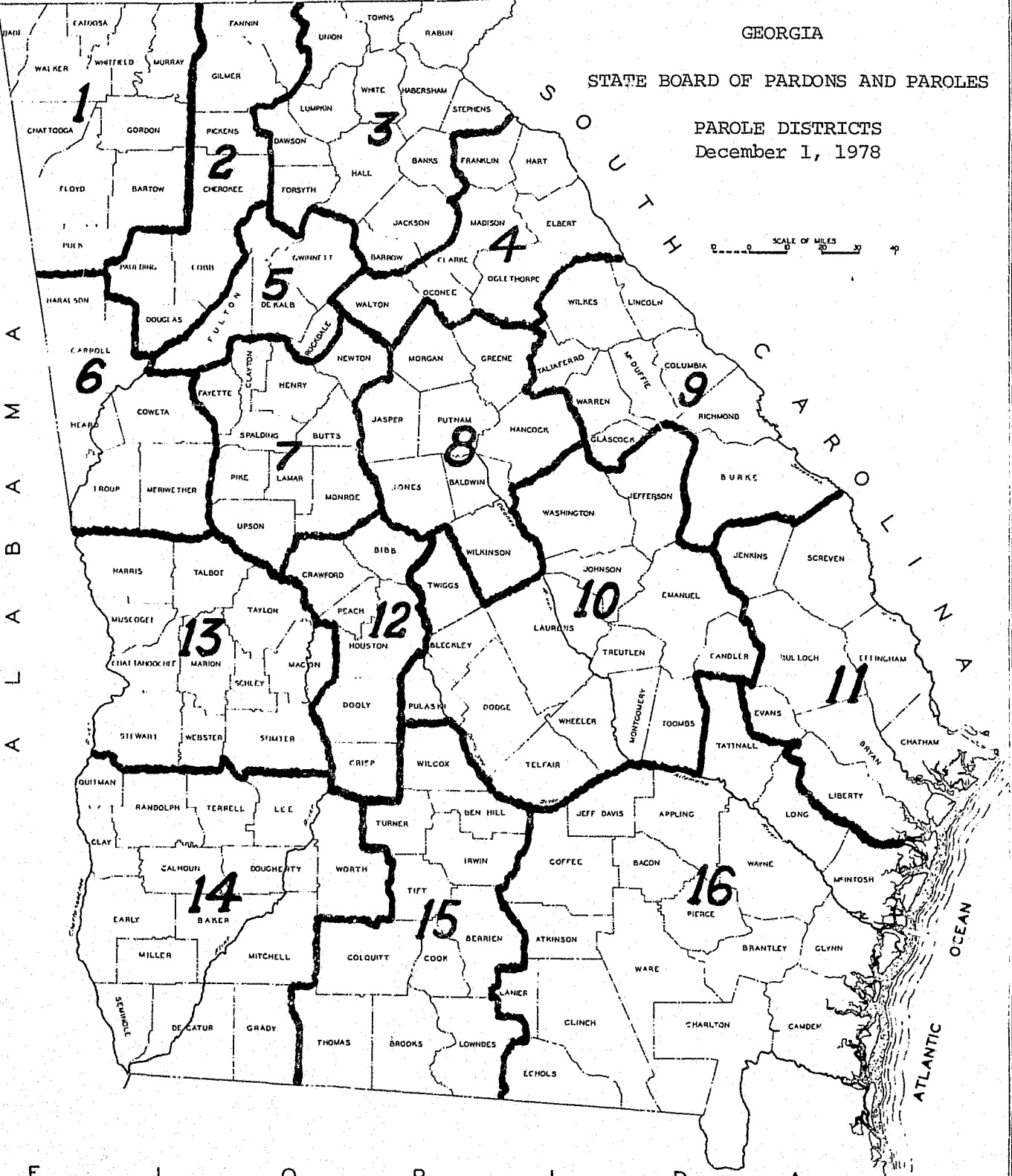
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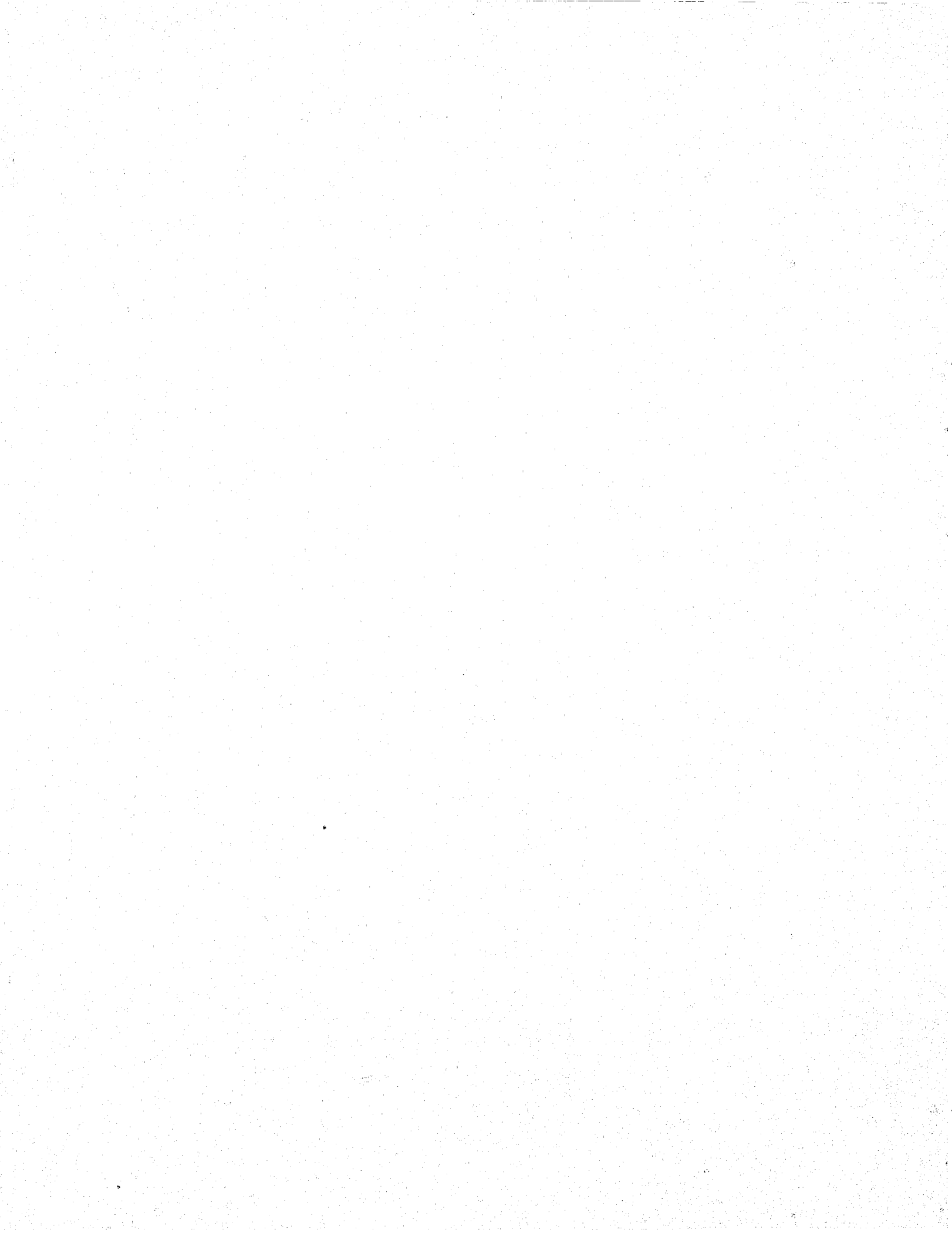
STATE BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES

PAROLE DISTRICTS
December 1, 1978

SCALE OF MILES
0 20 40



F L O R I D A



END