

**UNPUBLISHED**

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

---

**No. 24-6329**

---

GEORGE ZACHARY SCHUPPAN,

Petitioner - Appellant,

v.

BETH CABELL, Warden, Sussex II State Prison; CHADWICK DOTSON, Director,  
Virginia Department of Corrections,

Respondents - Appellees.

---

Appeal from the United States District Court for the Western District of Virginia, at  
Roanoke. Elizabeth K. Dillon, Chief District Judge. (7:22-cv-00733-EKD-JCH)

---

Submitted: October 16, 2025

Decided: November 21, 2025

---

Before HARRIS, RUSHING, and BERNER, Circuit Judges.

---

Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

---

Michael J. Brickhill, David Paul Mitchel, MICHAEL J. BRICKHILL, PC, Appomattox,  
Virginia, for Appellant. Katherine Quinlan Adelfio, OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY  
GENERAL OF VIRGINIA, Richmond, Virginia, for Appellees.

---

Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

## PER CURIAM:

George Zachary Schuppan seeks to appeal the district court’s order denying relief on his 28 U.S.C. § 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 the district court denies relief on the merits, a prisoner satisfies this standard by demonstrating that reasonable jurists could find the district court’s assessment of the constitutional claims debatable or wrong. *See Buck v. Davis*, 580 U.S. 100, 115-17 (2017). 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. *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 Schuppan’s counseled informal brief, we conclude that Schuppan has not made the requisite showing. *See* 4th Cir. R. 34(b); *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.”); *see also United States v. Fernandez Sanchez*, 46 F.4th 211, 219 (4th Cir. 2022) (“[A] party . . . waives an issue by failing to develop its argument—even if its brief takes a passing shot at the issue.” (cleaned up)). Accordingly, we deny a certificate of appealability 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*