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Pederson Convicted of Deadly DUI Crash; Injuring 2nd Victim
People v. William Pederson: Kern County Superior Court Case BF193500A

(Bakersfield) – Kern County District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced a significant Office of Traffic Safety conviction. On May 8, 2025, in a case prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Brandon Stallings, Defendant William Pederson pled as charged to one count of 2nd Degree Murder, a lesser included charge of Vehicular Manslaughter with Gross Negligence, and Driving Under the Influence causing great bodily injury to a second victim. Pederson entered an open plea before his trial, meaning he received no promises from the Court or the People of what the sentence may be. However, the charges, in addition to Pederson’s prior strike, make him eligible for an elevated sentence of up to 30 years to life plus 16 years in prison.

On February 18, 2023, Pederson was in a pickup truck travelling southbound on SR-65 when he crossed over the center line and struck a sedan being driven by Juana Torres de Calderon and occupied by the second victim. Torres de Calderon succumbed to her injuries. Investigation revealed that Pederson was travelling at 82 mph at the time of impact. His blood was tested and came back with methamphetamine in his system and a blood alcohol content of 0.167%, over twice the legal limit. On scene, Pederson stated, “If it’s my fault you know, I gotta live up to it.” Pederson acknowledged he had two prior DUI’s and said, “The consequences are just all this, it’s not time in prison, it’s not being locked up, it’s the reality that somebody is no longer here.”

Pederson has one strike prior and felony convictions dating back to 1988. Pederson’s two prior DUI convictions are out of Sacramento County and date back to 2014 and 2019. As a condition of his probation, he was required to install an Ignition Interlock Device (IID) on his vehicle. An IID is a breathalyzer device installed in a vehicle that requires the driver to blow into it before starting the engine. If the device detects alcohol on the driver’s breath, it prevents the car from starting. There was evidence that Pederson disabled the IID device at some point, prior to driving on the incident date.

Assistant District Attorney Joseph Kinzel commented; “Pederson had a history of reckless driving with multiple DUI offenses. Despite warnings from the legal system about the severe consequences of his

actions, he continued to drive under the influence. Tragically, his repeated negligence culminated in a fatal crash that claimed the life of an innocent individual and injured another – for that, he must face the severe consequences.”

Sentencing is set for July 29, 2025, before Superior Court Judge Tiffany Organ-Bowles in Department 8 of the Kern County Superior Court where Pederson faces up to 30 years to life plus 16 years in prison.

William Pederson:

