



July 9, 2025

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## **Fresno County Man Sentenced in Fiery DUI Crash That Killed One, Injured Several**

Today, July 9, 2025, Jesus Rosendo Zeferino (25, of Reedley) was sentenced to 13 years in state prison for gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated and driving with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) over .08% causing great bodily injury. The sentence followed Zeferino's guilty plea on May 13, 2025, and was handed down by the Honorable Stephanie Negin of the Fresno County Superior Court.

The charges stem from a fatal crash that occurred on October 19, 2024, at approximately 11:00 p.m. Zeferino was driving eastbound on Manning Avenue near Hill Avenue, just outside the City of Orange Cove, at an estimated speed of 80 to 90 miles per hour. He had three passengers in his vehicle.

At the same time, Eli Abraham Lopez Lopez (27, of Kingsburg) was stopped at a stop sign at the intersection, preparing to continue eastbound. Zeferino failed to stop for the stop sign or the vehicle ahead and slammed into the rear of Lopez Lopez's sedan. The impact sent the vehicle through the intersection, where it caught fire. A passenger in Lopez Lopez's vehicle was eventually able to escape the flames but sustained severe burns. Lopez Lopez was tragically unable to escape and was pronounced dead at the scene.

Following the initial collision, Zeferino's vehicle veered into oncoming traffic and struck a second vehicle that had been stopped at the stop sign heading westbound. All three of Zeferino's passengers sustained serious injuries, with one requiring air transport to a local hospital via the SkyLife helicopter.

Officers from the California Highway Patrol's Fresno office responded to the scene and conducted a DUI investigation. Zeferino was found to have a blood alcohol concentration of .16%, which is twice the legal limit.

The Fresno County District Attorney's Office would like to thank the California Highway Patrol for their swift response, thorough investigation, and ongoing efforts to protect the public from impaired drivers.

This case was successfully prosecuted by Senior Deputy District Attorney Steven Ueltzen, with support from Senior District Attorney Investigator Randall Paulson. It was prosecuted under the Alcohol and Drug Impaired Driver Vertical Prosecution Program, which is funded by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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