



COUNTY OF YOLO
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Elk Grove Man Sentenced to 22-Years-to-Life in Prison for DUI
Murders**

Gabriel Poletti had been arrested for another DUI 13 days earlier

(Woodland, CA) – May 30, 2023 – On May 30, 2023, Yolo County Superior Court Judge Peter Williams sentenced 29-year-old Elk Grove man, Gabriel Poletti, to 22 years-to-life in prison with the possibility of parole. The sentence was the result of Poletti’s conviction for two counts of DUI-related second-degree murder.

During the late hours of February 15, 2021, Poletti was driving southbound on Jefferson Avenue in West Sacramento when he crossed over the center dividing line and struck a vehicle head-on while it was stopped at a red light in the opposite turn lane. Inside that vehicle, husband and wife Rasul and Anila Afzili were killed as a result of the collision. Their three-year-old child suffered a broken arm and leg, while their 5-month-old baby miraculously suffered only cuts and abrasions. A test of Poletti’s blood revealed he had a blood alcohol content of 0.243%, over three times California’s legal limit.

Under California law, DUI drivers may be charged with murder if they are found to understand that driving under the influence is a dangerous act that may kill or injure

others, yet they choose to do so regardless. Nearly all California courts require an advisement of this fact when an individual is convicted of DUI. Drivers with prior DUI convictions should understand the risks of driving under the influence. Poletti had been previously convicted of DUI on April 8, 2016, in Sacramento County, and had been arrested for another DUI in Sacramento County on February 2, 2021, a mere 13 days prior to the fatal Yolo County crash.

On May 10, 2023, Poletti pled guilty to all counts and enhancements alleged against him, including two counts of second-degree murder, vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated, and driving under the influence of alcohol causing injury. Poletti entered his plea following a promise from the Judge Williams that, if Poletti entered a guilty plea to all charges, he would be sentenced to seven years in state prison plus an additional 15-years-to-life. The District Attorney's Office supported the family of the deceased in objecting to this deal. At today's hearing, several members of the victims' family spoke and provided statements in opposition to the sentence.

"We are all well aware of the risks to human life of drinking and driving. And Mr. Poletti was acutely aware having been convicted of one DUI in 2016 and having been arrested for another DUI just 13 days before this tragedy," said District Attorney Jeff Reisig. "His decisions and actions took the lives of Rasul and Anila Afzili. Nothing will bring them back but there must be accountability and we must protect the public moving forward."

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