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LOCAL NEWS

Abortion doctor who worked in Bakersfield accused of injuring woman during surgery, failing to fully document procedures



by: [Jason Kotowski](#)

Posted: Aug 17, 2020 / 02:16 PM PDT / Updated: Aug 17, 2020 / 02:18 PM PDT

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. (KGET) — An abortion doctor who worked in Bakersfield is accused of injuring a woman during a surgery where he couldn't clearly see what he was doing and failing to fully document the procedures he performed.

Donald Clyde Willis, who worked at various Family Planning Associates clinics, including in Bakersfield, is accused of gross negligence, repeated

negligent acts and failure to maintain adequate and accurate medical records, according to the accusation filed with the Medical Board of California. The board’s executive director has asked for a hearing to decide the following: to revoke or suspend the physician’s and surgeon’s certificates issued to Willis; to revoke, suspend or deny approval of Willis’ authority to supervise physician assistants and advanced practice nurses; and, if Willis is placed on probation, to order him to pay the costs of probation monitoring.

Efforts to reach Willis on Monday were unsuccessful. The accusation says Willis currently only practices gynecology in Fresno and Modesto, but Family Planning Associates clinics in those locations said he no longer worked there.

The accusation, filed earlier this month, is based on Willis’ treatment of three patients he saw in 2017.

In October of that year, Willis performed an abortion on a patient despite not being able to clearly see what he was doing, according to the accusation. The patient’s vital signs became unstable and she was taken to a hospital, where she suffered cardiac arrest during surgery and was resuscitated. Surgeons found her uterus had been perforated and there was major injury to the large vessels of the ovary and fallopian tube, the accusation says.

The patient stayed five days in the hospital before she was discharged. The accusation says Willis didn’t take into account potential risk factors for the surgery such as unstable vital signs, abnormal anatomy, medication use or previously unspecified allergies. It goes on to say he was unable to perform the surgery safely without assistance or an imaging device.

“(Willis) did not visual a normal cervical opening during (the patient’s) procedure, and was unable to perform surgery safely without imaging or other assistance,” the accusation says. “(Willis) could have rescheduled the surgery so that he could have the imaging assistance needed, but he elected to proceed by blindly dilating where he believed the cervical opening was located.”

In another case, Willis performed an abortion and afterward placed a contraceptive device in the patient, according to the accusation. Her bleeding increased after surgery, and Willis took her back to the operating room where he removed a small amount of additional tissue.

An ultrasound revealed more bleeding outside the patients’ uterus, and she was transferred to a hospital, according to the accusation. Doctors there didn’t find evidence of bleeding where Willis believed it was occurring, and the patient remained stable and was later discharged, the accusation says.

Willis failed to document “numerous pertinent facts” in the patient’s medical record, the accusation says, including the size of surgical instruments used and a description of the fetal tissue removed.

In the third case listed in the accusation, Willis performed surgery on a woman who began “suddenly jerking” toward the end of the procedure. A surgical clamp tore her cervix and she began bleeding, according to the accusation.

Willis had her transported by ambulance to a hospital, where she was taken to an emergency room to complete the surgery. Emergency room staff requested OBGYN consultation as Willis failed to document what tissues were removed before sending the patient to the hospital, the accusation says.

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Bakersfield College kicking off virtual Distinguished Speaker Series this week

by Joseph Luiz / Sep 2, 2020

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. (KGET) -- Bakersfield College is kicking off this year's Distinguished Speaker Series later this week, but this time the series will be virtual due to COVID-19.

The college said the programs will be presented live via Zoom as well as on the Student Government Association Facebook page. The first speaker in the series is STEM educator Fredi Lajvardi, who will be presenting on Thursday at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

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Kern County Fire responding to fire on I-5

by Marisel Maldonado / Sep 2, 2020

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. (KGET) — The Kern County Fire Department is responding to a vegetation fire on Interstate 5, just south of Grapevine Road. The fire is on the center divider. KCFD asks travelers to watch for crews working along the roadway and to slow their speeds. California Highway Patrol Fort Tejon is on scene.

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Man injured in south Bakersfield shooting

by Joseph Luiz / Sep 2, 2020

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. (KGET) -- A man was injured in a shooting in south Bakersfield earlier this morning.

The Bakersfield Police Department said officers were sent to Fairview Road at Nimitz Street after receiving reports of a shooting in the area. When officers arrived, they found a person who had suffered a gunshot wound. They were taken to a local hospital for treatment of moderate injuries.

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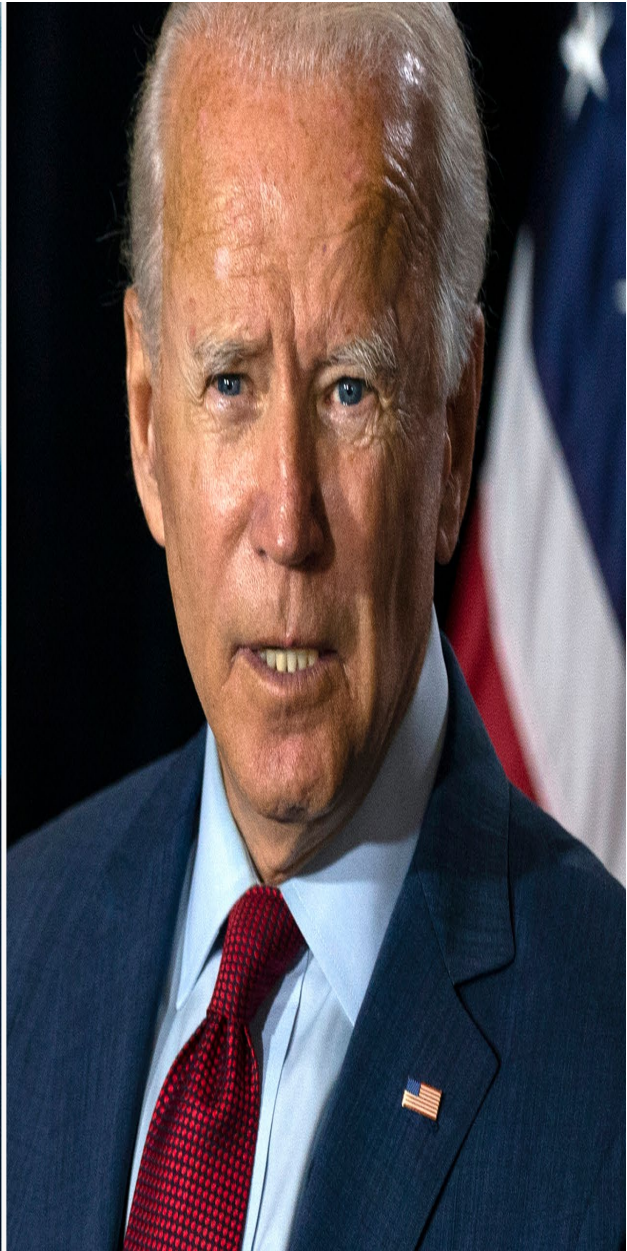
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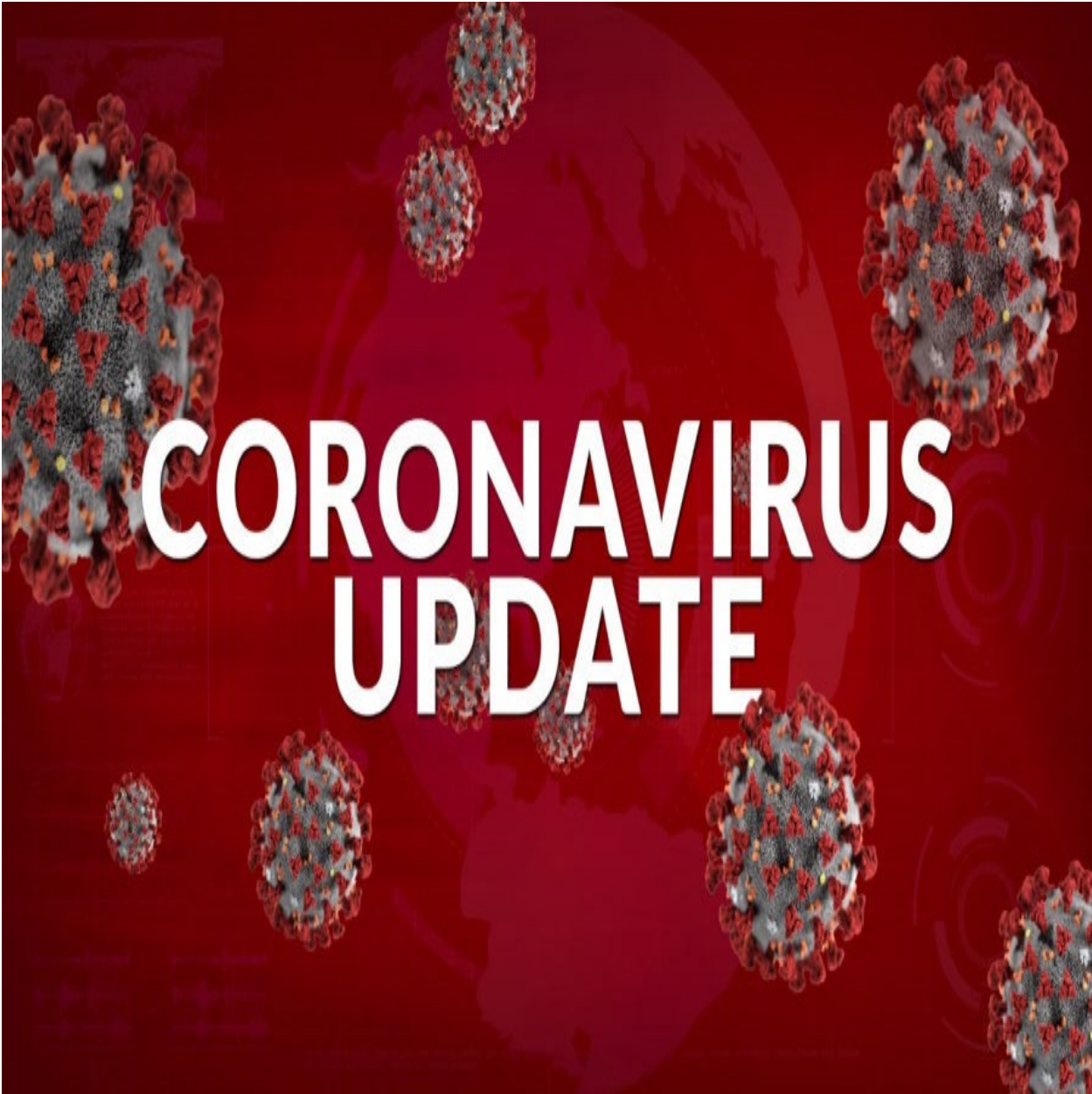
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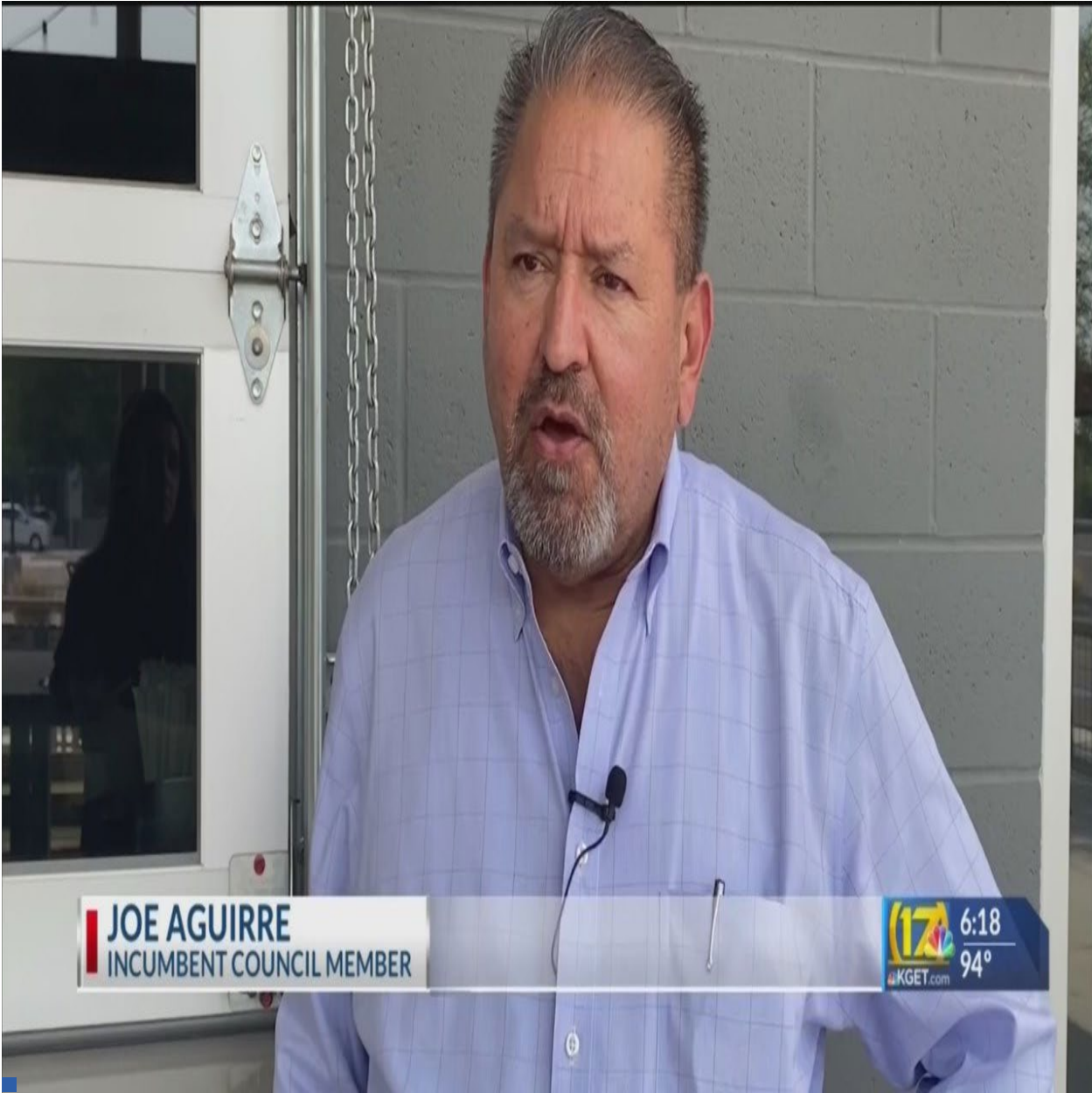
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