

## Medical Board Reprimands Abortionist Who Waited Days to Report Child Rape, Sent Victim Back to Her Rapist

State | Micaiah Bilger | May 26, 2023 | 9:40AM | Indianapolis, Indiana



An Indiana medical board disciplined an abortionist Thursday for violating patient privacy laws after the attorney general said she exploited the abuse of a 10-year-old rape victim to promote her pro-abortion agenda to the press.

[The Indianapolis Star reports](#) Dr. Caitlin Bernard, an abortionist and OB-GYN with Indiana University Health, violated three patient privacy laws and must pay a \$3,000 fine, the Indiana Medical Licensing Board decided. The board said Bernard may continue to practice but she will receive a reprimand letter.

However, it also dismissed allegations that Bernard failed to report the child abuse case to authorities in a timely manner, resulting in the child being sent back to her rapist, according to the report.

“There’s been no case like this before the board,” state Deputy Attorney General Cory Voight said during the disciplinary hearing Thursday, [the AP reports](#). “No physician has been as brazen in pursuit of their own agenda.”

Voight said Bernard's comments about the girl to the Indianapolis Star in July 2022 were an "egregious violation" of patient privacy. The story attracted national news attention and even President Joe Biden mentioned the young girl's case in a speech.

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"Everyone – the country – learned about her patient, learned a 10-year-old little girl was raped and had an abortion," he said.

Dr. John Strobel, president of the medical board, said Bernard did not seem to expect her comments to receive so much attention, but she should have been more careful, [CNN reports](#).

"I don't think she expected this attention to be brought to this patient," Strobel said. "But I do think that we as physicians need to be more careful in this situation. I think she's a good doctor."

Meanwhile, Bernard continued to insist that she was innocent, telling the medical board: "I did not release any protected health information. I complied with all patient confidentiality and HIPAA laws to the best of my knowledge. And, again, there was no information that I released that led to her being identified."

An expert witness disagreed. Andrew Mahler, a former official with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights, testified that it "certainly is possible" that the comments she made to the newspaper could have led to the girl being identified, according to the Star.

Last year, in an administrative complaint, state Attorney General Todd Rokita's Office said Bernard initiated the "media frenzy from the beginning," drawing attention to an "innocent little girl who is trying to cope with a horrific trauma." According to the complaint, two weeks after her comments were published, a reporter showed up at the girl's house in Ohio with video cameras, [the Star reported at the time](#).

Rokita and Bernard both have accused each other of politicizing the matter. Bernard's attorney claimed the state leader was just trying to "intimidate" her and other abortionists by filing the medical complaint, according to CNN.

On Thursday, Rokita's office said Bernard exploited the young rape victim to promote her pro-abortion agenda without thought to the girl's privacy or safety.

"When Bernard talked about the high priority she puts on legislation and speaking to the public, she did so at the expense of her own patient. This shows where her priorities are as an activist rather than a doctor," Rokita's office wrote.

Responding during the hearing, Bernard accused Rokita of pursuing the case against her as a "political stunt."

"I think if the attorney general, Todd Rokita, had not chosen to make this his political stunt we wouldn't be here today," she said.

On the matter of not reporting the child abuse to authorities, the board agreed that Bernard did not violate the law – even though she waited two days to report the case to the state and the girl went back home to her rapist.

Her attorney, Alice Morical, said Bernard informed a hospital social worker about the girl immediately and learned that the girl’s case already had been reported to law enforcement in Ohio, where the girl lived. She said Bernard also reported the abuse case to authorities two days after the abortion, according to the reports.

In July, authorities did [arrest a 27-year-old Ohio man](#) and charged him with raping the girl. However, according to the state attorney general’s office, the girl did live with the man for several days after the abortion.

In a statement after the ruling, Rokita thanked the board for protecting patients’ privacy.

“Like we have said for a year, this case was about patient privacy and the trust between the doctor and patient that was broken,” Rokita said. “What if it was your child or your parent or your sibling who was going through a sensitive medical crisis, and the doctor, who you thought was on your side, ran to the press for political reasons? It’s not right, and the facts we presented today made that clear.”

This is not the first time Bernard has been accused of failing to properly report a potential rape case involving a minor girl. [As LifeNews reported in 2018](#), she and eight other abortion practitioners allegedly failed to file abuse reports in 48 cases involving girls as young as 12 years old.

According to information Indiana Right to Life provided LifeNews, some of the girls who had abortions that were not reported to the Indiana Department of Child Services were as young as 12 and 13. The alleged 48 instances occurred since July 1, 2017. Complaints were filed with former Indiana Attorney General Curtis Hill and the Indiana State Department of Health. The Marion, Lake, Tippecanoe and Monroe county prosecutors also were notified.

Two members of Congress, including Rokita who was in the U.S. House at the time, called for investigations. However, after the accusations were made, nothing ever came of them.

Indiana law requires mandatory reporting of abortions on girls under 16 to the Indiana State Department of Health and the Indiana Department of Child Services within three days of the abortion so that authorities can investigate potential child sex abuse.



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