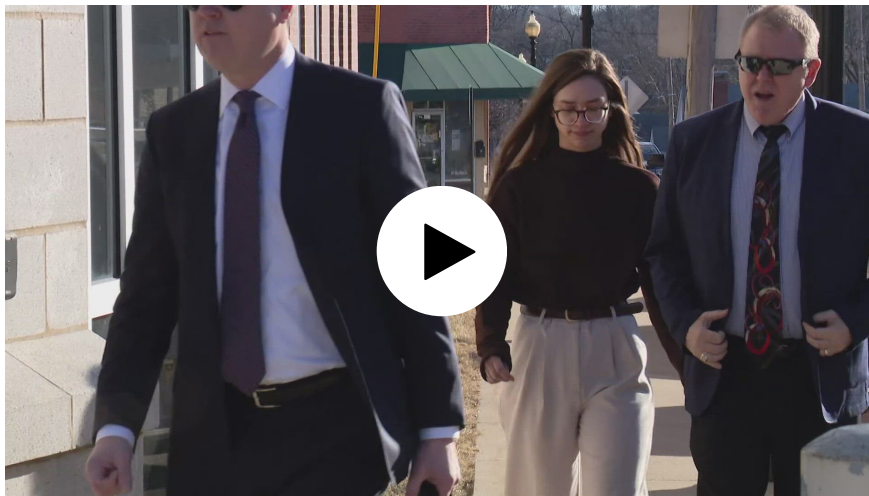




CRIME

## Franklin County woman, pardoned for Jan. 6, sentenced to 10 years in prison for deadly DUI crash

The deadly crash happened Jan. 5, 2022. Emily Hernandez pleaded guilty in November.



Author: Justina Coronel (KSDK), Diamond Palmer  
Published: 2:55 PM CST January 29, 2025  
Updated: 6:49 PM CST January 29, 2025



FRANKLIN COUNTY, Mo. — A Franklin County woman was sentenced to 10 years in prison for a deadly drunk driving crash days after being [pardoned by President Donald Trump](#) for her role in the Jan. 6 Capitol riot.

Video showed Emily Hernandez holding a stolen, broken nameplate belonging to former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Hernandez pleaded guilty for her involvement and served 30 days in federal prison.

She also pleaded guilty Nov. 5, 2024, in connection to a DWI wrong-way crash. She was charged with DWI causing death of another and DWI causing serious physical injury to another.

On Jan. 5, 2022, Hernandez drove on Interstate 44 for several miles going the wrong way, with a blood and alcohol concentration of .125, before crashing into another car belonging to a Franklin County couple, Victoria and Ryan Wilson. The couple just left dinner celebrating their 15th wedding anniversary.

Victoria, 32, died and Ryan faced serious injuries. The couple has two children, now ages 18 and 13.



Credit: Family of Victoria Wilson

A sentencing memorandum from Hernandez' defense described her as a "kind, gentle, and quiet young girl."

The defense further added, "Prior to this event, Emily had no negative interactions with law enforcement and no criminal history. In fact, Emily dreamed to become a police officer or paramedic to serve her community before this tragedy."

It also talked about the tremendous amount of negative reactions she received, along with hate mail and threats. She underwent mental health treatment and counseling.

Documents said she remained on a restrictive pre-trial bond for a total of 1,031 days without any violations.

In court Wednesday morning, Hernandez called her own actions "ungodly" and said she prays

for the victim's family daily.

Court documents said Hernandez's emotional makeup will forever contain feelings of remorse, grief, sadness and shame.

She said, "I feel like it should not have been her, it should have been me. She had a family and I was lost at the time."

Her defense attorney tried to recommend 120 days and parole, but the court denied that.

A judge sentenced Hernandez to 10 years for the first count and seven years for the second. They'd be served concurrently.

Right after the hearing, 5 On Your Side spoke to Victoria's family.

"Nothing will bring her back. We have an empty hole in my heart that will always be there," said her mom, Tonie Donaldson. "It was some relief to be able to turn and look her in her eyes and tell her how much harm she had really done to us... that's a choice she made, she has to live with it."

Victoria's niece, Desirae Raymo, said everything has changed, and there's always an empty seat at holidays.

Raymo told 5 On Your Side they miss seeing Victoria's contagious smile.

"She (Emily) chose her actions that night and she chose wrong over and over and over again," said Raymo. "I don't feel any amount (of time) she will serve will bring her back, it won't rectify her actions. I hope she can change and be a better person."

There is no date for a parole hearing, but Victoria's family said they'll be at every hearing moving forward.

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