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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2017

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Officials: 2 sold drugs causing woman's death

■ Pregnant woman, fetus died from fentanyl bought from couple

GREEN BAY (AP) — The daughter of a Wisconsin legislator who has worked to stem the opioid epidemic provided the drugs that caused the death of a pregnant woman, investigators said Thursday.

Brown County sheriff's officials said they are recommending a long list of charges against 28-year-old Cassandra Nygren and her 33-year-old boyfriend, Shawn Gray, including first-degree reckless homicide by delivering drugs.

The two appeared in court Thursday and were ordered held on \$50,000 cash



Gray



Nygren

bond. Formal charges are expected next week.

Chief Deputy Todd Delain said Nygren and Gray provided the fentanyl that killed Jennifer Skeen, who was about six months pregnant when she died near Green Bay in June. The fetus

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DRUGS:

also did not survive. An obituary listed Skeen's age as 31.

At a news conference, Delain described the couple as mid-level dealers who sold drugs to support themselves and their drug habit. When officers attempted to arrest them on Oct. 10, Delain said they fled in a car with Nygren's 14-month-old child inside. They were later taken into custody.

Nygren's arrest is the latest chapter in her long battle with drugs. She spent two years in prison after a near-fatal overdose. She was released in 2014, becoming an advocate for sobriety, but was convicted again in 2015 of drug possession and admitted to

drug court, an alternative program aimed at helping participants fight addiction.

Nygren's struggles spurred her father, Republican Rep. John Nygren, to sponsor numerous bills aimed at curbing opioid addiction over the years. Republican Gov. Scott Walker has signed nearly 30 bills sponsored by Rep. Nygren since 2013 that deal with opioids.

The lawmaker said in a statement that his daughter's arrest is another example of "the disastrous and destructive consequences" of addiction.

"Cassie has publicly struggled with addiction and recovery for several years. This is a strong reminder of how fragile the road to recovery is. We will continue to support and pray for her recovery," he said.

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Representative's daughter jailed

Cassandra Nygren booked on multiple drug charges, reckless homicide

By **DAN KITKOWSKI**

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GREEN BAY — Cassandra "Cassie" L. Nygren, the daughter of Marinette lawmaker John Nygren, has been booked into the Brown County Jail on multiple charges, including two counts of first-degree reckless homicide — deliver drugs.

Nygren, 28, who lives in Green Bay, has not been formally charged, but she was booked Wednesday on eight charges,

according to the Brown County Jail inmate directory. Besides the two felony reckless homicide charges, she is to make her initial appearance on felony charges of manufacture deliver heroin, maintain drug trafficking place — dangerous drugs, possess with intent to deliver non-narcotics — amphetamine and possession of narcotic drugs — opium/derivative possession, along with misdemeanor



Nygren



Gray

charges of neglecting a child and possession of drug paraphernalia.

A man identified as Shawn M. Gray, 33, was also booked on charges of reckless homicide and drug charges in this case. Gray was also arrested for failure to comply with Sex Offender Registry, providing false information to Sex Offender Registry, resisting an officer and bail jumping, according to the Brown County

Sheriff's Office. He faces 13 charges total, including 10 felonies.

Nygren's Facebook states that she is engaged to Gray. They have the same Green Bay address, according to online court records.

Brown County Chief Deputy Todd Delain told the Green Bay Press-Gazette that Nygren and Gray were arrested in connection with a recent drug death. He declined to identify the person who over-

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NYGREN:

dosed. Investigators were still getting information to the district attorney's office, and the two were unlikely to be charged until today, Delain said. The sheriff's office was planning a news conference today to give more information, he said.

Nygren has had a public battle with heroin abuse for nearly 10 years. In 2010, she was sentenced to 18 months prison for possession of narcotic drugs. In 2015, she pleaded guilty to a drug possession charge. She was sentenced to probation, which was revoked in 2016, according to court records.

His daughter's drug problems prompted State Rep. John Nygren, R-Marinette, to get a series of laws passed focusing on heroin and other opioid abuse issues in Wisconsin. The legislation is known as the "Hope Agenda" — with HOPE being an acronym for Heroin, Opioid Prevention and Education.

Nygren issued a statement on his daughter's criminal matter. It reads:

"First and most importantly, I offer my sincere and heartfelt condolences for the loss of life. There are no words that we as a family can offer to give any real comfort for the trag-

ic loss. To the family and friends of the victims of this tragedy, please know that you are in our prayers and that our hearts are heavy.

"Cassie has publicly struggled with addiction and recovery for several years. This is a strong reminder of how fragile the road to recovery is. We will continue to support and pray for her recovery.

"This is just another example, in a seemingly endless line, of the disastrous and destructive consequences addiction continues to have on families and communities nationwide. These stories are the motivating factor behind all our work in the legislature to fight this epidemic.

"In this time of extreme sadness and sorrow, I request that privacy and respect be extended to those grieving from their loss."

In an Aug. 29 EagleHerald article, John

Nygren said Cassie helped encourage the HOPE agenda. Gov. Scott Walker and Assembly Speaker Robin Vos both praised Nygren for his work. Walker said Nygren is a national leader on the opioid abuse issue.

In the same article, Cassie called her father her No. 1 supporter. "The biggest concern coming forward with admitting I had an issue and a struggle was how my dad was going to perceive it and how he was going to look at me as a person," she said. "Growing up, all I wanted to do was make my dad proud."





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