

**PRESS RELEASE**

Retired NYPD Officer Arrested, Charged in Federal Court for Assaulting and Impeding MPD Officer during U.S. Capitol Breach

Tuesday, February 23, 2021

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of
Columbia

Assailant Attacked Law Enforcement with Pole Displaying Marine Corps Flag In Effort To Halt Certification of Presidential Election

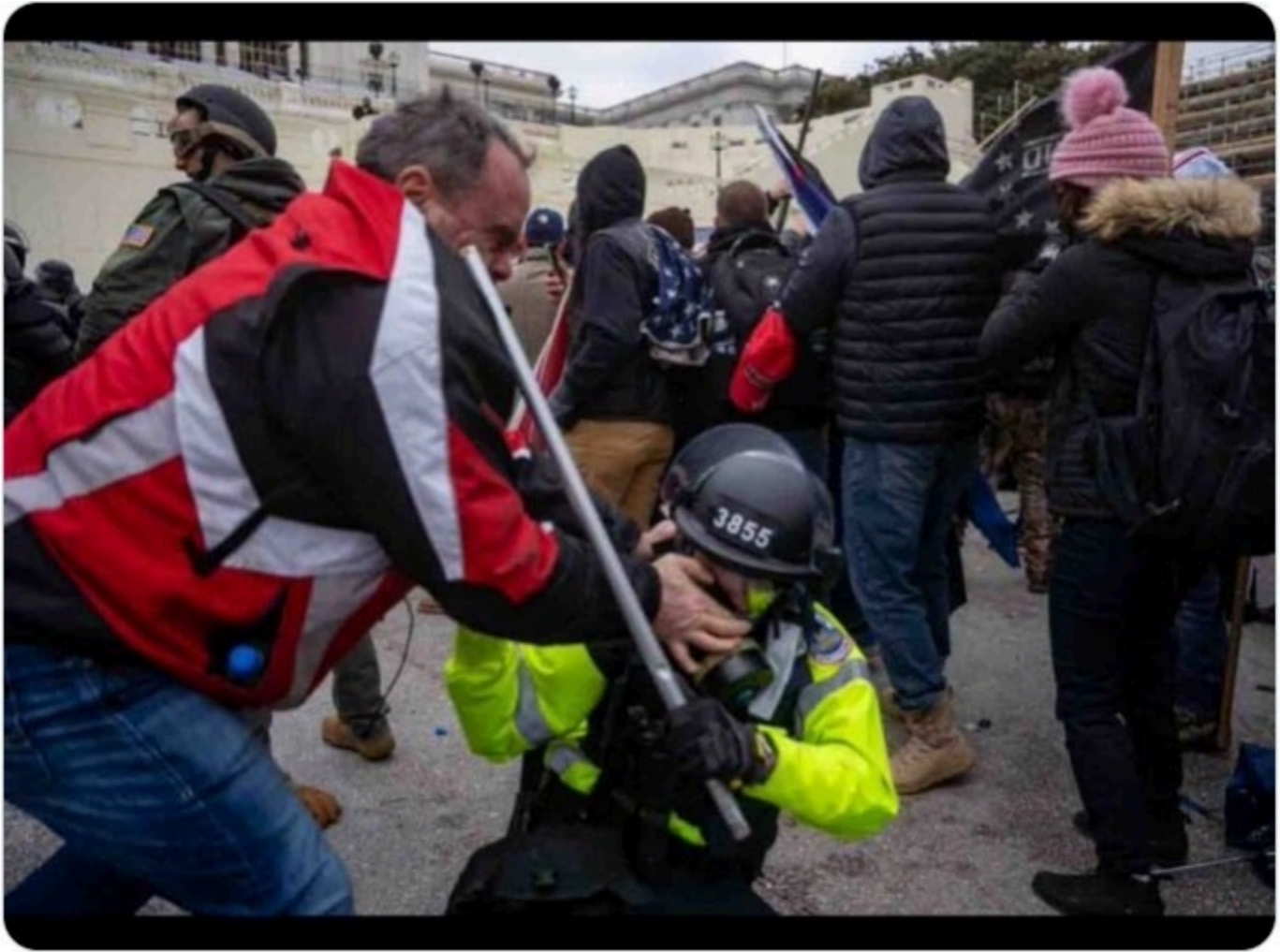
WASHINGTON, D.C. – A retired New York Police Department officer and former Marine appeared today in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York on charges stemming from his attack on a law enforcement officer, as well as other crimes, during the riots at the U.S. Capitol on January 6 that disrupted a Joint Session of the U.S. Congress in the process of affirming Presidential election results.

Thomas Webster, 54, of Town of Florida, New York, was charged by criminal complaint with one count of assaulting, resisting, opposing, impeding, intimidating, or interfering with any person assisting an officer or employee of the United States in the performance of their official duties while armed with a deadly or dangerous weapon, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 111(a)(1) and (b); one count of obstructing, impeding, or interfering with any law enforcement officer during the commission of a civil disorder which in any way obstructs or

delays the conduct or performance of any federally protected function, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 231(a)(3); one count each of unlawful entry, engaging in disorderly or disruptive conduct, and engaging in an act of physical violence against any person on restricted building or grounds while armed with a dangerous or deadly weapon, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1752(a)(1), (2), (4), and (b)(1)(A); and one count of violent entry and disorderly conduct on Capitol grounds, in violation of Title 40, United States Code, Section 5104(e)(2)(D) and (F).

Webster voluntarily was taken into custody yesterday and, at a detention hearing today in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, was ordered detained with a future appearance date of March 3, 2021.

The affidavit in support of the criminal complaint against Webster alleges that body worn camera footage depicts Webster's assault on a Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) officer who was assisting the U.S. Capitol Police in securing the exterior plaza of the U.S. Capitol on January 6. According to the affidavit, the body worn camera footage shows Webster --wearing a red, black, and white snow jacket, blue jeans, and brown work boots--approaching the MPD officer, who is barricaded behind a metal gate. Webster, carrying a large metal flagpole with a U.S. Marine Corps flag attached to it, waves his finger at the MPD officer, yelling: "You f----- piece of s---. You ----ing Commie m-----, man Come on, take your s---off. Take your s---off." After berating the MPD officer, Webster aggressively shoves the metal gate, behind which the officer was standing, into the officer's body and then arms himself with the metal flagpole. The footage then shows Webster raising the metal flagpole above his head and forcefully swinging downward, striking the metal barricade directly in front of the MPD officer. Webster then attempts to attack the officer by lunging toward him with the metal flagpole, striking at the officer with the flagpole numerous times. Webster proceeds to break through the metal barricade and begins charging toward the officer with clenched fists. Webster ultimately lunges at the officer and tackles him to the ground. The affidavit in support of the criminal complaint further alleges that additional footage posted to an open source Twitter medium captures the assault and shows Webster pinning the officer to the ground and straddling him while he tries forcibly to remove the officer's face shield and gas mask. According to the affidavit, the officer could not breathe during the assault because he was being choked by his chinstrap.



Video footage posted to YouTube depicts Webster on the staircase leading to the Upper West Terrace of the U.S. Capitol building, according to the affidavit. In that video footage, where he appears to be wearing a dark blue or black body armor vest over his torso, Webster says into the camera, “Send more patriots. We need some help.”

These cases are being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Columbia and the Counterterrorism Section of the DOJ’s National Security Division, with assistance from the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of New York. The cases are being investigated by the FBI’s Washington and New York Field Offices, along with the Metropolitan Police Department and the United States Capitol Police.

A criminal complaint is a formal accusation of criminal conduct for purposes of establishing probable cause, not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

The FBI is looking for individuals who may have incited or promoted violence of any kind. Anyone with digital material or tips can call 1-800-CALL-FBI (800-225-5324) or submit images or videos at www.fbi.gov/wanted/capitol-violence.

Updated February 24, 2021

Component

[USAO - District of Columbia](#)

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Related Content

PRESS RELEASE

Statement from U.S. Attorney Edward R. Martin, Jr.

See below statement from U.S. Attorney Edward R. Martin, Jr.

January 24, 2025

PRESS RELEASE

U.S. Attorney's Office Concludes Investigation Into Fatal Police Shooting of Dalaneo Martin

The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia announced today that there is insufficient evidence to pursue federal criminal civil rights or District of Columbia charges against a United...

November 7, 2024

PRESS RELEASE**Child Predator Sentenced to 10 ½ Year Prison Term for Abusing a Female Relative in 2015**

Gary Bellinger, 61, of Maryland, was sentenced today for child sexual abuse for the sexual abuse of a then-15-year-old female relative in 2015.

October 17, 2024

**District of Columbia**

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