



PRESS RELEASE

Leader of North Carolina Chapter of Oath Keepers Pleads Guilty to Seditious Conspiracy and Obstruction of Congress for Efforts to Stop Transfer of Power Following 2020 Presidential Election

Wednesday, May 4, 2022

For Immediate Release

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

Defendant is Third Member of Oath Keepers to Plead Guilty to Seditious Conspiracy Charge

WASHINGTON – A regional leader of the Oath Keepers pleaded guilty today to seditious conspiracy and obstruction of an official proceeding for his actions before, during, and after the breach of the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. His and others' actions sought to stop the transfer of power by disrupting a joint session of the U.S. Congress convened to ascertain and count the electoral votes related to the presidential election.

William Todd Wilson, 45, of Newton Grove, North Carolina, pleaded guilty in the District of Columbia to seditious conspiracy in connection with the Capitol breach. As part of the plea agreement, Wilson has agreed to cooperate with the government's ongoing investigation.

Wilson is the third Oath Keepers member to plead guilty to seditious conspiracy and obstruction charges. Joshua James, 34, of Arab, Alabama, pleaded guilty on March 2, 2022. Brian Ulrich, 44, of Guyton, Georgia, pleaded guilty on April 29, 2022.

As described in court documents, Wilson was an Oath Keeper member since 2016. He was a leader of a chapter from Sampson County, North Carolina. The Oath Keepers are a large but loosely organized collection of individuals, some of whom are associated with militias. Though the Oath Keepers will accept anyone as members, they explicitly focus on recruiting current and former military, law enforcement, and first-responder personnel.

In his guilty plea, Wilson, a military and law enforcement veteran, admitted that he agreed with others to take part in a plan to use force to prevent, hinder, and delay the execution of the laws of the United States governing the transfer of presidential power. He and others used encrypted and private communications, equipped themselves with a variety of weapons, donned combat and tactical gear, and were prepared to answer a call to take up arms.

According to court documents, Wilson and other conspirators engaged in numerous communications in the weeks leading to Jan. 6, often using an encrypted messaging application called "Signal." In one post, on Dec. 14, 2020, Wilson wrote, "It is time to fight!" In another, on Dec. 30, 2020, he posted, "Things are about to get real . . . and we need to be ready as ever!" On Jan. 5, 2021, in response to a message anticipating unrest after the next day's Congressional proceeding, Wilson replied, "That's why I have all my gear with me."

On Jan. 5, Wilson drove to the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. He brought an AR-15-style rifle, a 9-millimeter pistol, approximately 200 rounds of ammunition, body armor, a camouflaged combat uniform, pepper spray, a large walking stick intended for use as a weapon, and a pocketknife." He stayed at a Virginia hotel with other Oath Keepers leaders. Wilson stored his firearms, ammunition, and combat gear in the hotel room, and was prepared to retrieve the weapons if called upon to do so.

On the afternoon of Jan. 6, Wilson and others marched to the Capitol. Shortly after 2 p.m., he and others in the group bypassed barricades and Capitol Police officers and unlawfully entered the restricted grounds. At 2:34 p.m., Wilson entered the Capitol through the Upper West Terrace Doors. He was the first of the Oath Keepers co-conspirators to breach the building. Wilson was armed with a pocketknife and wore a neck gaiter and beanie hat to mask his appearance. By 2:38 p.m., he had marched through the Rotunda to the east side of the Capitol, where he joined in the center of a mob of people trying to push open the Rotunda Doors

from inside the building. About one minute later, the Rotunda Doors were forced open, and a mob of people, including more Oath Keepers, moved inside.

Wilson exited the Capitol at 2:55 p.m. He later met with other co-conspirators at a restaurant in Vienna, Virginia, where one member advised that incriminating materials should be deleted from their cell phones. On Jan. 7, after arriving at his home, Wilson took steps to conceal incriminating evidence of his participation in the conspiracy from being stored in his Apple iCloud account. In late January 2021, he intentionally discarded his only cell phone into the Atlantic Ocean to prevent law enforcement from discovering incriminating evidence about his participation in this conspiracy.

Wilson was charged in a criminal information that was filed today. Nine other members of the Oath Keepers, including Elmer Stewart Rhodes III, 57, the founder and leader, also are charged with seditious conspiracy in an indictment returned Jan. 12, 2022; they have pleaded not guilty.

Wilson faces up to 20 years in prison for seditious conspiracy and up to 20 years for obstruction of an official proceeding, along with potential financial penalties. No sentencing date was set. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

The case is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia and the Department of Justice National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section.

The case is being investigated by the FBI's Washington Field Office and the FBI's Charlotte Field Office, including its Fayetteville Resident Agency.

In the 15 months since Jan. 6, 2021, nearly 800 individuals have been arrested in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including over 250 individuals charged with assaulting or impeding law enforcement. The investigation remains ongoing.

Anyone with tips can call 1-800-CALL-FBI (800-225-5324) or visit tips.fbi.gov.

Updated May 5, 2022

Attachments

[Wilson - Information](#) [PDF, 184 KB]

[Wilson - Plea Agreement](#) [PDF, 4 MB]

[Wilson - Statement of Offense](#) [PDF, 3 MB]

Topic

VIOLENT CRIME

Components

[Federal Bureau of Investigation \(FBI\)](#) | [National Security Division \(NSD\)](#) | [USAO - District of Columbia](#)

Press Release Number: 22-130

Related Content

PRESS RELEASE

Guilty Plea in Theft and Sale of Hundreds of Government-Issued Phones and Computers Slated for Destruction

Nikhil Parekh, 37, of Randallstown, Maryland, pleaded guilty today in U.S. District Court in connection with the theft and sale of hundreds of government-issued smartphones, laptop computers, and other IT...

February 4, 2025

PRESS RELEASE**Alleged Armed Carjacker Charged After Arrest**

Parren Hawkins, 33, of Washington, D.C., was charged today in Superior Court with armed carjacking in connection with an incident, yesterday, in Northeast D.C. The charge was announced by U.S...

February 3, 2025

PRESS RELEASE**Murder of Shoe Reseller Results in 32 Year Sentence**

Darius Anderson, 23, of Washington, DC, was sentenced today to 32 years of in prison for first-degree murder while armed and related offenses in the June 2022 killing of 30-year...

January 31, 2025

**District of Columbia**

Main Office:

601 D Street, NW

Washington, DC

Email USAO-DC



Telephone: (202) 252-7566