



PRESS RELEASE

Alabama Man Found Guilty of Charges For Actions During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Friday, November 18, 2022

For Immediate Release

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

Defendant Was Among First in Mob to Enter Capitol Building

WASHINGTON – An Alabama man was found guilty today in the District of Columbia of felony charges for his actions during the breach of the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. His actions and the actions of others disrupted a joint session of the U.S. Congress convened to ascertain and count the electoral votes related to the presidential election.

William Watson, 25, of Auburn, Alabama, was found guilty of obstruction of an official proceeding and entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds with a dangerous weapon. Judge Reggie B. Walton returned the verdict after a trial in which Watson and the government agreed upon a stipulated set of facts regarding his conduct.

According to the stipulated facts, on Jan. 6, 2021, Watson was among a mob of rioters illegally on the Capitol grounds. He had a pocketknife on his waistband, which he used to tear down cloth around the inauguration scaffolding so that the crowd could move further up the steps toward the Capitol Building. Just after 2 p.m., the police line was overrun by rioters. Watson, along with others, stormed up the Capitol steps and across the Upper West Terrace

towards the Senate Wing Doors. He was among the first rioters to enter the building at approximately 2:13 p.m.

As Watson entered through the Senate Wing Door area, he completed the breaking a partially broken windowpane and jumped through the frame into the interior of the building. By then, he also had a cannister of chemical spray that he had found. Watson eventually arrived in the Ohio Clock Corridor near the Senate Chambers, where a group of rioters encountered several officers. Officers eventually escorted Watson and others out of the building. He later created a Snapchat story with a photo of himself and others in the Ohio Clock Corridor. Among other things, the caption stated, “The fake news won’t win against the thousands of patriots recorded today.”

Watson was arrested on May 4, 2021, in Alabama. He is to be sentenced on March 9, 2023. He faces a statutory maximum of 20 years in prison on the obstruction charge, as well as a statutory maximum of 10 years in prison for entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds with a dangerous weapon. The charges also carry potential financial penalties. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

This 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. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Middle District of Alabama.

The case is being investigated by the FBI’s Mobile Field Office and its Auburn Resident Agency, and the FBI’s Washington Field Office, which identified Watson as #22 on its seeking information photos. Valuable assistance was provided by the Metropolitan Police Department and the U.S. Capitol Police.

In the 22 months since Jan. 6, 2021, nearly 900 individuals have been arrested in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including over 275 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 November 21, 2022

Attachment

[Watson - Statement of Facts for Stipulated Trial](#) [PDF, 444 KB]

Topic

VIOLENT CRIME

Components

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

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PRESS RELEASE

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

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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

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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



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