

**PRESS RELEASE**

Florida Man Pleads Guilty to Striking Officer During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Wednesday, November 30, 2022

For Immediate Release

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

Defendant Took Part in Attack on Officers in Lower West Terrace Area

WASHINGTON — A Florida man pleaded guilty today to assaulting, resisting, or impeding a law enforcement officer with a dangerous weapon 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.

Mason Joel Courson, 27, of Tamarac, Florida, pleaded guilty in the District of Columbia.

According to court documents, on Jan. 6, 2021, Courson was part of a mob that confronted law enforcement officers at the Archway and tunnel areas leading into the Capitol Building from the Lower West Terrace. By approximately 4:20 p.m., hundreds of rioters were gathered there, some of whom were throwing and/or swinging various objects at a group of law enforcement officers.

During the violence, at approximately 4:27 p.m., another rioter, Jack Wade Whitton, climbed over a railing and began striking an officer with a crutch, also kicking him. Whitton then grabbed the officer and dragged him down the steps. He and others then dragged him fully into the crowd. Courson, who was at the bottom of the steps, beat the officer with a police baton. The officer sustained physical injuries, including bruising and abrasions.

Courson is to be sentenced on March 31, 2023. He faces a statutory maximum of 20 years in prison, as well as potential financial penalties. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Courson is among a group of defendants named in an indictment in this case that was returned in the District of Columbia. Three others have pleaded guilty. Whitton, 32, of Locust Grove, Georgia, pleaded guilty on Sept. 13, 2022. Justin Jersey, 32, of Flint, Michigan, pleaded guilty on Sept. 7, 2022. Logan James Barnhart, 42, of Holt, Michigan, pleaded guilty on Sept. 28, 2022. All are awaiting sentencing. Four others have pleaded not guilty and are awaiting further court proceedings.

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. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida.

The case is being investigated by the FBI's Washington Field Office, which identified Courson as #129 in its seeking information photos, as well as the FBI's Miami Field Office. Significant assistance has been provided in the investigation by the Metropolitan Police Department, the U.S. Capitol Police, and other FBI field offices.

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 December 2, 2022

Attachments

[Courson - Government Notice in Preparation for Plea Hearing](#) [PDF, 307 KB]

[Courson - Indictment](#) [PDF, 432 KB]

Topic

VIOLENT CRIME

Components

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

Press Release Number: 22-432

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