



PRESS RELEASE

Florida Man Found Guilty of Felony and Misdemeanor Charges Related to Capitol Breach

Monday, May 15, 2023

For Immediate Release

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

Defendant Assaulted Officers with Pepper Spray

WASHINGTON – A Florida man and self-identified Proud Boy was found guilty in the District of Columbia of all charged felony and misdemeanor counts for his actions during the Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol breach. 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.

Christopher Worrell, 51, of Naples, Florida, was found guilty on May 12, 2023, of assaulting, resisting, or impeding certain officers using a dangerous weapon, obstruction of an official proceeding of Congress, and obstructing, impeding, or interfering with officers during the commission of a civil disorder, entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds with a deadly or dangerous weapon, disorderly and disruptive conduct in a restricted building or grounds with a deadly or dangerous weapon, engaging in physical violence with a deadly or dangerous weapon all felonies, and an act of physical violence in the Capitol Grounds or Buildings, a misdemeanor. The verdict followed a five-day bench trial before U.S. District Judge Royce C. Lamberth, who commented in reading the verdict that the defendant's defense that he

had been pepper spraying other violent rioters, instead of U.S. Capitol Police officers, was “preposterous” and that the defendant’s testimony presented an “unbelievable” and “false narrative” that was “undermined by the contradictions and post-January 6 false statements identified by the government during Mr. Worrell’s cross-examination and the government’s rebuttal case.” Judge Lamberth scheduled sentencing for August 18, 2023.

The evidence at trial showed that, on January 6, 2021, Worrell was a member of the “Hurricane Coast Zone 5” Proud Boys chapter. In the weeks leading up to January 6, Worrell and other members of the Proud Boys shared their animosity toward the police in an encrypted chat application. On the morning of January 6, Worrell, dressed in a tactical vest and carrying two canisters of pepper gel, marched with other Proud Boys from the Washington Monument to the United States Capitol. He passed U.S. Capitol Police officers and warned them not to resist, saying “honor your oaths, on your knees,” and “don’t make us go against you.” Worrell and other “Zone 5” members breached the restricted perimeter and reached the West Plaza of the Capitol by approximately 1:00 p.m. He then filmed himself calling the U.S. Capitol Police officers “scum,” “piece[s] of “sh**,” and “commies,” among other expletives and insults.

At approximately 1:31 p.m., he stepped forward and sprayed pepper gel at a line of police officers trying to defend the Capitol from the mob on the West Plaza. Worrell later bragged that he had “deployed a whole can” and was “f***** handing it to them.” A photojournalist present at the Capitol witnessed Worrell spraying toward the officers, and took a photograph that captured the moment.

Approximately twenty minutes later, Worrell’s fellow Zone 5 Proud Boy member and co-defendant Daniel Scott shoved two USCP officers who were defending a staircase leading to the Upper West Terrace of the Capitol. Mr. Scott’s assaults collapsed the police line, allowing a large group of rioters to make their way up the stairs to the Capitol building, where they became the first group of rioters to break into the building itself. Worrell and other members of Zone 5 celebrated Scott’s assault, with Worrell turning the camera on himself to say: “Yeah! Taking the Capitol!”

Worrell was arrested on March 12, 2021, in Naples, Florida.

Worrell faces up to 20 years in prison for each felony count, plus potential financial penalties. The Court 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. Valuable assistance was provided by U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Middle District of Florida.

The case was investigated by the FBI’s Tampa Field Office-Fort Myers Resident Agency and the Sarasota Resident Agency and the Washington Field Office. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department.

In the 28 months since Jan. 6, 2021, more than 1,000 individuals have been arrested in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including more than 320 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 15, 2023

Topic

VIOLENT CRIME

Components

[Federal Bureau of Investigation \(FBI\)](#) | [USAO - District of Columbia](#) | [USAO - Florida, Middle](#)

Press Release Number: 23-258

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