



PRESS RELEASE

California Man Arrested on Felony Charge For Actions During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Wednesday, June 7, 2023

For Immediate Release

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

Defendant Accused of Fighting Police in the Lower West Terrace "Tunnel"

WASHINGTON — A California man has been arrested on felony charge 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.

Jay James Johnston, 54, of Los Angeles, California, is charged in a criminal complaint filed in the District of Columbia with interfering with law enforcement officers in relation to and during a civil disorder, entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds, disorderly and disruptive conduct in a restricted building or grounds, and impeding passage through Capitol grounds. He surrendered to the FBI Los Angeles field office today. He is expected to make his initial appearance today in the Central District of California.

According to court documents, on January 6, 2021, Johnston was near the front of the mob illegally amassed on the West Plaza of the United States Capitol Building. After the police on the West Plaza were forced to retreat, Johnston, along with others, pursued the police to the

Lower West Terrace and into tunnel that leads into the Capitol Building. At approximately 3:05 p.m., he entered the tunnel. Law enforcement officers had formed a protective line with riot shields inside the tunnel in an effort to defend the entrance to the U.S. Capitol. While inside the tunnel, Johnston was handed a stolen U.S. Capitol police riot shield by other rioters. Johnston then participated with other rioters in a group push effort against the police in the tunnel. Johnston then walked back toward the entrance of the tunnel before turning around and again participating in another group push effort, during which the crowd called, “HEAVE! HO!” as it pushed against the police. Johnston left the tunnel at approximately 3:13 p.m. carrying another stolen U.S. Capitol Police riot shield, which he handed to another rioter as he exited the tunnel.

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 Central District of California.

The case is being investigated by the FBI’s Los Angeles Field Office and the FBI’s Washington Field Office, which identified Johnston as AFO #247 on its seeking information photos. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department.

In the 29 months since Jan. 6, 2021, more than 1,000 individuals have been charged in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including nearly 350 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.

A complaint is merely an allegation, and all defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

Updated June 7, 2023

Attachments

[Jay J. Johnston criminal complaint redacted](#) [PDF, 232 KB]

[signed_jay_j._johnston_statement_of_facts_redacted](#) [PDF, 2 MB]

Topic

VIOLENT CRIME

Components

[Federal Bureau of Investigation \(FBI\)](#)

|

[USAO - California, Central](#)

|

[USAO - District of Columbia](#)

Press Release Number: 23-306

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