



PRESS RELEASE

Ohio Man Found Guilty of Felony Charge Related to Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Tuesday, August 8, 2023

For Immediate Release

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

Defendant Illegally Entered Capitol, Remained Inside for Approximately 30 Minutes

WASHINGTON – An Ohio man was found guilty in the District of Columbia today on one felony count and one misdemeanor count for his actions during the Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol breach during a stipulated bench trial. 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.

Ethan C. Seitz, 34, of Sandusky, Ohio, was convicted of one charge of obstructing an official proceeding and a charge of disorderly or disruptive behavior in a restricted building. The stipulated trial was held before U.S. District Court Judge Dabney L. Friedrich.

According to the government's stipulated evidence, Seitz was among rioters in a mob that illegally entered the Capitol grounds and Capitol Building on Jan. 6, 2021.

On Jan. 5, 2021, Seitz traveled by himself to Washington, D.C., because he believed the 2020 Presidential Election had been stolen and that former President Trump was the rightful victor.

Before leaving on his trip, he texted a family member on January 2 that “I’m leaving on the 5th and going to DC. I’ll be back on the 7th. Pray hard that I have a safe and successful trip please.”

He texted a second family member that “Trump personally has asked goes [sic] this fight the election fraud!” In a second text, he explained his thinking: [W]e are both convinced there is a war going on. With the deep state. But also a war between Good and Evil. And we had a conversation about the possibilities of what could happen if things we think come true. And also putting on the armor of God and fighting. And regardless of what is happening I feel like this is my first time to really stand up. ... I have high hopes in the great awakening. But things could get way worse. And way fast. I take a stand now if only for the experience of it. Cause I’m a stand firm [sic] on the belief that the time is very quickly approaching when good men are gonna have to do bad things. Because it’s war.

Consistent with his plans, Seitz attended the rally in support of the former president and then marched to the Capitol with the crowd and joined the riot..

In a series of Facebook messages, Seitz described his participation in real-time. At 2:06 p.m. he wrote, “Cops blocking Capitol they just threw tear gas.” At 2:25 p.m., Seitz wrote, “I’m goin in the capitol.” Slightly less than two minutes later, Seitz entered the Capitol through a broken window next to the Senate Wing Door and wrote on Facebook, “I just climbed in through a broken window.”

Inside the Capitol, Seitz wrote that he was hit multiple times with pepper spray and tear gas multiple times. “I had to climb back out I couldnt breath,” he posted. At 2:55 p.m., Seitz wrote he had climbed out a smashed-out window near the Senate Wing Door.

By 4:28 p.m., Seitz was among a group of rioters being pushed back by police outside the west side of the Capitol Building. While being pushed back by an officer, Seitz grasped an officer’s baton.

In an interview given that evening, Seitz stated he was part of a group that rushed in and “made it to the other side of the building” before encountering a locked and barricaded door. Once Seitz’s group had amassed enough people, “we pushed through and let the other side in.” He said: “we’re here because we care about the integrity of the election and Donald Trump won this election.”

In another Facebook message that evening, Seitz wrote that he “didnt expect to be on the frontline storming the capitol and taking the building lol.”

On March 19, 2021, Seitz was arrested in Bucyrus, Ohio.

Seitz is to be sentenced on Jan. 8, 2024. The felony obstruction charge carries a statutory maximum of 20 years in prison and 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 Northern District of Ohio and the Department of Justice's Criminal Division.

The case was investigated by the FBI's Cleveland Field Office. Valuable assistance was provided by the FBI's Washington Field Office, the U.S. Capitol Police, and the Metropolitan Police Department.

In the 31 months since Jan. 6, 2021, more than 1,106 individuals have been arrested in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including over 372 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 August 8, 2023

Topic

VIOLENT CRIME

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Press Release Number: 23-446

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**District of Columbia**

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