



PRESS RELEASE

Iowa Man Sentenced on Felony and Misdemeanor Charges Related to Actions During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Friday, August 18, 2023

For Immediate Release

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

Defendant Accessed Senate Chamber, Ascended Senate Dias, Rifled through Documents

WASHINGTON – An Iowa man was sentenced in the District of Columbia today on seven offenses, including one felony, committed during the Jan. 6, 2021, U.S. 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 2020 presidential election.

Leo Christopher Kelly, 37, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Royce C. Lamberth to 30 months in prison, 36 months of supervised release, and ordered to pay \$7,000 in restitution and fines.

Kelly was found guilty following a trial by jury on May 9, 2023, of obstruction of an official proceeding, a felony offense. In addition, Kelly was convicted of six other misdemeanor offenses, including entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds, disorderly and disruptive conduct in a restricted building or grounds, entering and remaining on the floor of the

Congress, disorderly conduct in a Capitol building, and parading, demonstrating, or picketing in a Capitol building.

According to court documents and evidence presented during the trial, Kelly was one of the very few rioters who breached the Senate Chamber during his participation in the January 6th attack on the Capitol. Once inside the Senate Chamber, Kelly ascended the Senate Dais, leafed through sensitive documents, and took photos of them.

According to court documents, Kelly drove to Washington, D.C. on Jan. 5, 2021, from his home in Iowa. On January 6, Kelly joined a large group of people, including his parents, for a rally at the Ellipse. After the rally, Kelly and his parents marched towards the Capitol building.

Kelly eventually made his way past the barriers to the West Terrace Courtyard, where rioters had broken into the Senate Wing door and flooded into the building. Kelly used his phone to capture video of the scene. His footage showed shattered glass windows, rioters, and police officers in riot gear guarding the inside of the Capitol.

Around that same time, a rioter began bashing in the Parliamentarian's Door just across the courtyard from Kelly. After the rioter bashed in the window with a metal pole and opened the door for the mob, rioters rushed into the building, Kelly included.

Kelly entered the Capitol building through the Parliamentarian's Door at approximately 2:43 p.m. Upon entering, Kelly watched as another rioter used a metal stand to bash in an office door. Across the hallway, rioters had already breached the Parliamentarian's Office. Kelly entered that office for a short time, walked out and down the hallway a few more steps, and again entered the office through a second door.

Kelly entered the ransacked office, shooting video on his phone. Shortly after, Kelly rejoined the rioters in the hallway and faced off against an outnumbered line of officers attempting to keep the rioters back. Despite the clear indications that they should leave, the rioters charged forward into the police line. The mob then grabbed a rioter under arrest and pulled him back into the crowd. Chanting "USA! USA! USA!" and screaming, "THIS IS OURS!" the rioters successfully pushed the police line all the way back to the end of the hallway. Kelly then approached a large bay window, looked out the window towards the rioters still outside the building, pumped his fist in the air, and smiled.

Kelly then joined the mob as it started down a second hallway and encountered another police line. To the rioters' right and front, officers held a police line guarding hallways that led into the Capitol building. To the rioters' left, there was an exit. Kelly stepped towards the police line until he was face-to-face with the officers guarding the stairway that led to the Senate Chamber. As Kelly confronted the police line, he ignored officers' repeated orders to exit out of the nearby door. Rioters promptly started to "push and shove" the police officers. After tussling with the officers, one rioter near Kelly stepped through the police line. When an officer turned

to grab the rioter, Kelly took a step forward and created a gap for all the rioters behind him to “pour through” the now-broken police line, opening a path to access the staircase that led directly to the Senate Chamber.

From there, Kelly ascended the stairs to the second floor and ultimately made his way onto the Senate floor as rioters flooded the Chamber, yelling, screaming, and ransacking the Senators’ desks. Kelly made his way to the head of the room – to the Senate Dais – where shortly before, the Vice President had presided over Senate convened to certify the electoral college vote.

Kelly rifled through sensitive documents and took video footage of the papers on the Vice President’s desk, including a ballot sheet, handwritten notes, and a script. Kelly then joined a group of rioters and “prayed” to “send a message to the tyrants, the communists, and the globalists that this is our nation, not theirs.” Kelly then rifled through sensitive documents on another desk in the Senate Chamber.

Kelly exited the Chamber soon after officers entered. As he walked out of the Capitol, he pumped his fist in the air and smiled. After Kelly left the Capitol grounds, he sent texts to his mother declaring, “I am not dead and not in jail” and “I’m safe and sound. Only a little tear [g]as in the back of my throat.”

Kelly sent the photos that he took in the Senate Chamber to several individuals, including a reporter, and he sent video footage of the siege to his friends.

On January 18, 2021, FBI agents arrested Kelly in Cedar Rapids. On Dec. 3, 2021, a federal grand jury returned an indictment charging Kelly with seven counts,

This case was prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Columbia and the Department of Justice National Security Division’s Counterterrorism Section, with valuable assistance provided by the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Northern District of Iowa.

This case was investigated by the FBI’s Omaha and Washington Field Office, with valuable assistance provided by the Metropolitan Police Department and U.S. Capitol Police.

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 more than 350 individuals charged with assaulting or impeding law enforcement.

Anyone with tips can call 1-800-CALL-FBI (800-225-5324) or visit tips.fbi.gov.

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Topic

VIOLENT CRIME

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February 4, 2025

PRESS RELEASE

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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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