



PRESS RELEASE

Ohio Man Sentenced on Felony Charges for Assaulting Police Officers During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Friday, November 17, 2023

For Immediate Release

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

WASHINGTON — An Ohio man was sentenced on Thursday, Nov. 16, 2023, for assaults on several police officers 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 2020 presidential election.

Kenneth Joseph Owen “Joe” Thomas, 41, of East Liverpool, Ohio, was sentenced in the District of Columbia to 58 months in prison on seven counts that included four separate counts of assaulting, resisting or impeding certain officers; obstruction of law enforcement during civil disorder; and engaging in disorderly and disruptive conduct on Capitol grounds. A jury found Thomas, also known as “Pi Anon,” guilty on June 1, 2023, in U.S. District Court.

In addition to the prison term, the Honorable Dabney L. Friedrich ordered 36 months of supervised release, restitution of \$2,000, and a \$20,000 fine.

According to the government’s evidence, Thomas was on the Upper West Terrace at 3:30 p.m. on Jan. 6, 2021, standing in front of a line of police officers who were preventing the rioters from advancing further towards the Capitol. When the mob surged forward against the police line, Thomas twice charged the line of police officers, striking and shoving two Metropolitan

Police Department (MPD) officers with his hands. Thomas' assaults were captured on police body-worn cameras (BWC) and in many open-source videos from the scene.

Then, approximately an hour later, in a different part of the Upper West Terrace, Thomas was captured on MPD BWC footage advancing toward a line of law enforcement and pushing against their shields. At 4:26 p.m., officers began to advance to dispel the crowd of rioters from the steps. Thomas turned toward rioters and ordered them to "hold the line" against advancing officers, repeating this statement fifteen times as he locked arms with the other rioters and pushed against the officers. At 4:28 p.m., as officers worked to clear the Upper West Terrace, Thomas rushed to the head of the line of rioters and twice threw himself into an MPD officer while yelling to the rioters, "hold the f-ing line." In subsequent interviews, law enforcement officers confirmed the attack and stated Thomas "was one of the first to come in and start hitting [and] pushing officers on the line."

Thomas was identified from open-source photos and videos.

The FBI arrested Thomas on May 26, 2021, in Huntsville, Alabama.

The 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. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Ohio and the Northern District of Alabama.

The case was investigated by the FBI's Birmingham and Washington Field Offices, who identified Thomas as #214 on their seeking information photos. Valuable assistance was provided by the Metropolitan Police Department and the U.S. Capitol Police.

In the 34 months since Jan. 6, 2021, more than 1,200 individuals have been charged in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including more than 400 individuals charged with assaulting or impeding law enforcement, a felony. The investigation remains ongoing.

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

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VIOLENT CRIME

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**District of Columbia**

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