

**PRESS RELEASE**

Washington State Man Found Guilty of Assaulting Law Enforcement and Other Charges for Actions During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Tuesday, November 21, 2023

For Immediate Release

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

WASHINGTON - A Washington state man was found guilty in the District of Columbia today of assaulting law enforcement and other felony and misdemeanor charges related to his conduct during the Jan. 6, 2021, breach of the U.S. Capitol. 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.

Taylor James Johnatakis, 39, of Kingston, Washington, was convicted of seven charges, including three felonies, by a federal jury in Washington, D.C. Johnatakis was convicted of obstruction of an official proceeding, civil disorder, and assaulting, resisting, or impeding certain officers, all felony offenses. In addition to the felonies, Johnatakis was convicted of four misdemeanor charges, including entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds; disorderly and disruptive conduct in a restricted building or grounds; engaging in physical violence in a restricted building or grounds; and engaging in an act of physical violence in the grounds of any of the Capitol building.

U.S. District Judge Royce C. Lamberth will sentence Johnatakis at a later date.

According to evidence presented during the trial, Johnatakis led a mob of rioters up a staircase on the West Front of the Capitol. He came to the Capitol with a megaphone strapped to his back. He joined the riot at the base of the southwest staircase when the mob was overwhelming police officers, who were forced to retreat toward the Capitol. Johnatakis followed right behind those retreating police officers, underneath the scaffolding of the Inaugural Stage. He was one of the first rioters to reach the top of the southwest staircase, where he was confronted with a line of police barricades and police officers protecting the Capitol.

Johnatakis organized and coordinated other rioters to assault the police line at the top of the southwest staircase. Specifically, using his megaphone, Johnatakis directed rioters to move up to the police line and yelled at the rioters to “pack it in! pack it in!” Johnatakis then instructed the crowd through the megaphone that they were going to push the bike racks “one foot” at a time and counted, “one, two, three, GO!!” Johnatakis and his fellow rioters — including co-defendants Isaac Steve Sturgeon and Craig Michael Bingert — grabbed the bike racks in front of them and pushed them forcibly into the line of police officers. Numerous police officers ran to reinforce the line as the rioters thrust the metal bike racks forward into the officers. As a result of this attack, at least one police officer was injured.

Johnatakis was arrested on Feb. 11, 2021, in Washington State by the FBI.

Sturgeon and Bingert were both previously sentenced for their roles in the January 6th Capitol Breach.

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 Western District of Washington.

This case is being investigated by the FBI’s Seattle and Washington Field Offices, which identified Johnatakis as BOLO (Be on the Lookout) #103 on its seeking information photos. Valuable assistance was provided by the United States Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department.

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.

Updated November 28, 2023

Topic

VIOLENT CRIME

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**District of Columbia**

Main Office:
601 D Street, NW
Washington, DC

Email USAO-DC



Telephone: (202) 252-7566