



PRESS RELEASE

New York Woman Sentenced on Felony and Misdemeanor Charges for Actions During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Tuesday, December 19, 2023

For Immediate Release

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

WASHINGTON – A New York woman was sentenced to prison today on several felony and misdemeanor charges related to her conduct during the breach of the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. Her 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.

Sara Carpenter, 54, of Richmond Hill, New York, was sentenced to 22 months in prison and 24 months of supervised release by U.S. District Chief Judge James E. Boasberg. A federal jury in the District of Columbia found Carpenter guilty on March 9, 2023, of felony charges, civil disorder, and obstruction of an official proceeding. Carpenter was also convicted of misdemeanor charges of entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds, disorderly and disruptive conduct in a restricted building or grounds, disorderly conduct in a Capitol building, impeding passage through the Capitol grounds or buildings, and parading, demonstrating, or picketing in a Capitol building.

According to court documents, on Jan. 6, 2021, Carpenter, who once served as a police officer in New York City, was among rioters gathered at the west front of the Capitol building. Carpenter then made her way up the Inaugural stage, ignoring barriers, and a line of police officers. As she ascended to the stage, tear-gas smoke enveloped the crowd on the West Plaza.

Outside the emergency doors on the Upper West Terrace, Carpenter's fellow rioters had been using Inaugural stage construction material and stolen barriers to build an obstacle between the rioters and officers. The makeshift barrier did not slow Carpenter, moving a bike rack barrier clearly marked "AREA CLOSED" and marched up the steps to the doors.

Carpenter entered the Capitol through the Upper West Terrace emergency exit doors while shaking a tambourine ignoring a blaring alarm.

Once inside the Capitol building, Carpenter rallied other rioters in the Rotunda to follow her into the Old Senate Chamber hallway. There, Carpenter made her way up to the front of a mob and faced another line of officers, screaming at them: "I am a f-ing animal," "it ain't stopping," "do you hear me back there?" Carpenter's actions ignited the crowd behind her, who pushed against the police to get past them. During the confrontation, Carpenter slapped away the arm of an officer, who was trying to push her back, with her tambourine. Other rioters even tried, unsuccessfully, to hold her back and dissuade her from further violence.

The evidence at trial showed that Carpenter refused direct orders from police to leave the building. As the mob pushed, Carpenter continued to say, "This is my house" and "no" as officers attempted to force her back. Officers eventually deployed pepper spray to disperse the crowd. While many of the rioters retreated, Carpenter did not. Carpenter remained, telling the police, "This ain't nothing," when referring to the spray. And, despite the violence and the pepper spray, Carpenter remained inside the Capitol until she was pushed out through the Rotunda Doors by police. In total, Carpenter spent over thirty minutes inside.

As Carpenter exited the building, she raised her tambourine in triumph, celebrating what she believed was her success in stopping Congress from certifying the 2020 presidential election result. On the steps of the East Rotunda Doors, Carpenter rejoiced, announcing, "The breach was made, and it needs to calm down now. Congress needs to come out, they need to certify Trump as president, and this is our house."

The FBI arrested Carpenter on March 23, 2021, in Jamaica, N.Y.

This case was prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

This case was investigated by the FBI's Washington Field Office. Valuable assistance was provided by the FBI's New York Field Office, the U.S. Capitol Police, the U.S. Secret Service, and the Metropolitan Police Department.

In the 35 months since Jan. 6, 2021, more than 1,230 individuals have been charged in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including more than 440

individuals charged with assaulting or impeding law enforcement, a felony. The investigation is 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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