



PRESS RELEASE

Texas Man Found Guilty of Felony and Misdemeanor Charges for Actions During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Tuesday, January 2, 2024

For Immediate Release

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

Defendant Wore Body Armor, Carried a Tactical Tomahawk

WASHINGTON – A Texas man was convicted of several felony and misdemeanor charges in the District of Columbia today related to his actions during the Jan. 6, 2021, 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.

Alex Kirk Harkrider, 36, of Carthage, TX., was convicted of felony charges of civil disorder, obstruction of an official proceeding, entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds with a deadly or dangerous weapon, and disorderly and disruptive conduct in a restricted building or grounds with a deadly or dangerous weapon. Harkrider was also found guilty of misdemeanor charges of theft of government property, disorderly conduct in a Capitol building, and parading, demonstrating, or picketing in a Capitol building.

Harkrider was convicted following a stipulated bench trial before U.S. District Judge Royce C. Lamberth. He is scheduled to be sentenced on May 9, 2024.

According to the stipulated facts, Harkrider traveled from his home in Texas to Washington, D.C., with his friend and co-defendant, Ryan Nichols, based on their belief that the 2020 presidential election was fraudulent. Harkrider and Nichols exchanged text messages in the preceding days, planning and organizing for the trip. In one message, Nichols sent Harkrider a photograph of body armor and pricing, stating that the body armor would protect against various bullets. In another series of messages to Harkrider, Nichols stated, “Dad and I are building a gun container in the truck today. Just know I have intel that Washington will be a warzone. Big possibility that actual battle goes down.”

Court documents say that Harkrider and Nichols each brought two firearms with them on their trip, transporting them in the box built for Nichols’ truck. On the night of Jan. 5, 2021, Harkrider and Nichols attended a rally on the streets of Washington, D.C.

On Jan. 6, 2021, Harkrider and Nichols attended the “Stop the Steal” rally at the Ellipse and then marched toward the U.S. Capitol building. Harkrider and Nichols both wore body armor. Harkrider was armed with a tactical tomahawk axe. The two joined a large crowd of rioters that had gathered in front of an arched entrance to the Lower West Terrace doors, also known as the Tunnel. This was the site of some of the most violent assaults on law enforcement officers on January 6th. Rioters at the Tunnel battled officers for hours as they attempted to storm the Capitol building.

At approximately 3:56 p.m., Harkrider and Nichols pushed with the crowd against law enforcement officers in the Tunnel in synchronized movements. Harkrider then took hold of a red canister, held it above his head for more than ten seconds, and passed it to other members of the crowd. The canister was identified as a stolen police canister of O.C. spray. Harkrider and Nichols then continued to push with the crowd against the officers, rocking back and forth as the crowd chanted, “Heave! Ho!”

At about 4:13 p.m., Nichols observed another rioter attempting to break a window to the Capitol with a stolen canister of police pepper spray. Nichols and Harkrider then entered the Capitol through a broken window, specifically entering Room ST-2M. Before entering the Capitol, Harkrider pumped his fist in the air. Harkrider and Nichols then emerged from the room and stood on a window ledge. From the ledge, Nichols, using a bullhorn, shouted to other rioters, “Get in the building, this is your country, get in the building, we will not be told ‘No,’” “This is the second revolution,” “This is not a peaceful protest,” and “If you have a weapon, you need to get your weapon!”

Harkrider and Nichols exited the Capitol building at about 4:35 p.m. As he was leaving, Harkrider picked up a broken piece of government furniture from the Capitol and took it to his home in Texas. Authorities later recovered the stolen item during the execution of a search warrant.

Harkrider and Nichols each were arrested on Jan. 18, 2021. Nichols pleaded guilty on Nov. 7, 2023, to obstruction of an official proceeding and assaulting, resisting, or impeding certain officers, both felony offenses.

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 Eastern District of Texas.

This case is being investigated by the FBI’s Dallas and Washington Field Offices. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Capitol Police 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 remains ongoing.

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

Updated January 2, 2024

Topic

VIOLENT CRIME

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**District of Columbia**

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