



PRESS RELEASE

New Jersey Man Sentenced on Felony Charge for Actions During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Wednesday, January 3, 2024

For Immediate Release

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

WASHINGTON - A New Jersey man was sentenced today on a felony charge related to his actions 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.

Ezekiel Kurt Stecher, 49, of Sewell, New Jersey, was sentenced to 60 days incarceration and 24 months of supervised release by U.S. District Judge Randolph D. Moss. Stecher pleaded guilty to a felony charge of civil disorder on June 16, 2023.

According to court documents, Stecher drove from New Jersey to Washington, D.C., to attend the "Stop the Steal" rally scheduled to take place at the Ellipse on Jan. 6, 2021. After the rally, Stecher marched with the crowd towards the Capitol building and, by 2:28 p.m., had made his way with other rioters to the West Plaza, where police officers had set up a defensive line. At that time, violent scuffles between the rioters and the officers were occurring. Despite witnessing this violence and despite making assertions supporting the police, Stecher did not turn back, even as law enforcement officers were telling the rioters to leave the area. Police soon retreated from the West Plaza, and Stecher followed in the same direction, making his way

to the Lower West Terrace area and, from there, to the exterior of the Lower West Terrace Tunnel.

Stecher arrived at the Lower West Terrace Tunnel entrance at about 2:44 p.m. and, by 2:47 p.m., had climbed atop a ledge near the archway to view the confrontation inside the Tunnel. Stecher stepped off the ledge and forcefully banged on the archway's wall with this hand more than a dozen times. Stecher then advanced deeper into the Tunnel and repeatedly yelled at police officers in the area. When OC spray, or other irritants, filled the Tunnel, Stecher used his jacket's hood to cover himself but did not leave. Instead, he penetrated deeper into the Tunnel and aggressively berated police officers who were attempting to stop him and the others from illegally entering the Capitol building.

Court documents say that for the next 10 minutes, Stecher remained deep inside the Tunnel, near the swinging double doors leading to the Capitol, as increasingly violent confrontations unfolded between police and rioters. Stecher stood within feet as other rioters assaulted police officers, attempted to impede the officers' vision with strobe flashlights, sprayed chemicals at officers, threw objects into the Tunnel, and robbed the officers of their riot shields. At about 2:59 p.m., Stecher exited and reentered the Tunnel, marching directly toward the front of the police line, forcefully pushing the crowd toward the metal doors leading into the Capitol.

Stecher advanced to the double doors leading into the Capitol, and there, in concert with other rioters, he pushed as part of a collective "Heave! Ho!" effort against the law enforcement lines. Stecher was later forced to retreat from the Tunnel after he was hit with OC spray by law enforcement. As he exited the Tunnel, Stecher advised other rioters, "If we can't push them, drag 'em!" Despite leaving the Tunnel, Stecher remained on the Inaugural stage inside the restricted area of the Capitol as other rioters continued to battle with the police.

Stecher was arrested on March 9, 2021, in Mantua Township, N.J.

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. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey.

This case was investigated by the FBI's Philadelphia Field South Jersey Resident Agency and the Washington Field Office. Stecher was listed as BOLO (Be on the Lookout) #118 on its seeking information photos. Valuable assistance was provided by the Metropolitan Police Department and the U.S. Capitol Police.

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.

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