PRESS RELEASE

# Maine Man Pleads Guilty to Assaulting Law Enforcement During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Thursday, January 18, 2024

**For Immediate Release**

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

WASHINGTON – A Maine man pleaded guilty today to assaulting law enforcement 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.

Matthew Brackley, 40, of Waldoboro, Maine, pleaded guilty in the District of Columbia to one count of assaulting, resisting, or impeding certain officers. U.S. District Court Judge Carl J. Nichols will sentence Brackley on May 14, 2024.

According to court documents, Brackley flew from Portland, Maine, to Washington, D.C., to attend the Stop the Steal rally on the National Mall and afterward made his way to the U.S. Capitol building, arriving on the Capitol's West lawn at about 1:40 pm, where a large crowd was already gathered. Brackley stood in the crowd near the Lower West Terrace, where he observed rows of bike rack barricades and uniformed police officers preventing people from advancing towards the Capitol.

Brackley then approached a set of stairs underneath a scaffolding erected to construct the Inaugural stage. Other rioters had climbed onto the scaffolding and tore up the white tarp

covering it, giving Brackley and others better access to the stairs. Brackley and other rioters then flooded up the stairs and advanced towards the Capitol building. Brackley entered the U.S. Capitol via the Senate Wing Door at 2:23 pm. From there, he made his way to the Crypt, where a large group of rioters had filled the room and pushed against a line of U.S. Capitol Police (USCP) Officers. The rioters in the Crypt eventually overwhelmed the line of USCP officers, gaining further access to the Capitol. Brackley and several dozen rioters entered a hallway behind the Crypt where USCP officers again stopped them; however, they moved past these officers and continued down the hall.

Brackley traveled through the Rotunda and eventually made his way to the Senate Chamber, which had been evacuated several minutes earlier. Here, Brackley and others were stopped by USCP officers. Two of these officers told Brackley to "back up," and one officer gave him a small push backward. Brackley, however, did not retreat and asked where Pelosi's office was as others behind him shouted obscenities. After about 40 seconds of conversation with the officers, Brackley turned to the crowd behind him and shouted, "Let's go!" He then leaned forward and, with both elbows extended outward, pushed through the two officers, leading the crowd behind him further into the hallway towards the Senate Chamber.

Brackley's progress was stopped when a larger group of officers dressed in riot gear entered the hallway from the opposite end and halted the crowd. A police line formed as the rioters pushed against the officers, who tried to back the crowd away from the Senate Chamber. A standstill then ensued between the rioters and USCP officers in the hallway, and Brackley stood among the crowd as others shouted expletives directed at Members of Congress, including "F— McConnell." The rioters then resumed pushing against the USCP police officers while chanting "USA."

An officer then deployed chemical spray in the hallway, causing Brackley and other rioters to retreat. Brackley exited the Capitol through the South Door at 3:05 pm, over 40 minutes after first entering the building.

FBI agents arrested Brackley on July 21, 2023, in Maine.

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 District of Maine.

This case is being investigated by the FBI’s Boston and Washington Field Offices. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department.

In the 36 months since Jan. 6, 2021, more than 1,265 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 18, 2024*

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**VIOLENT CRIME**

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Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) | USAO - District of Columbia | USAO - Maine

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**District of Columbia**

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