



PRESS RELEASE

Tennessee Man Sentenced to Prison on Multiple Felony Charges Related to Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Thursday, February 29, 2024

For Immediate Release

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

Defendant, a Former Sherriff's Deputy, Assaulted a Downed Police Officer

WASHINGTON – A Tennessee man was sentenced to prison today on six felony charges related to his conduct 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.

Ronald Colton McAbee, 29, of Unionville, Tennessee, was sentenced to 70 months in prison, 36 months of supervised release, and ordered to pay \$32,165 in restitution by U.S. District Judge Rudolph Contreras.

A jury convicted McAbee of five felonies on Oct. 11, 2023, including assaulting, resisting, or impeding an officer; civil disorder; entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds with a deadly or dangerous weapon; disorderly and disruptive conduct in a restricted building or grounds with a deadly or dangerous weapon; and engaging in physical violence in a restricted building or grounds with a deadly or dangerous weapon.

McAbee pleaded guilty on Sept. 25, 2023, to a separate felony charge of assaulting, resisting, or impeding a second officer and a misdemeanor charge of an act of physical violence on the Capitol grounds before Judge Contreras.

According to court documents, McAbee was on medical leave from his job as a Sheriff's Deputy in Williamson County, Tennessee at the time of the events of Jan. 6, 2021. In the days prior to January 6th, McAbee exchanged text messages with an associate about plans to travel to Washington, D.C., including bringing weapons and other gear. In a series of text messages, McAbee relayed his intent to travel to Washington, D.C., on January 6th and inquired of his associate, "How can I get some knuckles." The associate sent McAbee a link for "Steel Outdoor Reinforced Brass Knuckle Motorcycle Motorbike Powersports Racing Textile Safety Gloves" they had just purchased. McAbee asked his associate to order a pair for him, as well. McAbee also bought a shirt that his friend had designed, with the words "SAME BLOODLINE DIFFERENT GENERATION" and "WE WILL NOT COMPLY WE WILL NOT DISARM," and a "Three Percent" emblem.

On Jan. 5, 2021, McAbee and his associate drove from Tennessee to Washington, D.C., and met up with a third individual. On the morning of January 6th, the three attended the "Stop the Steal" rally at the Ellipse. McAbee is described in court documents as dressed for battle. McAbee wore the reinforced brass knuckle gloves that his associate had ordered for him and a bulletproof vest with two patches. One patch announced his position as a law enforcement officer; it read "SHERIFF." The other bore the Three Percenter insignia, a "III" circled with thirteen stars.

Shortly after 2:00 p.m., McAbee was on the West Plaza of the Capitol, where police officers in riot gear had erected barricades composed of linked metal bicycle racks and were attempting to disperse the gathering mob. McAbee watched and filmed the scene on his phone as rioters chanted and shoved against the barricades. McAbee left the area; however, he returned and made his way to the Lower West Terrace Tunnel and the Archway at the mouth of the Tunnel by approximately 3:50 p.m.

The construction of the Inauguration stage created the Lower West Terrace Tunnel and was the site of some of the most violent attacks against law enforcement on January 6th. Rioters at the Tunnel battled police officers for hours as they attempted to storm the Capitol building. McAbee eventually worked toward the Archway and positioned himself directly south of it.

At about 4:27 p.m., a Metropolitan Police Department officer positioned toward the opening of the Archway was knocked to the ground, kicked, and stripped of his baton by other rioters. During this incident, McAbee was positioned on the south side of the Archway and was able to observe the assault. After the officer was knocked to the ground, McAbee stepped into the Archway, grabbed the officer's leg, and pulled him further toward the crowd. When a second

MPD officer stepped off the police line to assist the downed officer, McAbee stood up, yelled at the officer who had stepped out to assist, and then swung his arms and hands towards the officer's head and torso. McAbee made contact with the officer and was wearing the reinforced knuckle gloves at the time of the assault.

McAbee then returned his attention to the downed officer and lifted him by the torso and shoulders. As a result, McAbee and the officer slid down a set of steps, with McAbee falling on top of the officer. The two landed in the crowd, where McAbee held the officer down while other rioters assailed the officer for over 20 seconds before the officer was finally able to get up and work his way back to the Archway. The officer sustained physical injuries, including a head laceration, concussion, elbow injury, bruising, and bodily abrasions. The officer was transported to the hospital and treated for his injuries.

In the days following January 6th, McAbee expressed pride in participating in the riot. On Jan. 7, 2021, McAbee and his associate took a photograph posing with a newspaper headline that read "INSURRECTION" and featured a photograph of the standoff between law enforcement officers and rioters at the House Chamber. McAbee is smiling in the picture.

McAbee texted that photograph to another contact, along with pictures of an injury he sustained on January 6 – an abrasion on his head -- stating, "I've shed blood for my country. By the hands of the swamp. I will shed much more in the days to come. But I will not forget the Oath I swore years ago to protect the America I once knew. / necisque libertas [liberty or death]."

The FBI arrested McAbee on Aug. 17, 2021, in Nashville, Tennessee.

The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia and the Department of Justice National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section prosecuted this case. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle and Eastern Districts of Tennessee.

The FBI's Knoxville, Washington, and Memphis Field Offices, which identified McAbee as BOLO (Be on the Lookout) #134 on its seeking information photos, investigated this case. The U.S. Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department provided valuable assistance.

In the 37 months since Jan. 6, 2021, more than 1,313 individuals have been charged in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including more than 469 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 February 29, 2024

Topic

VIOLENT CRIME

Components

[Federal Bureau of Investigation \(FBI\)](#) | [USAO - District of Columbia](#) | [USAO - Tennessee, Eastern](#) | [USAO - Tennessee, Middle](#)

Press Release Number: 24-193

Related Content

PRESS RELEASE

Facebook Marketplace Armed Robberies Case Ends in Guilty Plea

Elijah Porter, 20, of Washington, D.C., pleaded guilty today in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia to charges from two armed robberies, committed in 2023, announced U.S. Attorney...

February 7, 2025

PRESS RELEASE

Man Who Stabbed His Girlfriend 21 Times Gets 15 Year Prison Term

Devan Green, 30, of Washington DC, was sentenced today to 180 months in prison, for stabbing his girlfriend in their apartment on September 19, 2023, announced U.S. Attorney Edward R...

February 7, 2025

PRESS RELEASE**Guilty Plea in Theft and Sale of Hundreds of Government-Issued Phones and Computers Slated for Destruction**

Nikhil Parekh, 37, of Randallstown, Maryland, pleaded guilty today in U.S. District Court in connection with the theft and sale of hundreds of government-issued smartphones, laptop computers, and other IT...

February 4, 2025

**District of Columbia**

Main Office:

601 D Street, NW

Washington, DC

Email USAO-DC



Telephone: (202) 252-7566