



PRESS RELEASE

Florida Man Arrested on Felony and Misdemeanor Charges For Actions During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

For Immediate Release

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

WASHINGTON — A Florida man has been arrested on felony and misdemeanor charges 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 presidential election.

Michael Hennessey, 38, of Palm Harbor, Florida, is charged in a criminal complaint filed in the District of Columbia with a felony count of civil disorder. In addition to the felony, Hennessey is charged with misdemeanor counts of entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds, disorderly and disruptive conduct in a restricted building or grounds, disorderly or disruptive conduct in a Capitol building or grounds, and parading, picketing, or demonstrating in a Capitol building.

Hennessey was arrested today in Florida and is expected to make his initial appearance in the Middle District of Florida.

According to court documents, Hennessey traveled from his home in Florida to Washington, D.C., to attend the “Stop the Steal” rally at the Ellipse on Jan. 6, 2021. At the end of the rally, Hennessey joined the crowd as they walked to the Capitol and entered the Capitol

grounds via the West Plaza. An open-source video shows Hennessey proceeding toward the Capitol building via the northwest stairs. There, he was among the first group of rioters to ascend the concrete stairs from the West Plaza to the Capitol's Upper West Terrace as the crowd overwhelmed police lines and forced law enforcement to retreat.

From the Upper West Terrace, Hennessey entered the Capitol building via the Senate Wing Door at 2:15 p.m. — approximately two minutes after the first breach of the Capitol, which occurred at this entrance. Once inside, Hennessey joined the mob in chanting "Our House" and briefly proceeded toward the Senate Carriage Door. Shortly after, Hennessey reversed and walked back by the Senate Wing Door toward the Crypt. Before reaching the Crypt, he entered a room with windows to the Upper West Terrace. While inside the room, he appeared to record videos and take photographs.

Once Hennessey reached the Crypt, it is alleged that he positioned himself at the front of a crowd facing off against U.S. Capitol Police (USCP) officers attempting to protect the area. In a coordinated effort with the rest of the mob, Hennessey allegedly proceeded to push up against the USCP officers, and the crowd eventually overpowered the police line at approximately 2:25 p.m. and pushed past police. After pushing past the police line in the Crypt, Hennessey again took a position at the front of the advancing mob.

The mob traversed the Capitol building, and Hennessey is accused of entering the office of the House Majority Leader and the Rotunda. While the mob made its way through the Capitol, with Hennessey often at the forefront, it is alleged that the group pushed past police and made its way toward the Senate Chamber. The police were eventually able to stop the mob from advancing just outside the Old Senate Chamber, at which point Hennessey allegedly returned to the Rotunda and joined another mob that pushed against officers, causing one officer to fall down a set of stairs.

By 3:04 p.m., police regained control of this doorway and undertook efforts to gain control of the Rotunda. Despite instructions from the police, Hennessey allegedly remained in the Rotunda. At approximately 3:06 p.m., the police established a line across the center of the room. This police line began to advance through the Rotunda, forcing rioters toward the exit. At approximately 3:10 p.m., Hennessey exited the Rotunda and, shortly after that, exited the Capitol building through the East Rotunda Doors. Hennessey spent approximately 56 minutes inside the Capitol building.

Once outside, Hennessey allegedly remained on restricted Capitol grounds and allegedly joined rioters on the Capitol's East Plaza, where he again positioned himself directly in front of a line of police officers attempting to protect the building. Later, Hennessey is allegedly seen joining a crowd gathered around video cameras and other recording equipment abandoned by reporters who had been forced to flee after being subjected to threats and assaults from other rioters.

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 Middle District of Florida.

The case is being investigated by the FBI's Tampa and Washington Field Offices. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department.

In the 39 months since Jan. 6, 2021, more than 1,385 individuals have been charged in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including nearly 500 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.

A complaint is merely an allegation, and all defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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VIOLENT CRIME

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**District of Columbia**

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