PRESS RELEASE

Alabama Man Convicted of Assaulting Law Enforcement and Other Charges During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Monday, May 13, 2024

For Immediate Release

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

WASHINGTON – An Alabama man was convicted on May 10, 2024, of multiple felony and misdemeanor offenses, including assaulting law enforcement during the Jan. 6, 2021, breach of the U.S. Capitol. 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.

Bryan Shawn Smith, 37, of Huntsville, Alabama, was found guilty of civil disorder and assaulting, resisting, or impeding certain officers, both felony offenses, following a bench trial before U.S. District Judge Randolph D. Moss.

In addition to the felonies, Judge Moss found Smith guilty of four misdemeanor offenses, including entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds, disorderly and disruptive conduct in a restricted building or grounds, engaging in physical violence in a restricted building or grounds, and act of physical violence in the Capitol grounds or buildings.

Judge Moss will sentence Smith on Aug. 20, 2024.

According to court documents and evidence presented during the trial, Smith was present on the Lower West Terrace of the Capitol building on Jan. 6, 2021, and was captured on police body-worn camera footage at approximately 2:10 p.m. confronting officers at a security barricade in this area. As rioters breached the security barricades on the Lower West Terrace, a group of officers fell back behind a door underneath the inaugural stage scaffolding. About 45 seconds later, the door was opened, and Smith held the door open and refused an officer's command to step away from the doorway to allow the officer to close it.

Evidence at trial showed that Smith later made his way to the Lower West Terrace Tunnel, the site of some of the most violent attacks against law enforcement on January 6th. As he entered the Tunnel, Smith carried a stun gun. At approximately 2:53 p.m., Capitol building surveillance footage captured Smith spark the stun gun and pass it to another rioter in the Tunnel. Within approximately one minute, the stun gun was passed from the rioter who received it from Smith to another rioter and then to yet another rioter.

Court documents say that Smith then exited the Tunnel quickly after passing off the stun gun and pumped his fist in an apparent effort to inspire others in the large crowd to press into the Tunnel and continue the riot. A rioter who later received the stun gun, Vitali Gossjankowski, later exited the Tunnel and used the stun gun in at least one attempt to assault an officer who was already under assault by other rioters.

Smith entered the Tunnel a third time at approximately 3:16 p.m. and made his way to the front of the mob in the Tunnel. Inside the Tunnel, Smith joined a group of rioters violently pushing against the police line in an attempt to breach the Capitol. Here, Smith witnessed rioters physically assault police and helped push other rioters into the police line.

The FBI arrested Smith on Dec. 4, 2022, in Huntsville.

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. The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Alabama provided valuable assistance.

The FBI's Birmingham and Washington Field Offices investigated this case. The United States Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department provided valuable assistance.

In the 40 months since Jan. 6, 2021, more than 1,424 individuals have been charged in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including more than 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.

Updated May 13, 2024

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VIOLENT CRIME

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Press Release Number: 24-413

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