



PRESS RELEASE

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

Tuesday, July 9, 2024

For Immediate Release

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

WASHINGTON – A Connecticut man pleaded guilty on July 8, 2024, to 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.

Benjamin Cohen, 22, of Westport, Connecticut, pleaded guilty to a felony charge of assaulting, resisting, or impeding certain officers before U.S. District Judge Ana C. Reyes. Judge Reyes will sentence Cohen on Nov. 8, 2024.

According to court documents, Cohen was identified by law enforcement authorities among the crowd of rioters gathered along a police line on the West Plaza of the Capitol grounds on Jan. 6, 2021. At approximately 2:28 p.m., numerous members of the mob pushed through barriers and attacked members of the U.S. Capitol Police and Metropolitan Police Department, lawfully engaged in the performance of their official duties. At about this time, Cohen was present near the front of the mob of rioters up against the West Plaza police line.

At approximately 2:29 p.m., Cohen joined other rioters in breaching the police line and moved toward a group of officers. Cohen then made physical contact with the group of police

officers — pushing and shoving them with his hands. Moments later, Cohen moved toward police officers again and resumed shoving and striking them with his hands.

At approximately 2:48 p.m., Cohen, who had progressed from the West Plaza up to the Inaugural Stage and Lower West Terrace, entered an area known as the Tunnel, the site of some of the most violent attacks against law enforcement on January 6th. As rioters ahead of him were attacking police officers, Cohen moved into the Tunnel and, at approximately 2:51 p.m., pushed against a rioter in front of him, joining in a coordinated and collective “heave-ho” effort push against the police line.

Later, Cohen moved back to the mob and returned to the Tunnel’s entrance; however, about one minute later, Cohen reversed course and moved back into the mob in the Tunnel. Cohen then watched as rioters shined strobe lights at officers, threw objects at officers, and utilized other means to disrupt the police line. At one point, Cohen observed another rioter to his left deploy a chemical spray against the police.

Cohen then moved further forward, toward the front of the mob, where rioters were directly engaged in physical altercations with the police officers. At about 2:56 p.m., a rush of additional rioters entered the Tunnel behind him and the mob — including Cohen — engaged in another “heave-ho” effort by moving their bodies in unison back and forth. By approximately 3:05 p.m., Cohen had moved back toward the Tunnel’s entrance and rinsed his eyes with a bottle of water to wash chemical spray from his eyes. Cohen then exited the Tunnel but remained with the mob on the Lower West Terrace and Inaugural Stage until at least approximately 4:01 p.m., where he continued to assist rioters’ efforts to push back into the Tunnel and, at one point, entered a room in the Capitol through a broken window adjacent to the Tunnel’s entrance.

The FBI arrested Cohen on Aug. 9, 2023, in Connecticut.

The U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Columbia and the Department of Justice National Security Division’s Counterterrorism Section are prosecuting this case. The U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Connecticut provided valuable assistance.

The FBI’s New Haven and Washington Field Offices investigated this case and identified Cohen as BOLO (“Be On the Look Out”) #379 on its seeking information photos. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department.

In the 41 months since Jan. 6, 2021, more than 1,450 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.

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