



PRESS RELEASE

South Carolina Man Sentenced for Assaulting Law Enforcement During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Thursday, July 18, 2024

For Immediate Release

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

USADC.Media@usdoj.gov

WASHINGTON — A South Carolina man was sentenced to prison today after he previously pleaded guilty 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.

Thomas Andrew Casselman, 30, of Walhalla, South Carolina, was sentenced to 40 months in prison, 36 months of supervised release, and ordered to pay \$2,000 in restitution by U.S. District Judge Dabney L. Friedrich. Casselman pleaded guilty to a felony count of assaulting, resisting, or impeding certain officers on March 21, 2024.

According to court documents, Casselman traveled from his home to Washington, D.C., and participated in the “Stop the Steal” rally on Jan. 6, 2021, at the Ellipse. After the rally, Casselman joined a crowd of individuals making their way toward the Capitol building. Casselman made his way toward the West Plaza of the Capitol grounds and positioned himself near the media tower in front of an established police line maintained by Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) officers.

There, Casselman taunted officers with a copy of the U.S. Constitution and implored officers that they were “Fighting the wrong fight” and “Should be facing that way” (in other words, that the officers should be facing the Capitol, like the rioters were, rather than defending the Capitol, with their back towards it). Minutes later, the police line began to fall as officers were overwhelmed by the size and the violence of the crowd. As other rioters fought with officers, Casselman stepped forward and deployed a canister of oleoresin capsicum (“OC”)-based spray in close range of several officers.

Court documents say that the OC-based spray directly hit multiple MPD officers near their faces, leaving bright orange residue visible on their clothing and protective equipment. Immediately after Casselman deployed the OC-based spray, video footage shows the officers staggering backward and struggling to remain upright. As a result, the officers’ vision was significantly impaired, hindering their ability to protect themselves and do their job in defending the Capitol. Shortly after this assault, Casselman receded back into the crowd.

After participating in the events of January 6th, Casselman made multiple search inquiries online, including:

- “The statute of limitations for assault on a police officer”
- “The statute of limitations for assault on a federal officer”
- “Assaulting a federal officer punishment”
- “What is the definition of a domestic terrorist”
- “How long does Verizon keep text messages”

The FBI arrested Casselman on March 28, 2023, in Walhalla.

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 South Carolina provided valuable assistance.

This case was investigated by the FBI’s Columbia and Washington Field Offices, which identified Casselman as BOLO (Be on the Lookout) #363 in its seeking information photos. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department.

In the 42 months since Jan. 6, 2021, more than 1,470 individuals have been charged in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including more than 530 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.

Contact

USADC.Media@usdoj.gov

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VIOLENT CRIME

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District of Columbia

Main Office:

601 D Street, NW

Washington, DC

Email USAO-DC



Telephone: (202) 252-7566