



PRESS RELEASE

Ohio Woman Sentenced on Felony and Misdemeanor Charges for Actions During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Thursday, September 5, 2024

For Immediate Release

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

WASHINGTON - An Ohio woman was sentenced to prison on Sept. 4, 2024, on felony and misdemeanor charges related to her conduct during the Jan. 6, 2021, breach of the U.S. Capitol. Her 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.

Therese Borgerding, 61, of Piqua, Ohio, was sentenced to 50 days in prison, 130 days of home confinement, 36 months of supervised release, and ordered to pay \$2,000 in restitution by U.S. District Judge Timothy J. Kelly.

A federal jury previously convicted Borgerding of obstruction of law enforcement during a civil disorder, a felony, and misdemeanor offenses of entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds, disorderly and disruptive conduct in a restricted building or grounds, disorderly conduct in a Capitol building, and parading, demonstrating, or picketing in a Capitol building.

According to court documents, Borgerding and her codefendant and husband, Walter Messer, traveled from their home in Ohio to Washington, D.C., on Jan. 6, 2021, and arrived on the

East Front of the U.S. Capitol building by approximately 7:00 a.m. while the crowd was sparse. Borgerding carried with her a large homemade ‘Q’ sign.

After reaching the barricades, Borgerding and her husband remained immediately outside the restricted perimeter for several hours. At about 1:59 p.m., a large crowd had gathered and overrun the barricades at the East Front. Borgerding then approached the nearest barricades, unhooking, and pushing them apart, parting the way for herself and other rioters to run towards the Capitol. Borgerding then stood on the east steps near the Rotunda Doors for several minutes, joining chants and waving her sign.

At approximately 2:41 p.m., police officers inside the Rotunda Doors attempted to shut the doors to the Capitol building, which rioters inside and outside had previously opened; however, the officers were confronted by rioters outside who forced the doors back open and pushed their way into the building. Court documents say that Borgerding was near this confrontation.

Still holding her “Q” sign, Borgerding pushed her way through the Rotunda Doors and walked straight into the Rotunda, where she remained for approximately two minutes. She then joined the large crowd near the Senate Wing Doors and later exited through one of the smashed windows onto the Northwest Courtyard around 2:49 p.m. Borgerding remained in the Northwest Courtyard at length, chanting and waving her large sign.

The FBI arrested Borgerding on Aug. 6, 2021, in Dayton, Ohio.

Walter Messer was previously sentenced on Sept. 11, 2023, to 24 months of probation for his role in the events of January 6th.

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 Southern District of Ohio provided valuable assistance.

The FBI’s Cincinnati and Washington Field Office investigated this case. The United States Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department provided valuable assistance.

In the 43 months since Jan. 6, 2021, more than 1,488 individuals have been charged in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including nearly 550 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 September 5, 2024

Topic

VIOLENT CRIME

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February 4, 2025

**District of Columbia**

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