

**PRESS RELEASE**

Texas Couple Sentenced to Prison for Assaulting Law Enforcement and Other Charges During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Wednesday, October 23, 2024

For Immediate Release

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

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WASHINGTON - A Texas couple was sentenced to prison after they were previously convicted of assaulting law enforcement and other charges during the Jan. 6, 2021, breach of the U.S. Capitol. Their 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.

Mark Middleton, 55, and Jalise Middleton, 54, both of Forestburg, Texas, were sentenced to 30 and 20 months in prison, respectively, by U.S. District Judge Randolph D. Moss. Mark Middleton was additionally sentenced to 36 months' supervised release, and a \$2,000 fine. Jalise Middleton was additionally sentenced to 30 months' supervised release, and a \$2,000 fine.

A federal jury previously convicted the Middletons of two counts of assaulting, resisting, or impeding certain officers, as well as civil disorder and obstruction of an official proceeding. In addition to the felonies, the Middletons were convicted of misdemeanor offenses of 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,

disorderly conduct in the Capitol grounds or building, and act of physical violence in the Capitol grounds or building.

Following the Supreme Court's decision in *Fischer v. United States*, the government voluntarily moved pre-sentencing to dismiss the Middleton's conviction on obstruction of an official proceeding.

According to evidence presented during the trial, on Jan. 6, 2021, Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) officers responded to the West Front of the U.S. Capitol building to assist U.S. Capitol Police officers with protecting the Capitol building and grounds from a group of amassed rioters. At about 2:09 p.m., MPD officers struggled against rioters who had refused repeated orders to step back from the police line and bike rack barricades.

According to trial evidence and police body-worn camera footage, as the officers struggled with the group of rioters, a man, later identified as Mark Middleton, called the officers "traitors" and then pushed against the barricades and the police line with his body. Officers are heard on body-worn camera footage repeatedly ordering Mark Middleton and others to "Get back!" In response, Mark Middleton is heard yelling "f — you!" as he continued to push against the police barricades. Evidence showed that Mark Middleton resisted MPD officers, grabbed onto an MPD officer's left arm, and pulled the officer forward over the barricades and towards the crowd.

At the same time, a woman, later identified as Jalise Middleton, is seen on body-worn camera footage repeatedly grabbing and striking the same officer over the barricade with her hand, striking him in the face, chest, and arms. Another officer stepped in to assist, and Jalise Middleton struck that officer as well. Mark Middleton then used his flagpole to strike the second officer in the head. Video footage shows that the couple continued to grapple with and strike at the officers and attempted to pull the first officer into the crowd, as rioters jabbed, slashed, and swung flag poles at officers.

The Middletons only broke off their assault when the first officer sprayed them in the face with chemical irritants, forcing them to retreat from the barricaded line. Both defendants later posted social media messages touting their key role in helping to breach the barricades by fighting officers and that they had only stopped due to pepper spray.

Mark and Jalise Middleton were arrested on April 21, 2021, in Forestburg, Texas.

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 Eastern District of Texas.

This case is being investigated by the FBI's Dallas and Washington Field Offices with substantial assistance from the Frisco Resident Agency Additional valuable assistance was

provided by the United States Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department.

In the 45 months since Jan. 6, 2021, more than 1,532 individuals have been charged in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including more than 571 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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