



PRESS RELEASE

New York Proud Boy Found Guilty of Felony and Misdemeanor Charges for Actions During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Wednesday, October 23, 2024

For Immediate Release

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

USADC.Media@usdoj.gov

WASHINGTON – A New York man was found guilty today of felony and misdemeanor charges related to his conduct 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.

William Joseph Pepe, 35, of Beacon, New York, was found guilty of a felony charge of tampering with records, documents, or objects, obstructing, impeding, or interfering with law enforcement during a civil disorder and misdemeanor charges of entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds, disorderly and disruptive conduct in a restricted building or grounds, and tampering with records, documents, or other objects.

Pepe was convicted following a bench trial before U.S. District Judge Timothy J. Kelly. Judge Kelly will sentence Pepe on March 11, 2025.

According to evidence presented during the trial, on the morning of Jan. 6, 2021, Pepe met a group of approximately one hundred Proud Boys members in Washington, D.C., near the Washington Monument at approximately 10:00 a.m. Shortly after, the group marched away from

the rally that was taking place near the monument and toward the U.S. Capitol building. Pepe and the group arrived at the Peace Circle, at the edge of the restricted portion of Capitol grounds, at approximately 12:50 p.m.

There, members of the crowd violently disassembled and trampled the metal bike rack barriers blocking further entry into Capitol grounds. The crowd, with Pepe at the front, charged over the fallen bike rack barriers and advanced toward the West Plaza of the Capitol. As they advanced, Pepe and the crowd encountered another set of metal bike rack barriers at the West Plaza, behind which was a line of police officers. Behind the officers was a waist-high black metal fence. Pepe dragged away a segment of the metal bike rack barriers, as did other rioters.

The police line then reformed behind the black metal fence. As Pepe and rioters approached the black metal fence, Pepe looked directly into a nearby camera and yelled, “Let’s go! This is what we came for, yeah!” Officers began to deploy pepper spray and other crowd control measures to get the crowd to disperse. Pepe was pepper sprayed, and he posted a selfie-style video in which he declared, “Yo, the cops pepper sprayed me and Hooks. Me and Hooks got f—ing maced. Storming that Capitol, baby!”

At 2:16 p.m., Pepe entered the Capitol through the Senate Wing Door. During his time in the Capitol, he recorded a video and sent to fellow Proud Boys where Pepe stated, “We did it.” Pepe was inside the building for approximately 38 minutes, exiting at 2:54 p.m. through a broken window beside the Senate Wing Door.

The FBI arrested Pepe on Jan. 12 2021, in White Plains, New York.

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 Southern District of New York.

This case is being investigated by the FBI’s New York and Washington Field Offices. Pepe was identified as BOLO (Be on the Lookout) # 4 on the FBI’s seeking information images. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. 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

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