



PRESS RELEASE

West Virginia Man Arrested for Assaulting Law Enforcement and Other Charges During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Tuesday, October 29, 2024

For Immediate Release

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

USADC.Media@usdoj.gov

WASHINGTON — A West Virginia man has been arrested for allegedly assaulting law enforcement and other charges related to his alleged conduct during the Jan. 6, 2021, breach of the U.S. Capitol. His alleged 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.

Joseph Michael Adams, 41, of Hedgesville, West Virginia, is charged in a criminal complaint filed in the District of Columbia with a felony offense of assaulting, resisting, or impeding certain officers. In addition to the felony, Adams is charged with misdemeanor offenses of entering or remaining in any restricted building or grounds, disorderly or disruptive conduct in a restricted building or grounds, engaging in an act of physical violence in a restricted building or grounds, disorderly conduct in a Capitol building or grounds, engaging in an act of physical violence in a Capitol building, and parading, demonstrating, or picketing in a Capitol building.

The FBI arrested Adams today in Martinsburg, West Virginia, and made his initial appearance in the Northern District of West Virginia.

According to court documents, on Jan. 6, 2021, in Washington, D.C., Adams was identified walking to the west side of the U.S. Capitol grounds within a large crowd of rioters. Adams eventually made his way toward the Northwest Lawn and later toward the east side of the Capitol. There, Adams approached the Rotunda Doors and entered into the Capitol building at approximately 3:01 p.m. wearing a motorcycle helmet and carrying a flag.

At approximately 3:00 p.m., multiple law enforcement officers entered the Rotunda and verbally commanded rioters to leave the building. It is alleged that Adams entered into the Rotunda at about 3:02 p.m. and resisted police efforts to clear the area of rioters. Court documents say that Adams is seen in body-worn camera footage resisting police attempts to push back the rioters in the Rotunda. At approximately 3:04 p.m., it is alleged that a police officer pushed Adams, and, in response Adams lowered his head and braced himself to resist being pushed further.

At about 3:05 p.m., police again attempted to push Adams back. Again, Adams allegedly lowered his head and forcibly pushed back against police. Adams then moved to his right and continued to use his head to push against another police officer. At approximately 3:06 p.m., Adams stepped back, creating space between himself and the line of police officers. He then continued to lower his head and hold the flagpole in front of him while facing police. Court documents say that throughout this time, officers are heard commanding the rioters to get back.

Only a few minutes later, it is alleged that Adams again used his head to push against police and repeatedly ignored commands to leave the area. Instead, Adams allegedly approached another police officer, lowered his shoulder, and forcibly pushed the officer with his shoulder. Court documents say that Adams continued to push against this police officer with his shoulder, head, and flagpole.

Adams exited the building at approximately 3:16 p.m. through the Rotunda doors.

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 Northern District of West Virginia.

This case is being investigated by the FBI's Pittsburgh and Washington Field Offices. Adams was identified as BOLO (Be on the Lookout) #524 on the FBI's seeking information images. 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.

A complaint is merely an allegation, and all defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

Contact

USADC.Media@usdoj.gov

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Attachment

[adams_sof.pdf](#) [PDF, 21 MB]

Topic

VIOLENT CRIME

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**District of Columbia**

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