



PRESS RELEASE

Maryland Man Sentenced for Forcibly Obstructing Law Enforcement and Other Charges During Jan. 6 Capitol Breach

Friday, November 22, 2024

For Immediate Release

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

WASHINGTON – A Maryland man was sentenced to prison today after he was previously convicted of forcibly obstructing law enforcement and other 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.

Justin Lee, 25, of Rockville, Maryland, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Trevor N. McFadden to 18 months in prison, 12 months of supervised release, and ordered to pay \$7,500 in restitution.

Lee was previously convicted of two felony offenses, including assaulting, resisting, or impeding certain officers and civil disorder. In addition to the felonies, Judge McFadden found Lee guilty of misdemeanor offenses of entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds, disorderly and disruptive conduct in a restricted building or grounds, and disorderly conduct in a Capitol building.

According to court documents and evidence presented during the trial, on Jan. 6, 2021, Lee, a former law enforcement officer, was identified by authorities via open-source video as present among a crowd of rioters amassed at the exterior Archway leading to the Lower West Terrace Exterior Door of the Capitol, also referred to as the “Tunnel.” The Tunnel was the site of some of the most violent attacks against law enforcement on January 6th.

There, at approximately 2:41 p.m., numerous United States Capitol Police (USCP) and Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) officers, after having had their positions on the Lower West Terrace overrun by rioters, fell back and entered the Archway. Officers sought to prevent rioters from entering the Capitol building through that entrance while rioters attempted to force their way inside, including by throwing objects at the officers and using lights to distract and disorient the officers.

Through open-source video, authorities observed a man, later identified as Lee, standing on the steps leading to the Tunnel and committing multiple acts directed at the line of officers, including throwing a smoking and sparking object in the direction of the police line, throwing an unlit (not smoking or sparking) object at police, and holding and pointing a flashlight that appears to be turned on in the direction of the Tunnel entrance. Lee was identified due, in part, to the distinctive Maryland flag gaiter-styled face covering that he wore.

Evidence showed that the device thrown by Lee produced a billowing smoke cloud as other rioters attempted to physically push against the officers, preventing entry into the Capitol building.

FBI Baltimore arrested Lee on Oct. 19, 2023, in Maryland.

This case was 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 District of Maryland.

This case was investigated by the FBI’s Baltimore and Washington Field Offices, which identified Lee as BOLO (Be on the Lookout) #533 on its seeking information photos. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department.

In the 46 months since Jan. 6, 2021, more than 1,561 individuals have been charged in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including more than 590 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.

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VIOLENT CRIME

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