

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	:	Case No.: 22-CR-297 (TJK)
	:	
v.	:	18 U.S.C. § 1752(a)(2)
	:	
JOSHUA KNOWLES,	:	
	:	
Defendant.	:	
	:	

STATEMENT OF OFFENSE

Pursuant to Fed. R. Crim. P. 11, the United States of America, by and through its attorney, the United States Attorney for the District of Columbia, and the defendant, Joshua Knowles, with the concurrence of the defendant’s attorney, agree and stipulate to the below factual basis for the defendant’s guilty plea—that is, if this case were to proceed to trial, the parties stipulate that the United States could prove the below facts beyond a reasonable doubt:

The Attack at the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021

1. The U.S. Capitol, which is located at First Street, SE, in Washington, D.C., is secured twenty-four hours a day by U.S. Capitol Police (USCP). Restrictions around the Capitol include permanent and temporary security barriers and posts manned by USCP. Only authorized people with appropriate identification are allowed access inside the Capitol.

2. On January 6, 2021, the exterior plaza of the Capitol was closed to members of the public. The grounds around the Capitol were posted and cordoned off, and the entire area as well as the Capitol building itself were restricted as that term is used in Title 18, United States Code, Section 1752 due to the fact that the Vice President and the immediate family of the Vice President, among others, would be visiting the Capitol complex that day.

3. On January 6, 2021, a joint session of the United States Congress convened at the Capitol. During the joint session, elected members of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate were meeting in separate chambers of the Capitol to certify the vote count of the Electoral College of the 2020 Presidential Election, which had taken place on Tuesday, November 3, 2020. The joint session began at approximately 1:00 p.m. Shortly thereafter, by approximately 1:30 p.m., the House and Senate adjourned to separate chambers to resolve a particular objection. Vice President Mike Pence was present and presiding, first in the joint session, and then in the Senate chamber.

4. As the proceedings continued in both the House and the Senate, and with Vice President Pence present and presiding over the Senate, a large crowd gathered outside the Capitol. Temporary and permanent barricades, as noted above, were in place around the exterior of the Capitol, and USCP officers were present and attempting to keep the crowd away from the Capitol and the proceedings underway inside.

5. At approximately 2:00 p.m., certain individuals in the crowd forced their way through, up, and over the barricades. Officers of the USCP were forced to retreat and the crowd advanced to the exterior façade of the building. Officers with the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department were called to assist officers of the USCP who were then engaged in the performance of their official duties. The crowd was not lawfully authorized to enter or remain in the building and, prior to entering the building, no members of the crowd submitted to security screenings or weapons checks as required by USCP officers or other authorized security officials.

6. At such time, the certification proceedings were still underway, and the exterior doors and windows of the Capitol were locked or otherwise secured. Members of the USCP attempted to maintain order and keep the crowd from entering the Capitol; however, shortly after

2:00 p.m., individuals in the crowd forced entry into the Capitol, including by breaking windows and by assaulting members of law enforcement, as others in the crowd encouraged and assisted those acts. The riot resulted in substantial damage to the Capitol, requiring the expenditure of more than \$2.9 million dollars for repairs.

7. Shortly thereafter, at approximately 2:20 p.m., members of the House of Representatives and of the Senate, including the President of the Senate, Vice President Pence, were instructed to—and did—evacuate the chambers. Accordingly, all proceedings of the United States Congress, including the joint session, were effectively suspended until shortly after 8:00 p.m. on January 6, 2021. In light of the dangerous circumstances caused by the unlawful entry to the Capitol—including the danger posed by individuals who had entered the Capitol without any security screening or weapons check—Congressional proceedings could not resume until after every unauthorized occupant had been removed from or left the Capitol, and USCP confirmed that the building was secured. The proceedings resumed at approximately 8:00 PM after the building had been secured. Vice President Pence remained in the Capitol from the time he was evacuated from the Senate Chamber until the session resumed.

Joshua Knowles' Participation in the January 6, 2021, Capitol Riot

1. Joshua Knowles traveled to Washington, D.C. from Gilbert, Arizona to attend the “Stop the Steal” rally.

2. On January 6, 2021, Knowles wore a red, white, and blue Trump 2020 beanie, a black and blue plaid patterned flannel shirt, a blue and white neck gator, a black sweatshirt, black rimmed glasses, black pants, and red shoes. At times, he wore a black cape with blue and orange coloring and he carried a white pole with a flag attached.



Photo taken on January 6 showing Knowles' (yellow circle) attire

3. On the morning of January 6, 2021, Knowles attended the “Stop the Steal” rally. While there, he watched and recorded several videos of the speakers, including the former president. The former president and at least one other speaker referenced Vice President Pence in relation to the events occurring at the Capitol that day.

4. Knowles sent videos to contacts in his phone and said, “It’s wild.”

5. A contact in Knowles’ phone sent him a text message that said, “Save America !” and Knowles responded, “Trying to.”

6. Later during the rally, Knowles received and read a text message that said, “HAPPENING NOW Congress is voting to certify, or OBJECT TO, the Election results. Pres Trump needs YOU to STAND WITH HIM! 1000% IMPACT!”

7. After attending the rally, Knowles marched with other rioters to the Capitol. He recorded a video of people marching towards the Capitol and declared, “to the Capitol we go!”

8. Knowles sent a text message to contacts in his phone that said, “Walking there now with a million people.” He followed up with another text, at 11:59 a.m., that said, “Supposed to be a terrorist attack at the capital building.”

9. As Knowles continued to march towards the Capitol grounds, he sent a text message, “Oh wow. I see all fire trucks.” Minutes later, he followed up with a text message that said, “I guess we are trying to storm the capital building.”

10. At 12:14 p.m., a contact of Knowles sent a photo to Knowles of a news broadcast with the headline, “U.S. Capitol on Lockdown as Protests Erupt”:



Photo sent to Knowles at 12:14 p.m.

11. Another contact sent Knowles a text message in a group chat that said, “House and senate are both in shelter in place orders lol goodness.” Another contact followed up in that same group chat with, “Now there is people actually inside the capital.” Knowles responded, “Yeah I just heard. Heading there now.”

12. Knowles eventually ascended to the Lower West Terrace. Once there, he assisted rioters scaling a wall to gain access to the landing near entrances to the building.



Screenshot of video showing Knowles (yellow circle) assisting rioters scaling the wall

13. A family member of Knowles sent him text messages that said, “Be careful at the capitol, patriots are inside the capitol trying to get into the dome area and cops are armed and pointing live rounds on the other side of the door.”

14. A different family member of Knowles sent him a text message asking if he was okay, and followed up with another message that said, “i heard two people got shot for going in the capital.”

15. At 3:13 p.m., Knowles entered the Capitol building through the Senate Wing Door. As he entered the building, alarms blared, broken glass scattered the floor, and rioters chanted and yelled as they flooded into the building.



Screenshot of Capitol surveillance footage showing Knowles (yellow circle) entering the Capitol building

16. After remaining in the Senate Wing Door foyer for a few minutes, Knowles proceeded down a hallway to the Crypt where he used his cell phone to record the chaos around him.



Screenshot of video footage showing Knowles (yellow circle) marching through the Crypt

17. Still wielding the pole with a flag attached, Knowles made it back to the Senate Wing Doors, and he exited the building at 3:22 p.m., through the same door that he entered.



Screenshot of Capitol surveillance footage showing Knowles (yellow circle) moving to exit the building

18. Knowles remained on Capitol grounds. He moved from the Northwest Courtyard to the North side of the building and joined the mob amassed outside the North Door. As rioters

threw objects against the door and attempted to forcibly enter through the North Door, police officers in the crowd were swarmed by rioters.

19. Knowles watched and trailed the officers as they were assaulted by members of the crowd.





Screenshots of video footage showing officers (red arrow) get swarmed and Knowles (yellow circle) watching and trailing nearby

20. The officers eventually made it out of the crowd and retreated to the nearby doors. Knowles followed the officers up the stairs and approached the North Door.



Screenshot of video footage showing officers retreating from crowd and Knowles (yellow circle) nearing the North door as officers (red arrow) attempted to retreat to the door

21. As the crowd chanted “Fuck the blue!” Knowles made his way to the front of the crowd of rioters and approached the North Door.





Screenshots of video footage showing Knowles (yellow circle) approaching the North Door where officers had retreated

22. The officers sprayed smoke at the rioters in attempt to disperse the crowd away from the door. When the air cleared and officers retreated behind a second set of doors, Knowles and other rioters approached the doors and attempted to gain entry into the building.



Screenshot of video footage showing Knowles (yellow circle) approaching the North Door as rioters attempted to break in

23. Police officers again sprayed smoke at the rioters to disperse the crowd. After Knowles was sprayed, he moved away from the door.

24. Once the air cleared, Knowles again approached the door and held his hand in the air facing towards the officers, as other rioters continued to attempt to breach the door.



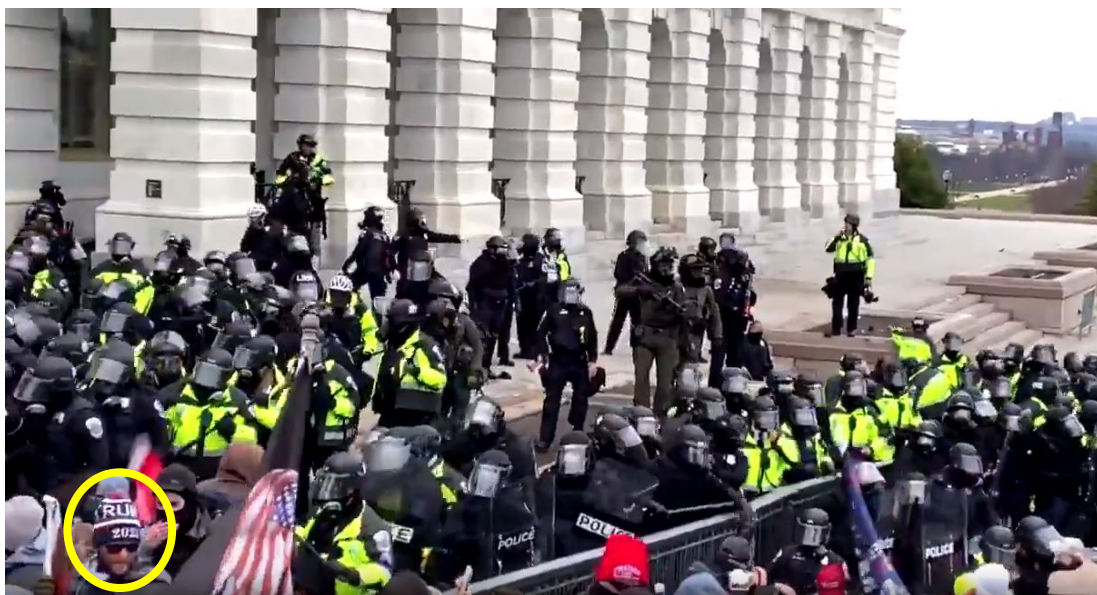
Screenshot of video footage showing Knowles (yellow square) with his arm in the air towards officers guarding the door

25. Officers again deployed smoke towards the crowd and only then did Knowles retreat from the door.



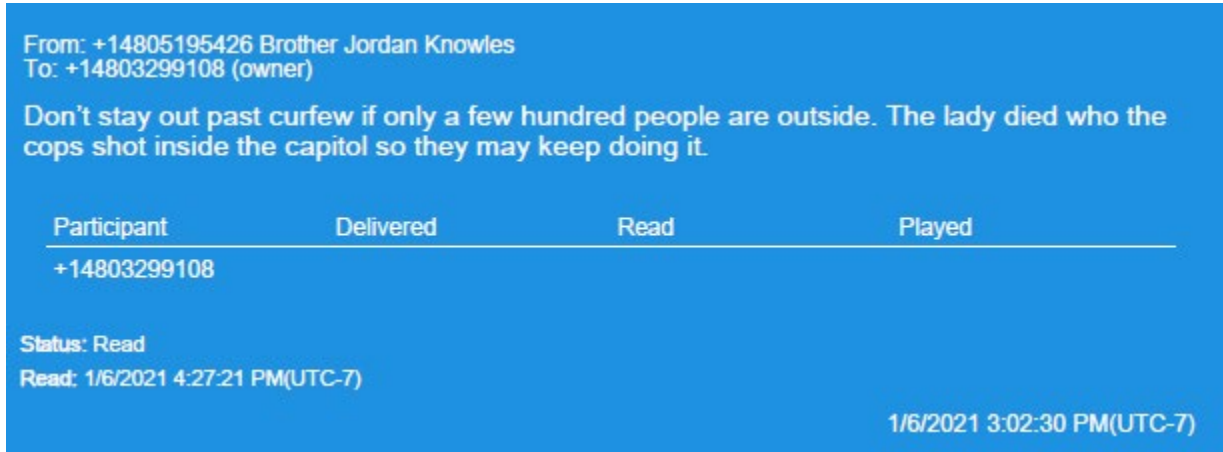
Screenshot of video footage showing Knowles (yellow circle) retreating from North Door after smoke deployed

26. Officers eventually gained control of the North terrace and attempted to collectively corral the rioters off the Capitol grounds. Knowles remained at the front of the police line, trailing behind other rioters, and leaving only when pushed out by the office line.



Screenshots of video footage showing officers corralling rioters off the North terrace, and Knowles (yellow circle) as one of the last of the group of rioters to comply with directives to leave

27. A contact from Knowles phone sent a text message, “DC mayor has a 6pm curfew.” At 5:03 p.m., Knowles responded, “Yeah dc police shot and killed 2 people possibly a third person. Shit was old.” Another contact warned Knowles of the curfew:



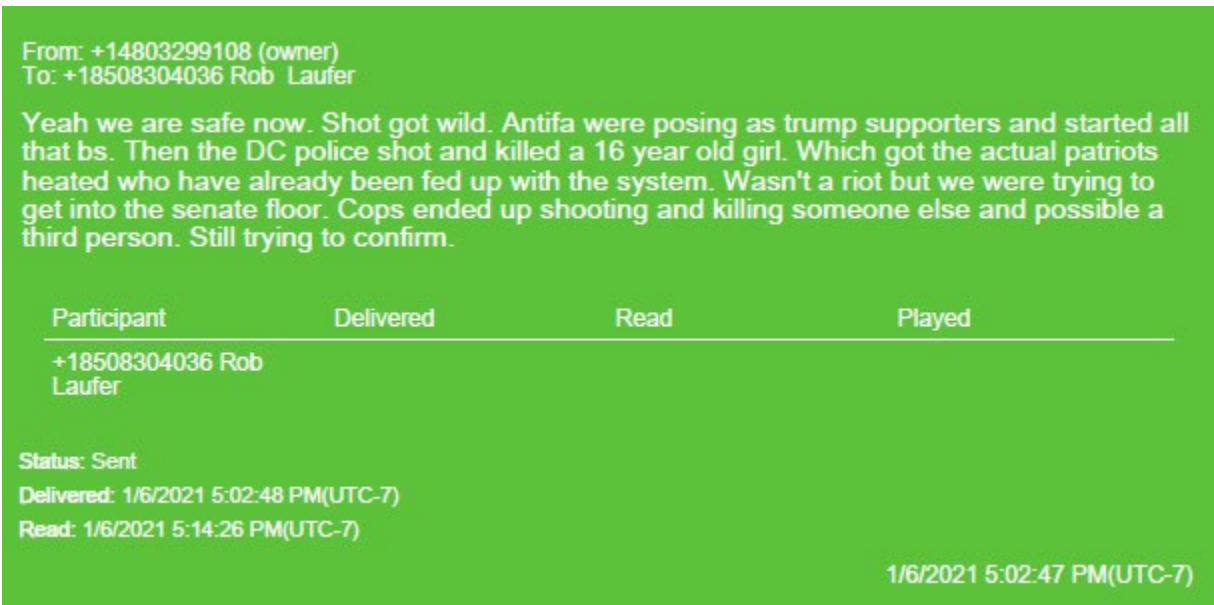
28. Knowles texted contacts at 5:05 p.m., “I got Tear gassed pepper sprayed billy clubbed. Flash bang blew up at my feet.”

29. Knowles sent a follow up text message to several contacts that said:



30. One of the contacts responded, “What the hell josh” and another responded, “Bro how scary wow u okay.” Knowles responded, “Yeah I’m good. Eyes were burning for and hr or more. By all is good now.”

31. Knowles texted a different contact, in part, “Wasn’t a riot but we were trying to get into the senate floor.”



32. Knowles was aware that Vice President Pence was inside the Capitol on January 6, 2021.

33. Knowles texted a different contact, “Just left the capital. Got tear gassed 3 times and flash banded,” and “it’s freaking crazy out here right now.” The contact responded, “Hopefully something comes of all this but it’s not looking likely.”

34. Knowles remained on Capitol grounds even after the 6:00 p.m. city-wide curfew went into effect. He sent a text message to a friend that said, “I’m back out on the streets. Trying to see what’s going on now.”

35. After the curfew went into effect, Metropolitan Police Department (“MPD”) officers verbally warned Knowles and other rioters in the area where Knowles was standing that they were violating the curfew and needed to disperse. As MPD officers continued to provide verbal warnings to the crowd, the United States Capitol Police broadcasted on loop numerous warnings that the Capitol Grounds were closed to unauthorized persons. The final warning stated: “This is your last and final warning. You’re in violation of a curfew on the 100 Block of Pennsylvania Avenue NW. You are subject to immediate arrest if you do not disperse.”



Screenshot of video footage showing Knowles (yellow circle) and others refusing to disperse, violating the city-wide curfew

36. Despite numerous directives to leave Capitol Grounds, Knowles and a small group of other rioters refused to leave. The MPD officers arrested Knowles.

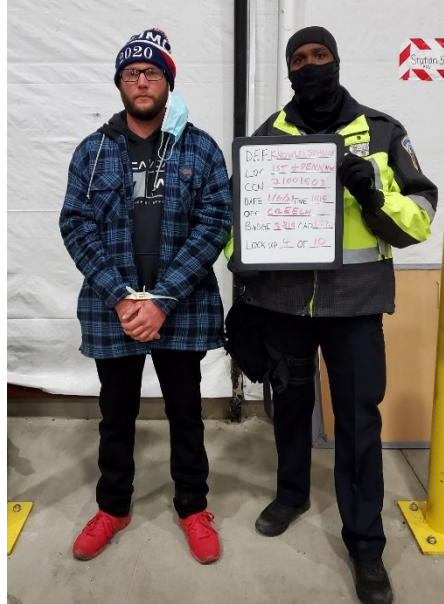


Photo of Knowles (left) after he was arrested and booked by the MPD for refusing to leave Capitol grounds

Elements of the Offense

37. The parties agree that 18 U.S.C. § 1752(a)(2) requires the following elements:
- a. First, the defendant engaged in disorderly or disruptive conduct in, or in proximity to, any restricted building or grounds.
 - b. Second, the defendant did so knowingly, and with the intent to impede or disrupt the orderly conduct of Government business or official functions.
 - c. Third, the defendant's conduct occurred when, or so that, his conduct in fact impeded or disrupted the orderly conduct of Government business or official functions.

Defendant's Acknowledgments

38. The defendant knowingly and voluntarily admits to all the elements as set forth above. Specifically, the defendant admits that he engaged in disorderly or disruptive conduct in a restricted building or grounds. The defendant admits that he did so knowingly, and with the intent to impede or disrupt the orderly conduct of Government business or official functions, that is, the certification of the electoral college vote. The defendant admits that he knew Vice President Pence

was temporarily visiting the Capitol on January 6, 2021. The defendant also admits that his conduct in fact impeded or disrupted the congressional proceeding.

Respectfully submitted,

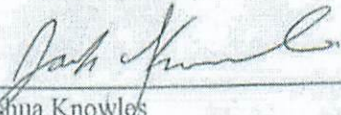
MATTHEW M. GRAVES
United States Attorney
D.C. Bar No. 481052

By: s/ Ashley Akers
ASHLEY AKERS
Trial Attorney
MO Bar No. 69601
Capitol Siege Section
Detailed to the U.S. Attorney's Office
District of Columbia
Telephone No: (202) 353-0521
Email Address: Ashley.Akers@usdoj.gov

DEFENDANT'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I, Joshua Knowles have read this Statement of the Offense and have discussed it with my attorney. I fully understand this Statement of the Offense. I agree and acknowledge by my signature that this Statement of the Offense is true and accurate. I do this voluntarily and of my own free will. No threats have been made to me nor am I under the influence of anything that could impede my ability to understand this Statement of the Offense fully.

Date: 3/5/24




Joshua Knowles
Defendant

ATTORNEY'S ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have read this Statement of the Offense and have reviewed it with my client fully. I concur in my client's desire to adopt this Statement of the Offense as true and accurate.

Date: March 5, 2024



Nathan Silver
Attorney for Defendant