

Attachment A

Victim Impact Statement – USCP Sergeant F.R. (Ret.)

November 2, 2023

TO: U.S. District Judge Jia M. Cobb

FROM: Sergeant Federico A. Ruiz

SUBJECT: Kenneth Bonawitz

Your Honor,

Just like the events of Sept. 11, 2001, forever changed our country and our way of life, the events of Jan. 6, 2021, has changed the course of life for many of us who call America home, and most especially for those of us who were at the Capitol that day. While the day ended in victory for Democracy and the Constitution, because the results of the presidential election were ultimately ratified, Jan. 6 was a nightmare for me that nearly cost me my life. I am respectfully asking for justice to be served – for Kenneth Bonawitz to be sentenced to the highest extent of the sentencing guidelines.

As a direct result of Bonawitz's actions I have been sentenced to a lifetime of medical issues that include physical pain and mental and emotional distress. There is not a day that goes by that pain, discomfort, and/or a mental health issue do not flare up to remind me of that day and how Bonawitz assaulted me. I'm unable to function as normal people would in large crowds without having panic attacks and paranoia set in. My suspicion of people has been raised to a level of anxiety that is a daily struggle to deal with. I spend a lot of time these days looking for pain relief; the simple act of sitting or walking has become a painful ordeal that has diminished my quality of life. I spend time each day managing the trauma of being attacked on that day. I have spent nearly all of this year on light duty as I try to manage my ailments and try to get back on a path to better health.

Jan. 6 started like any other day where I was assigned as a Civil Disturbance Platoon Leader. I was responsible for leading and ensuring the safety of 40 officers, most of whom were fresh out of college and had never been in a physical altercation in their life. The scene we responded to was one of total chaos. People were yelling profanities and chanting names of politicians, they threatened to kill members of Congress. Upon seeing the police presence, the rioters began to push and strike police officers with no regard for law and order or the harm they were inflicting upon the police.

Just before the assault on me, I saw Bonawitz jumping up and down on the stage built for the inauguration with a smile on his face, like he was on top of the world. Even in the crowd of rioters, he stood out because of his large size. His demeanor and his behavior struck me as someone who was enjoying himself that day. Soon Bonawitz turned his sights on me and ran in my direction, jumping off the stage and with both arms raised, he hurled himself at me and one of my Officers, knocking both of us to the ground. I fell on my back and hit my head on the ground. His arm and the force flung my helmet off my head. I was momentarily stunned and struggled to get back up on my feet and get my bearings. I thought there was a strong chance I could die right there. Thankfully, another Officer pulled me away from the pit of chaos. I found out later that Bonawitz was carrying an illegal 8-inch hunting knife when he jumped on us. I can only imagine the harm he had planned to do to me if given a few more seconds while I was on the ground.

I started my professional career with the Army, serving many years as a soldier. I was in the Army's Search and Rescue Unit out of Fort Belvoir, and was a first responder at the Pentagon after foreign terrorists attacked our country on 9/11. I did not fear for my life then as much as I did on Jan. 6, when my fellow Americans turned on me and attacked me like I was an enemy.

I enlisted in the Army and later joined the United States Capitol Police seeking a chance to support and defend this great nation and pursue a better life for my two children. I am proud of my service to my country, defending it from people who wish to destroy what it stands for. I never would have thought that I would find myself defending this nation from other Americans like Bonawitz, who I consider a traitor to this country.

Bonawitz has ended my career long before I was ready. Before January 6, 2021, I was on a path to promotion and a permanent position as an instructor. I wanted to train future police officers and continue to mentor individuals to improve the quality of policing in my department. Bonawitz ended that dream with his violent actions that day. I was looking forward to a long and rewarding career continuing to serve my country in the best way I know how. But last week, I filed my paperwork to retire from Capitol Police. Bonawitz has given me a life sentence of physical pain and discomfort, bodily injury and emotional insecurity as a direct result of his assault on me. I humbly ask that he be accorded a sentence that befits his crime.

Sgt. Federico A. Ruiz

United States Capitol Police

Badge #5477