



Judge Presiding Over Trump Case Issues Her Harshest Sentence yet to Jan. 6 Defendant

Description

US : The Obama-appointed judge overseeing former President Donald Trump's election interference case in Washington has just issued her harshest sentence yet in separate proceedings against a Jan. 6 defendant that she's presiding over, sending the Maryland man behind bars for over five years.

U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan delivered her sentence on April 19 in a case in which Maryland man Scott Miller, the former leader of a local chapter of the Proud Boys, was found guilty of assaulting law enforcement with a dangerous weapon during the unrest at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

Mr. Miller joined a crowd at the Lower West Terrace "Tunnel" at around 4:15 p.m. on Jan. 6, 2021, a location where some of the most violent clashes took place between protesters and police, per charging documents.

He struck a Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) officer multiple times with a long wooden pole and later threw a number of objects at police in the tunnel, including a metal pipe or pole, a bottle, and a large black speaker.

Prosecutors said Mr. Miller later hit multiple officers who were defending the tunnel by swinging or jabbing a long pole at their heads and, later, struggled with officers [holding a riot shield and](#) tore it out of their hands.

Mr. Miller pleaded guilty on Jan. 5, 2024, to a felony charge of assaulting, resisting, or impeding certain officers using a dangerous weapon.

Judge Chutkan, who recently put President Trump's election interference trial on hold until the U.S. Supreme Court can hear his historic bid for immunity, sentenced Mr. Miller to 66 months in prison, 36 months of supervised release, and \$2,000 in restitution.

The sentence is the harshest she has handed down so far in any of the multiple Jan. 6 cases she has presided over, exceeding the 63 months behind bars she ordered two defendants to serve for their

roles in the riot.

In court, she called the Jan. 6 incident “close to as serious a crisis as this nation has ever faced,” while praising the officers who fought back the crowd as “patriots.”

“It can happen again,” she said, per Politico. “Extremism is alive and well in this country. Threats of violence continue unabated.”

Judge Chutkan recently made headlines for saying that Jan. 6 defendants being held on charges are dangerous and don’t deserve to be called heroes or hostages, as President Trump has referred to them on occasion.

A review of court records shows that, to date, Judge Chutkan has matched or exceeded the sentences called for by prosecutors in Jan. 6 cases.

Over 1,350 people have been charged with various crimes in relation to the Jan. 6 Capitol breach, ranging from misdemeanor offenses such as trespassing to felonies such as seditious conspiracy and assaulting police officers.

Roughly 800 of them have been sentenced to date, with nearly [two-thirds receiving some time](#) in prison.

The longest prison sentence—22 years—was handed down to Enrique Tarrio, the former Proud Boys national chairman who was convicted of seditious conspiracy for what prosecutors alleged was a conspiracy to stop the transfer of power from President Trump to President-elect Joe Biden during the Jan. 6 certification of electoral votes.

Dozens of Jan. 6 detainees are still languishing in jail awaiting trial over three years after the Capitol incident.

President Trump has made the alleged mistreatment of Jan. 6 defendants a cornerstone of his reelection campaign, vowing to use executive power to issue pardons and free Jan. 6 “hostages” soon after taking office, if elected.

“They’ve been treated terribly and very unfairly,” President Trump said at a March 16 rally in Dayton, Ohio. “And we’re going to be working on that soon, on the first day we get into office,” he continued, while calling the Jan. 6 detainees “unbelievable patriots.”

President Biden has been sharply critical of President Trump’s statements about the Jan. 6 defendants, while Attorney General Merrick Garland has promised to press ahead with more Jan. 6 prosecutions.

Judge Chutkan has also pushed back on President Trump’s Jan. 6 defendant rhetoric.

“They’re being kept there because they are dangerous people,” the judge said during a sentencing hearing for Antony Vo, an Indiana man convicted of entering the Capitol with his mother.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Supreme Court is weighing the Justice Department's controversial use of a law that was originally intended for evidence tampering cases only against Jan. 6 defendants—as well as against President Trump.

A Supreme Court decision rejecting the use of 18 U.S. Code Section 1512(c)(2), or “Tampering with a witness, victim, or an informant,” in Jan. 6 cases could have major implications for a number of defendants.

That's because it's the most widely charged felony in Jan. 6 cases, and the mere fact that the high court decided to hear the case has already led some defendants to be released pending final Supreme Court decision or they have had their sentencing postponed until the matter is resolved.

By Tom Ozimek

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