

STATEMENT OF FACTS

Your affiant, [REDACTED], is a Federal Bureau of Investigation, Special Agent assigned to the Sacramento Division, Fresno Resident Agency. In my duties as a special agent, I have been tasked with investigating allegations associated with acts of domestic and international terrorism and the individuals perpetuating such acts. I have been employed with the Federal Bureau of Investigation since April of 2021 and initially spent twenty weeks at the FBI training academy in Quantico, Virginia. I have completed training and gained experience in interviewing and interrogation techniques, arrest procedures, search warrant applications, the execution of search and seizures, and various other criminal laws and procedures. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology, a Master's Degree in Emergency Management and Homeland Security, and approximately ten years of professional experience as a civil servant prior to joining the FBI. Through my training, education and experience, I have become familiar with the manner in which criminal activity is carried out, and the efforts of persons involved in such activity to avoid detection by law enforcement. Currently, I am tasked with investigating criminal activity in and around the Capitol grounds on January 6, 2021. As a FBI Special Agent, I am authorized by law or by a Government agency to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, investigation, or prosecution of a violation of Federal criminal laws.

The U.S. Capitol is secured 24 hours a day by U.S. Capitol Police. Restrictions around the U.S. Capitol include permanent and temporary security barriers and posts manned by U.S. Capitol Police. Only authorized people with appropriate identification were allowed access inside the U.S. Capitol. On January 6, 2021, the exterior plaza of the U.S. Capitol was also closed to members of the public.

On January 6, 2021, a joint session of the United States Congress convened at the United States Capitol, which is located at First Street, SE, in Washington, D.C. 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 United States Capitol to certify the vote count of the Electoral College of the 2020 Presidential Election, which had taken place on 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.

As the proceedings continued in both the House and the Senate, and with Vice President Mike Pence present and presiding over the Senate, a large crowd gathered outside the U.S. Capitol. As noted above, temporary and permanent barricades were in place around the exterior of the U.S. Capitol building, and U.S. Capitol Police were present and attempting to keep the crowd away from the Capitol building and the proceedings underway inside.

At such time, the certification proceedings were still underway and the exterior doors and windows of the U.S. Capitol were locked or otherwise secured. Members of the U.S. Capitol Police attempted to maintain order and keep the crowd from entering the Capitol; however, around 2:00 p.m., individuals in the crowd forced entry into the U.S. Capitol, including by breaking windows and by assaulting members of the U.S. Capitol Police, as others in the crowd encouraged and assisted those acts.

Shortly thereafter, at approximately 2:20 p.m. members of the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate, including the President of the Senate, Vice President Mike Pence, were instructed to—and did—evacuate the chambers. Accordingly, the joint session of the United States Congress was effectively suspended until shortly after 8:00 p.m. Vice President Pence remained in the United States Capitol from the time he was evacuated from the Senate Chamber until the sessions resumed.

During national news coverage of the aforementioned events, video footage which appeared to be captured on mobile devices of persons present on the scene depicted evidence of violations of local and federal law, including scores of individuals inside the U.S. Capitol building without authority to be there.

FACTS SPECIFIC TO THADDIS DERONE JOHNSON, JR.

On or about January 8, 2021, the FBI obtained information indicating that THADDIS DERONE JOHNSON, JR. may have been at the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021, and may have entered the Capitol building unlawfully. JOHNSON was subsequently interviewed by two FBI Agents on January 26, 2021. During the interview JOHNSON admitted he travelled to Washington, D.C. on January 6, 2021, at “the request of United States President Donald Trump” and “was on the steps of the U.S. Capitol recording the crowd.” However, JOHNSON denied entering the United States Capitol building.

In September 2021, a confidential human source (CHS) provided information that JOHNSON had entered the United States Capitol building on January 6, 2021. The CHS provided open-source video that showed Johnson near a door of the United States Capitol. The CHS also provided screenshots from an affidavit from another capitol riot defendant in which Johnson appeared to be inside the building.

Open source material posted to Youtube showed JOHNSON outside the Capitol wearing a red “Keep America Great” hat, a blue bandana or face gaiter, and a distinctive plaid jacket:



Figure 1

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k1_pp8_lb_o
at video mark 1:18:59

Additional open source material showed JOHNSON directly outside the Northwest Side Door entrance on the upper west terrace of the Capitol after the doors had been breached. Photos posted to Facebook and a video posted to Parler showed JOHNSON at the Northwest Side Door as people entered the building. Figure 4 shows the approximate location of JOHNSON when these images were taken.



Figure 2

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10164694238185483&set=pb.776265482.-2207520000..&type=3>



Figure 3

<https://web.archive.org/web/submit?url=https://video.parler.com/f6/58/f658MFug2P9l.mp4>

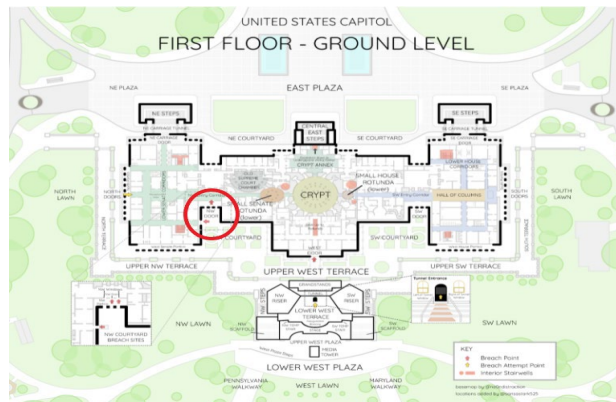


Figure 4

A review of closed circuit security footage provided by the United States Capitol Police from the Capitol on January 6, 2021, showed JOHNSON entering the United States Capitol building on two occasions. At approximately 2:42:22 p.m., the Northwest Side Door was breached. Approximately 36 seconds later, JOHNSON can be seen entering the building and

holding up his cell phone while the people in front of him engage law enforcement officers. JOHNSON stays in the hallway for approximately 38 seconds before exiting the building.



Figure 5

Approximately three minutes after leaving, JOHNSON reenters the building through the same doors. JOHNSON goes directly into the Senate Parliamentarian's office.



Figure 6

JOHNSON remains in the Senate Parliamentarian's office for approximately 70 seconds. While in the office, JOHNSON is captured in an image taken by another rioter:



Figure 7

See Case No. 1:21-CR-00304-DLF, ECF No. 31, at 8

JOHNSON exits the office and enters the office across the hall, where he stays for a little over one minute. JOHNSON can then be seen exiting the Capitol a second time.

FBI personnel compared known photographs of JOHNSON taken on January 6, 2021, and photographs from JOHNSON'S social media accounts, to the individual in the aforementioned United States Capitol security footage. The individual in the security footage matched the clothing and appearance of JOHNSON. In September 2021, JOHNSON updated his California Driver's License photo, which shows similarities between JOHNSON and the individual depicted inside the United States Capitol building on January 6, 2021. JOHNSON also ran a YouTube channel called "Real Important News," where he would post videos of himself. In a screenshot from a video posted to YouTube on October 19, 2020, JOHNSON's facial features and hair are consistent with the individual who entered the Capitol on January 6, 2021.

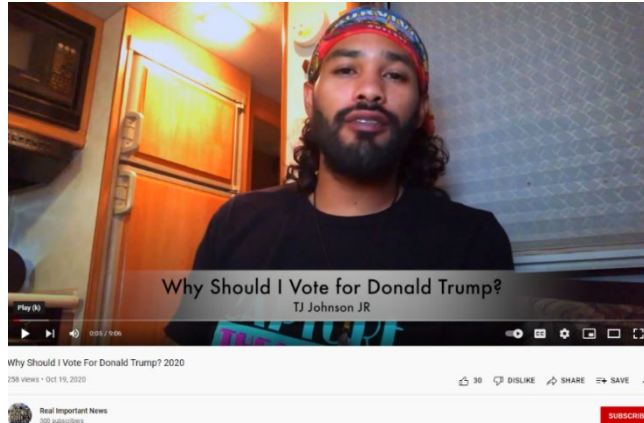


Figure 8

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s-imUQ61Ok8>

JOHNSON also had a Twitter account, which has since been suspended, under the handle “thaddislove.” In a video posted to Twitter, JOHNSON identifies himself as “T.J. Johnson from California” and gives his Facebook and Instagram handles, which the FBI was able to confirm were associated with JOHNSON. In the video, JOHNSON can be seen in what appears to be an airport lounge wearing similar clothing to the clothing JOHNSON wore to the Capitol on January 6.




Figure 9

On May 18, 2022, Special Agents with the Federal Bureau of Investigation conducted a non-custodial interview of JOHNSON in Fresno, California. During the interview JOHNSON admitted to entering the United States Capitol building twice on January 6, 2021. JOHNSON was shown numerous open source and CCTV images from January 6, including figures 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9, in which JOHNSON admitted he was the individual depicted in these photos. JOHNSON explained to Special Agents which rooms he entered and for approximately how long he remained inside. Following the interview, JOHNSON gave the FBI consent to search his phone and surrendered the device to Agents.

Based on the foregoing, your affiant submits that there is probable cause to believe that Thaddis Derone Johnson, Jr. violated 18 U.S.C. § 1752(a)(1) and (2), which makes it a crime to (1) knowingly enter or remain in any restricted building or grounds without lawful authority to do; and (2) knowingly, and with intent to impede or disrupt the orderly conduct of Government business or official functions, engage in disorderly or disruptive conduct in, or within such proximity to, any restricted building or grounds when, or so that, such conduct, in fact, impedes or disrupts the orderly conduct of Government business or official functions; or attempts or conspires to do so. For purposes of Section 1752 of Title 18, a “restricted building” includes a posted, cordoned off, or otherwise restricted area of a building or grounds where the President or other person protected by the Secret Service, including the Vice President, is or will be temporarily visiting; or any building or grounds so restricted in conjunction with an event designated as a special event of national significance.

Your affiant submits there is also probable cause to believe that Thaddis Derone Johnson, Jr. violated 40 U.S.C. § 5104(e)(2)(D) & (e)(2)(G), which makes it a crime to willfully and knowingly (D) utter loud, threatening, or abusive language, or engage in disorderly or disruptive conduct, at any place in the Grounds or in any of the Capitol Buildings with the intent to impede, disrupt, or disturb the orderly conduct of a session of Congress or either House of Congress, or the orderly conduct in that building of a hearing before, or any deliberations of, a committee of Congress or either House of Congress; and (G) parade, demonstrate, or picket in any of the Capitol Buildings.



Attested to by the applicant in accordance with the requirements of Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 by telephone, this 23rd day of May 2022.

ROBIN M. MERIWEATHER
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE