

Beat: News

Member of Oath Keepers Pleas Guilty to Obstruction of Congress

Brian Ulrich of Guyton, Georgia

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USPA NEWS - A member of the Oath Keepers pleaded guilty April 29th to seditious conspiracy and obstruction of an official proceeding for his actions before, during, and after the breach of the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. His and others' actions disrupted a joint session of the U.S. Congress convened to ascertain and count the electoral votes related to the presidential election.

Brian Ulrich, 44, of Guyton, Georgia pleaded guilty to seditious conspiracy in connection with the Capitol breach. As part of the plea agreement, Ulrich has agreed to cooperate with the government's ongoing investigation.

Ulrich is the second Oath Keepers member to plead guilty to seditious conspiracy and obstruction charges. Joshua James, 34, of Arab, Alabama, pleaded guilty on March 2, 2022.

As described in court documents, Ulrich was a member of the Georgia chapter of the Oath Keepers. The Oath Keepers are a large but loosely organized collection of individuals, some of whom are associated with militias. Though the Oath Keepers will accept anyone as members, they explicitly focus on recruiting current and former military, law enforcement, and first-responder personnel.

In his guilty plea, Ulrich admitted that, from November 2020 through January 2021, he conspired with other Oath Keeper members and affiliates to use force to prevent, hinder and delay the execution of the laws of the United States governing the transfer of presidential power. He and others used encrypted and private communications, equipped themselves with a variety of weapons, donned combat and tactical gear, and were prepared to use force to stop the transfer of power.

In the weeks leading to Jan. 6, 2021, Ulrich and others used an application called "Signal" to prepare for the actions that would take place that day. Ulrich encouraged others in a group called "Oath Keepers of Georgia" to join him in Washington. In one chat, on Dec. 5, 2020, he messaged the group, "I seriously wonder what it would take just to get ever patriot marching around the capital armed? Just to show our government how powerless they are!" On Dec. 11, 2020, Ulrich messaged the group chat that "Civil War" may be necessary if Joseph R. Biden became President of the United States, adding "I made my peace with God before I joined." Another individual later messaged, "remember, it is not over until January 20th." Ulrich responded, "And if there's a Civil War then there's a Civil War."

Ulrich also purchased tactical gear and other items, including two-way radio receivers, a recon backpack, a tactical holster, a medical tourniquet, and a half skull motorcycle helmet. Ulrich was told by another co-conspirator that others would be available with firearms. On Jan. 4, he traveled with other Oath Keepers to the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, staying in a downtown hotel with others.

On Jan. 6, after learning the Capitol had been breached, Ulrich and others traveled to the Capitol on golf carts, driving around multiple barricades, including marked law enforcement vehicles. Ulrich was wearing a tactical vest, radio equipment, a body-worn camera, goggles, a camouflage tactical backpack, a black neck gaiter, and an Oath Keepers hat.

He and others weaved through the restricted area in a military "stack" formation with hands on shoulders and gear. Ulrich marched in a line up the stairs on the east side of the Capitol. He entered the building at 3:22 p.m., maneuvering himself toward the entrance to the Rotunda as law enforcement officers were attempting to clear the area. After officers deployed chemical-irritant spray, Ulrich left the Capitol and gathered with other co-conspirators approximately 100 feet from the building. In the aftermath of Jan. 6, Ulrich continued to communicate with co-conspirators on Signal, including one message urging them to "stay below the radar."

Ulrich was arrested on Aug. 9, 2021, in Guyton, Georgia. He was among 11 defendants indicted on Jan. 12, 2022, in the District of Columbia on seditious conspiracy and other charges; co-defendant Joshua James pleaded guilty, and the remaining nine defendants have pleaded not guilty, including Elmer Stewart Rhodes III, 57, the founder and leader of the Oath Keepers.

Ulrich faces up to 20 years in prison for seditious conspiracy and up to 20 years for obstruction of an official proceeding, along with potential financial penalties. No sentencing date was set. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering

the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

The case is being 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 Southern District of Georgia.

The case is being investigated by the FBI's Washington Field Office and the FBI's Atlanta Field Office, including its Macon, Georgia Resident Agency.

In the 15 months since Jan. 6, 2021, nearly 800 individuals have been arrested in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including over 250 individuals charged with assaulting or impeding law enforcement. 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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