

Inner City Press

July 16, 2021

By E-mail to Chambers

The Honorable Randolph D. Moss
U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia
E. Barrett Prettyman U.S. Courthouse
333 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Press and Public Access via call-in audio line for first Capitol Breach felony sentencing in US v. Hodgkins, 21-cr-188 (RDM)

Dear Judge Moss:

This concerns the abrupt curtailment of press and public access via call-in audio line included in your Minute Order issued earlier today in the above-captioned felony criminal case, for the Capitol Riots.

This is a formal request that you not put an end to public access such as existed for more than a year, and at every previous stage of this particularly important case.

To put this request in context, I am a journalist based at the Southern District of New York courthouse but who has been covering the Capitol Breach cases, mostly in the District for the District of Columbia, since January 2021. See, e.g., January 10, 2021, Seattle Times, "Seattle man charged with assaulting a federal officer at U.S. Capitol siege, "Leffingwell's attorney said in court that he intended to return to Seattle, and the magistrate judge ordered him to stay away from Washington, D.C., according to reporting by Inner City Press journalist Matthew Russell Lee," <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/crime/seattle-man-charged-with-assaulting-a-federal-officer-at-u-s-capitol-siege/>

The January 6 defendants come from all over the country, and it is important that their neighbors and local media in their communities continue to have access to these proceedings. Be aware that Federal criminal proceedings all over the country are still allowing remote access. See, only yesterday, July 15, Daily Mail (UK), "While appearing in a California court on Thursday, Jordan reportedly agreed to face charges in the Southern District of New York and he was ordered to be released on a \$150,000 bond, according to the Twitter account Inner City Press. An Assistant U.S. Attorney told the court that a case agent had confirmed that none of the charges involved minors, Inner City Press reported," <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9793271/Indie-movie-producer-Dillon-Jordan-indicted-running-international-prostitution-ring.html>

Even for those physically in DC, many either will not or even cannot access the overflow room to which your Minute Order refers. Given the exclusion and limitation on transparency that the abrupt discontinuance of call-in audio access represents, what justifies it?

This is a formal request for call-in audio access, as before, to the July 19 sentencing in the above captioned case, and to other Capital Breach cases. It should, as Inner City Press' similar requests in the SDNY and EDNY have been, be docketed and, it is respectfully requested, be responded to / ruled on.

Thank you for your attention.

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