

May 4, 2023

The Hon. Amit P. Mehta
U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia
E. Barrett Prettyman Courthouse
333 Constitution Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20001

Your Honor, thank you for the opportunity to express my deep gratitude to this Court and the members of the jury who rightfully found these defendants guilty for their role in the Capitol insurrection on January, 6, 2021. As one of the U.S. Capitol Police officers who stood his ground that day, who protected our legislative members and our democratic institutions, I am profoundly grateful that, in this case, justice has been done.

I stand here today as a victim of the defendants' actions on January 6. But my pain didn't end on that day. Because I have told the truth about what happened, I have had to install security cameras around my home. I live in constant fear for my daughter, my loved ones, and myself. My dad feels it's necessary to tell me to be careful every time we talk on the phone. "Keep your head on a swivel," he says. When I am out attempting to live a regular life, whether that be at a restaurant, at the mall, or even at work, I am always hyper-vigilant about my surroundings. I have been a police officer for 15 years, so I have always paid attention to my surroundings, but now it's different. Instead of worrying and paying attention for the well-being of others, I now worry about my own safety and well-being. Whenever I see someone in cargo pants or anything that looks remotely close to tactical gear, I wonder if they were a part of the insurrection. I get anxious, I start to clench my teeth, I notice a rise in my heart rate, and I look for the closest place to retreat to for peace of mind. Of course, at my workplace – the U.S. Capitol – there is no such place to which I can retreat. Because of the defendants' actions on January 6, every day at work in the Capitol building evokes in me the feeling that I am at a never-ending crime scene, rather than the citadel of American democracy.

As I walk through the halls of Congress every day, I'm reminded of terrible things that I saw, that I experienced, or that one of my fellow officers told me happened in the place we are standing in. I used to enjoy coming to work each day, proud to be a police officer. But the defendants ripped that all away from me. I now dread going to work each day, and when I am there I count down the hours, the minutes, and the seconds until I can leave. A few of my fellow officers have told me they avoid certain parts of the U.S. Capitol because they never want to see that place again, often referring to a specific location in the building where they have a memory of the attack that day. When I see congressional staff members who were present in the Capitol during the attack, they tell me their stories from that day. It's like I can never stop reliving the horrors of January 6 in my head.

On the day I testified, I had been scheduled to speak to first responders on the effects of traumatic experiences. Instead of talking to real oath keepers, real victims, instead of helping those Americans who put their lives on the line every day, I had to come to the courthouse and tell the jury what actually happened on January 6. I had to reopen those wounds because the defendants, and those who supported and encouraged their actions, refused to take responsibility.

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People often ask me if I have flashbacks from that day and, honestly, I tell them no -- it's not a flashback -- it's more like the nightmare of January 6 replaying on a constant loop which never stops. I have continued to require therapy for the emotional injuries I suffered as a result of January 6, and my therapist tells me what I am experiencing is called PTSD, along with anxiety attacks. But I continue to seek therapy to learn how to heal from January 6. It has taken such a toll on me. I've gone from being an extroverted person to an introverted, depressed shell of my former self.

The relationships in my life have also suffered. I've pushed people who care about me away. I avoid seeing loved ones because I know all they will want to do is ask me how I am doing. Friends worry about me because the activities I used to love, I don't really have the desire to do anymore. And if I do muster up the energy, it's just going through the motions.

Why? Why is any of this necessary? Why am I still dealing with threats against my life and the lives of my loved ones for simply doing my job on January 6? Why am I and my fellow officers still called liars and traitors? Why must I suffer almost two and a half years later? While I will always live with the mental scars of January 6, I find a measure of relief in the jury's guilty verdict: relief that my fellow officers and I did not suffer in vain; relief that what I was protecting on January 6 was worth defending; and relief that, in the end, our American system of justice prevailed and thus Court will administer accountability.

Thank you for your consideration, Your Honor.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Harry Dunn