

# [***North Carolina man sentenced to six years in prison for attacking police with pole at Capitol***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BW0-PWW1-DYMD-649J-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

WASHINGTON — A man who became a fugitive after a federal jury convicted him of assaulting police officers during the [*U.S. Capitol riot*](https://apnews.com/hub/capitol-siege) was sentenced on Tuesday to six years in prison.

[*David Joseph Gietzen*](https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.dcd.241932/gov.uscourts.dcd.241932.1.1.pdf), 31, of Sanford, North Carolina, struck a police officer with a pole during a mob's Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol.

Gietzen told U.S. District Judge Carl Nichols that he didn't intend to hurt anybody that day. But he didn't express any regret or remorse for his actions on Jan. 6, when he joined a mob of Donald Trump supporters in interrupting the joint session of Congress for certifying President Joe Biden's 2020 electoral victory.

“I have to make it explicitly known that I believe I did the right thing,” he said before learning his sentence.

The judge said Gietzen made it clear during his trial testimony — and his sentencing hearing — that he clings to his baseless beliefs that the 2020 presidential election was stolen from Trump.

“Mr. Gietzen essentially was unapologetic today about his conduct,” Nichols said.

Last August, a jury convicted Gietzen of eight counts, including assault and civil disorder charges. After his trial conviction, Gietzen disregarded a court order to report to prison on Oct. 20, 2023, while awaiting sentencing. He missed several hearings for his case before he was arrested at his mother’s home in North Carolina on Dec. 12, 2023.

“This pattern of flouting rules and laws and doing what he wants, regardless of the consequences, is how Gietzen operates,” prosecutors wrote in [*a court filing*](https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.dcd.241933/gov.uscourts.dcd.241933.78.0.pdf).

Defense attorney Ira Knight said Gietzen apparently remained at his house, “just waiting to be picked up,” and wasn't on the run from authorities or trying to hide after his conviction.

Prosecutors recommended a prison term of 10 years and one month for Gietzen, who worked as a computer programming engineer after graduating from North Carolina State University in 2017 with bachelor's degrees in computer engineering and electrical engineering.

“Clearly, Gietzen is bright and able to get something done when he puts his mind to it – be it a college degree or assaulting officers as part of in a violent mob,” prosecutors wrote.

Gietzen's attorneys requested a four-year prison sentence.

“David’s current philosophy is that he no longer wishes to be engaged with the political process," [*defense attorneys wrote*](https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.dcd.241933/gov.uscourts.dcd.241933.77.0.pdf). "His involvement with ***politics*** has concluded and should be an indication to the Court that he is no longer interested in being a threat to the public or political process.”

Gietzen traveled to Washington, D.C., with his brother from their home in North Carolina. He attended then-President Donald Trump's “Stop the Steal” rally near the White House on Jan. 6 before marching to the Capitol.

As the mob of Trump supporters overwhelmed a police line on the Capitol's West Plaza, Gietzen shoved a police officer, grabbed another officer's gas mask and struck an officer with a pole.

"And all of Gietzen’s violence was based on a lack of respect for law enforcement and the democratic process — its goal was to get himself and other rioters closer to the building so they could interfere with the certification of the election," prosecutors wrote.

Gietzen later bragged about participating in the riot in messages to friends and relatives, saying he had “never been prouder to be an American."

[*More than 1,350 people*](https://interactives.ap.org/jan-6-prosecutions/) have been charged with Capitol riot-related federal crimes. Over 800 of them have been sentenced, with roughly two-thirds getting terms of imprisonment ranging from a few days to [*22 years*](https://apnews.com/article/enrique-tarrio-capitol-riot-seditious-conspiracy-sentencing-da60222b3e1e54902db2bbbb219dc3fb).

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