

## Rape, manslaughter, drug trafficking: NPR pulls lid off pardoned MAGA rioters' rap sheets



By Jennifer Bowers Bahney



Trump supporters clash with police as they storm the US Capitol in Washington on January 6, 2021. (Agence France-Presse)

Dozens of Jan. 6 rioters who were issued blanket pardons by President Donald [Trump](#) had violent criminal histories that judges considered when determining the severity of their sentences, according to new [reporting from National Public Radio](#).

President Trump made good on his campaign promise on his first day back in office by granting clemency to everyone charged or convicted in the 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol, including those found to have violently attacked police officers.

"While many people had no criminal record prior to committing crimes on Jan. 6, NPR has identified dozens of defendants with prior convictions or pending charges for crimes including rape, sexual abuse of a minor, domestic violence, manslaughter, production of child sexual abuse material and drug trafficking," the news outlet reported.

President Trump justified his decision to pardon the nearly 1,500 people — whom he has called "patriots" and "hostages" — saying it would have been "very, very cumbersome" to consider each case individually.

**ALSO READ:** [Top GOPer's 'most immediate' priority for new committee includes probing a MAGA conspiracy](#)

Trump "overlooked the role that the Jan. 6 defendants' prior criminal records played in sentencing," wrote NPR correspondent Tom Dreisbach. "Federal judges take that criminal history into account when deciding a criminal defendant's sentence."

Dreisbach continued, "If Trump had looked at individual cases, the long criminal records of some Jan. 6 defendants may have raised some red flags."

One person in particular, Peter Schwartz, had a "'jaw-dropping criminal history of 38 prior convictions going back to 1991' when he assaulted police officers with pepper spray on Jan. 6, according to federal prosecutors."

"Federal judge Amit Mehta gave Schwartz one of the toughest prison sentences stemming from the Capitol riot — more than 14 years. Less than four years after Schwartz's arrest, Trump's pardon freed him from prison."

At least two rioters have run afoul of the law in the few days since their pardons: [Emily Hernandez](#) of Missouri received a 17-year prison sentence for a deadly DUI crash, and [Matthew Huttel](#) of Indiana was shot and killed by police for allegedly resisting arrest.

The [White House](#) "did not respond to messages seeking comment for this story," according to the report.

[Read the NPR story right here.](#)



For customer support contact [support@rawstory.com](mailto:support@rawstory.com). Report typos and corrections to [corrections@rawstory.com](mailto:corrections@rawstory.com).

## Stories Chosen For You

[READ COMMENTS - JOIN THE DISCUSSION](#)





*Do you trust Donald Trump to uphold the Constitution?*

**VOTE NOW**

## Comments:

**RAWSTORY+**

**THOM HARTMANN, ALTERNET**

Another 'hair on fire' moment as Elon Musk further buries his nose into the U.S government

---

What Trump's unconstitutional executive orders are really meant to do

---

**D. EARL STEPHENS**

Democrats elect Martin as Party chair

