

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	:	CRIMINAL NO. 21-cr-28 (APM)
	:	
v.	:	
	:	
DONOVAN CROWL,	:	
SANDRA PARKER,	:	
BENNIE PARKER,	:	
LAURA STEELE,	:	
CONNIE MEGGS,	:	
WILLIAM ISAACS,	:	
JAMES BEEKS, and	:	
MICHAEL GREENE,	:	
	:	
Defendants.	:	

**GOVERNMENT’S OPPOSITION TO DEFENDANT’S MOTION TO SEVER**

On December 30, 2022, Defendant Greene filed a motion to sever his case from that of Defendant James Beeks. ECF No. 808. Defendant Sandra Parker has joined the motion. ECF Nos. 817. Defendant Greene’s motion is based on his perception that Defendant Beeks holds himself out to be a “sovereign citizen,” and that such status will cause the jury to be biased against him and all his co-defendants. The government opposes severance on that ground but asks for leave until the pretrial conference next Friday, January 20, to state its position on which defendants should be part of the February trial.

Although Rule 14 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure allows for severance of properly joined defendants, the defendant requesting the severance bears the heavy burden of showing that joinder would cause substantial prejudice. *Zafiro v. United States*, 506 U.S. 534, 539 (1993). The Supreme Court has defined “prejudice” in this context to be a “serious risk that a joint trial would compromise a specific trial right of one of the defendants, or prevent the jury from making a reliable judgment about guilt or innocence.” *Id.*



United States Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20004