

Judge Amy Berman Jackson,

Every day I wake up and go to bed with your stern warning playing in my head and I quote "I'm giving you the benefit of the doubt, which I believe you've earned. Please understand, Mr. Sibick, that you will only get one chance."

It has been almost two years since I had written you from solitary confinement, a place I chose to go in order to remove myself from the chaos and toxicity of the other defendants. An area typically reserved for those who are unable to behave properly and conform to the jail's policies; however, I was different, I was escaping. In that letter I provided an understanding of who I was and how my conduct on January 6th was unequivocally an aberration of who I desire to be. This letter will expand on that, in addition it will illustrate who I have become since then; the guilt I have endured, the struggles I have overcome, the remorse for my actions, the acceptance of my health issues, the shame I have experienced and most importantly the forgiveness I ask of Officer Michael Fanone and this court for my wrongdoing.

As we know the attack on the United States Capital was one of the most horrific days in American history. People showed up ready for battle, to keep one man in power, by stopping the certification of the Electoral College vote. It was an attack on the institutions of our democracy and not as some would make you believe legitimate political discourse. The attack was far from peaceful, my actions played a role that will follow me for the rest of my life. As Douglas McArthur said "You're remembered for the rules you break" and I certainly broke the rules that day, an embarrassment to myself, my family and my nation. The scar left in the wake of such a violent event astonished the world, with our adversaries laughing and our allies in complete disbelief. The lies, misinformation and utter deceit articulated by individuals in influential positions led many people to believe the election was stolen. I never thought that! In fact, I went spur of the moment, the last chance to hear the former president speak before President Biden was to be sworn in.

Countless times people have asked why I attended January 6th, (I don't call it the 'Stop the Steal' rally or a 'protest' because I wasn't going to do either). The motivating factors for attending were as follows. The first was a desire for acceptance/belonging as the former president and I attended the same high school, albeit years apart I felt a connection as I do with all New York Military Academy alumni. Next was the strain on my mental health, a direct result of the COVID pandemic, between the

lockdowns implemented in an effort to keep the outbreak under control to my employment at the time I was barely holding it together. Working at skilled nursing facilities throughout COVID I witnessed death on a daily basis, one unfortunate soul after another zipped in a body bag and off to the morgue but I kept showing up, depressed and emotionless at what was occurring. In addition to the horrific work environment, I was stuck in my condominium, my mind racing not knowing what to do and when it would end. I felt caged with no escape, unlike my time at CTF with other January 6th defendants, where I was caged yet had an escape. Looking back I am surprised I made it through those punishing months alive, many days I felt like giving up and if it were not for my strength as well as the extraordinary medical professionals at DC CTF I most likely wouldn't be writing this today. Lastly, all of that culminated with the former president saying it was going to be wild. That was the match that lit the fuse, setting off a chain of events, nothing stopping me from heading to DC. This irrational lapse of judgment exacerbated by factors I will discuss later on turned out to be the greatest calamity of my life.

The trauma officer Fanone endured that day is undeniably sickening! Watching the video of that vicious attack as he is unjustly pulled away from the police line, restrained, punched, and electroshocked makes me hurt. That man was just trying to do his job, a job he loved and took pride in doing. What transpired is inconceivable, yet there I was in a manic state not helping but contributing as I interfered with him after he had been tased by another individual. What I witnessed that day still troubles me, I recall the screams and chaos as members in the vicinity were yelling kill him. Officer Fanone bore the brunt of a gutless attack while simply being a courageous law enforcement officer defending the capital, as many were that day. I wish Officer Fanone peace and comfort.

Why did I reach in to remove his badge and radio from the vest? What was my intent? Did I even have an intent? Was I overpowered by the mob mentality and plagued by mental health issues which led to an action I would have otherwise not exhibited? I have grappled with these questions for the better part of two years, at times doubtful I was in control while other times thinking I wanted to help, because that's who I am. It occurred so quickly that I am not sure in that moment I was thinking clearly in order to formulate an intent. Regardless of what was going on in my head one thing is certain, I have understood and take full responsibility for my uncivilized display of reckless behavior. The pictures and videos presented by the government of my conduct is not the man I know when I look in the mirror, in fact quite the contrary. I am a kind hearted, compassionate, and peaceful individual that did not conspire with others nor did I have any malicious intent. I am confident that I never had any intent to harm Officer Fanone, unlike others who were combative and enraged with hate towards a human they

did not know. If I could tell Officer Fanone how deeply sorry I was for impeding him from doing his job, I would. If I was able to give him a hug and make him understand the true nature of my character I would. Officer Fanone, I am sorry!

Since a young age I was in and out of doctors' offices trying to determine what was wrong with me, trying one medication after another for impulsivity, attention deficit, depression and anxiety. It seemed as though nothing worked, I would speak with psychotherapists from time to time, and still issues would arise. In my adolescent I started to push back against the notion that there was something wrong with me, this only led to more substance abuse and less stability. Life was not peaceful, content or calm as it should be, and suicide was on my mind. I used drugs to feel better, to find happiness, to find my way, all it did was allow me to temporarily escape. I can't be certain why I felt this way, I knew I wanted more out of life but something was off. I started seeing medical professionals again and really wanted to get a grip on my mental health but every time it looked like we were headed in the right direction another setback would jump out from around the corner. I recall waking up one day and telling myself I had had enough, I needed an escape! My mind was made, a new environment was necessary, so I moved west. This was the change needed to mature my mind, in doing so I would figure out my path. It worked, or at least I thought it had, not because my mental health was in check, because I was super focused on a career and proving I was capable of excellence. Nothing was going to stop me, or was it? After a couple years I moved home and that's when it all started to come together. The employment achievements were gratifying yet the past troubles kept coming up. I went to see a doctor and once again they prescribed me Adderall, which helped but didn't make things great. This time I was a little older and wasn't abusing opioids. My goal was to be stable and I thought a professional career would provide that. I went back to school graduated from Niagara University with an MBA and was amazed at the progress I was making. It felt as though everything was under control, however this was due to my accomplishments overshadowing my inner demons.

I owe an enormous amount of appreciation to the medical staff at the DC CTF, as they diagnosed me with a major mental illness, Bipolar 1 along with personality disorder (which I don't share with others). This was news to me because the doctors I went to in the past classified me as having ADHD and always prescribed vast amounts of Adderall, which helped with irregularities but didn't make me feel the way I do today. Being diagnosed properly has permitted me to achieve the level of care I require. While others were complaining, fabricating stories of neglect and refusing medical attention, I was making the most of my situation by accepting the help from the doctors and therapists at the DC CTF. It

was difficult to understand a new diagnosis and fully accept it, but I was shown ways to cope with my feelings and slowly began to utilize new techniques in dealing with others and my shortcomings. This work has been strengthened while on home confinement the past 20 months. My unwavering dedication to my life long recovery has resulted in drastic reforms to my overall stability and mindset. The work my therapist has implemented called 'cognitive behavioral therapy' along with the proper medication management makes me feel normal, as arbitrary as that sounds. I have not only refrained from drugs and alcohol, which I will continue to do, but regularly participated in one on one sessions along with some groups. It's good to feel ok and know there are others dealing with the same issues as myself.

Mental health plays a crucial role in our country's stability the same was it does in an individuals, any imbalance will cause turmoil. Asking for help doesn't show weakness, honestly getting help shows your acceptance, courage, and dedication in the face of adversity. Although, we have made great progress regarding mental health awareness over the last few decades, barriers still exist. As a nation we have an obligation to end all forms of stigmas and discrimination against people who suffer from debilitating issues and ensure they receive the professional care required to be an active, productive and managed member of our society, as I have become.

People like me who suffer from complex mental illnesses merit your empathy. Please have compassion and understanding while sentencing me. I have dedicated the months incarcerated along with my time on home confinement to bettering myself. I want a sense of normalcy back, free from keeping my phone attached to my hip in fear I may receive a 'check-in' and miss it, resulting in a violation. One of my future goals is to lead my own group on mental health awareness. If I had been diagnosed properly years ago I likely wouldn't be in the situation I find myself today, and at the mercy of this court. I have matured and grown in ways never imaginable, for that I am grateful. The desire to give back and make a difference in others' lives as has been made in mine is without question. The support my family and amazing wife have provided are priceless. They have given everything, and ensured the stability needed to stay on track has been provided. Melissa, the other positive to come from my involvement in January 6th other than the mental health treatment, such a loving and gentle partner means who means the world to me. She provides a home and environment that is more peaceful than I ever could have imagined. The patience she has displayed through all of this amazes me and we both look forward to celebrating with a church wedding in the near future.

Judge Amy Berman Jackson, I apologize for my actions steps away from your chambers on that fateful day. I wholeheartedly understand and accept that I let down many people with my egregious display of immaturity, however I can assure you that I am not the same person I was back then. This has been a journey and will continue to be my entire life. My commitment to growth is evident through my actions, it truly is a testament to my character. I am not just talking but have shown. Your Honor, you afforded me a chance on October 26th 2021 and I have not disappointed, truthfully you played a key role in my development, for that I am thankful. I assure you prison time is unnecessary to deter me from any future unlawful behavior. I am a human with so much to give. I genuinely pray for the same chance on July 28th 2023. May I please continue taking the steps at rehabilitation I have been, by correcting my thoughts and actions?

Sincerely,

