

EXHIBIT 1: LETTER TO THE COURT FROM WILLIAM REID

Dear Judge Friedrich¹,

I accept full responsibility for my actions on January 6th, 2021 and in the weeks that followed. I apologize for my involvement in a situation that spiraled out of control and affected the lives of so many other Americans. I directly contributed to it the moment I decided to enter the Capitol building.

The most painful part of my last 20 months is the prolonged separation from my family, specifically my daughter. She is my world and the hope that I'll see her again keeps me going but the regret I feel for putting her in this situation to begin with eats at me every moment of every day.

Had I been sober on that January afternoon, I know I wouldn't have gotten any closer to the building than the grounds outside of the Capitol. No matter how disillusioned I was, I never would have allowed myself to compromise my daughter's wellbeing by entering the fray and putting myself at risk.

I did go to Washington DC to protest and I was hoping that if enough of us had simply shown up that Congress would have put a temporary halt to the certification of election results and implement a nationwide recount by hand. I thought this could happen because of what I heard on the news. I didn't go to take part in any insurrection. I believe in our Constitutional framework and know that peaceful resolution should always be the primary goal of a nation and its citizens. I believe that those playing dress up for a civil war are people acting as if they have nothing to lose. My daughter's safety now and in the future will always be my primary concern and as such, I have everything to lose.

I was anticipating "getting into trouble" in DC but that was in belief that Antifa might attack protesters. Many of my prognostications online were accompanied by defiant posturing. Even so, when sober, I avoid confrontation. The night of January 5th, I witnessed a fairly large skirmish near the Washington Monument and I decided to steer clear of the fight and the cameras. I wish I'd remained sober and righteous the next day.

The next morning, I skipped breakfast and started drinking because I was in a celebratory mood. The city was packed and the fact that so many people showed up gave me hope regardless of the outcome in Congress that day. Unfortunately, what should have been a peaceful protest quickly took a turn for the worse. There were many contributing factors, I'm sure but whatever the reasons as soon as things escalated I should have turned back. Instead, I was filled with liquid courage and the energy of the crowd. I never planned on entering the Capitol but once it appeared that the protest was moving inside I envisioned a steady stream of protesters marching into one side of the building then through the halls of Congress and out of the other side. I'd witnessed different groups of demonstrators in recent years do exactly that. Hundreds of them even occupied Nancy Pelosi's office and the area outside. I thought our voices would be heard. Despite that, if I'd been sober I

¹ Mr. Reid sent this letter to counsel and his mother through a series of emails using the jail's email system. Counsel has modified the font to make it easier to read.

would have concluded entering any federal building in protest wasn't a good idea. We are not career protesters. Had I stopped to think about that I would have realized how things might escalate and that my participation would only contribute to that.

I didn't enter any offices or the House Floor that day, I'd never intended to. I never intended to damage anything either, but did so out of drunken frustration when I threw a remote at a TV screen and tipped over a water cooler. I'd been peaceful in every encounter inside the building up to that point and in that moment, I reacted that way to the pandemonium brought on by the crowd and tear gas. In those moments, nearby, Ashli Babbitt's life was taken. I thought of my daughter and said to myself "live to fight another day" and I left.

As far as my past is concerned, I'm clearly flawed but my issues stem from a single problem: I drink to self-medicate. People close to me, including former girlfriends have told me that for years. I never listened, I rationalized. Twenty months of being sober in jail has allowed me the opportunity to honestly evaluate my life. When I was 17, I started drinking after a horrible breakup. It was a coping mechanism. Throughout my life, I've turned to drinking when I was depressed or angry to alleviate the pain but it has only ever made things worse. A sober panic or desperation that I was dealing with on my own would suddenly be unleashed in a drunken rage.

I was under the influence of alcohol in every incident of trouble in my adult life, without exception. Some of the statements against me aren't entirely accurate, some are untrue, but there is an underlying truth to them all: I'm at my worst when I'm drunk and emotional. As a bartender, I was trained to be mindful of serving customers exhibiting signs of depression or anger. I should have been more mindful of these signs in myself.

As for my Florida case, all of my drunken rants compounded a situation that I should have ended with a lawyer immediately. I allowed myself to be provoked. I can't say anything more about that on advice of my lawyer but I can say that I have had time to think of all of my many mistakes and resolve to change.

I miss my daughter more than anything and to be honest, resent my being here to some degree. I suppose that's natural. But I'm also thankful for this time in a lot of ways. I wasn't upholding my end of things before I was arrested. I felt like I was beginning to accomplish things in my life but I realize now I had a lot of personality flaws and bad habits that would have continued to get in my way anyway. I've never been more honest with myself and with what I want out of my life. I have my experience here to thank for that. I am more determined than ever before to change my life around. I am not and do not want to be seen as the person on social media was on Jan. 6. That does not reflect who I am and who I want to be. I pledge that after I serve my sentence, this Court will never see me again. Thank you for reading my letter.

William Reid