

DCCC: Bombshell new report reveals Derrick Van Orden joined rioters on capitol grounds during deadly January 6 insurrection

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[Daily Beast](#): “Van Orden [...] has [repeatedly](#) claimed he never entered the Capitol grounds. However, social media posts from the riot suggest that isn’t true”

In case you missed it, a bombshell new report revealed that failed candidate Derrick Van Orden “[joined ‘stop the steal’ rioters on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol](#)” during the deadly insurrection on the U.S. Capitol on January 6.

Van Orden has tried to cover up his involvement in the insurrection by claiming to have not been on Capitol grounds. But the new investigative report proves otherwise – with evidence of Van Orden on Capitol grounds while the riot broke out.

And that’s not all – Van Orden bankrolled the trip on his campaign’s dime, raising concern from a nonpartisan campaign finance watchdog group.

Van Orden also has a record of propagating the “Big Lie” and “[pushing Trump’s baseless claims that he was robbed of re-election.](#)”

“Derrick Van Orden was not only part of a deadly attack on our Democracy by being on Capitol grounds while the riot erupted — he’s also lied to Wisconsinites and covered up his participation in the insurrection. Van Orden owes Wisconsin answers immediately,” **said DCCC spokesperson Elena Kuhn.**

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT:

Daily Beast: [GOP Candidate Bankrolled Jan. 6 Riot Trip With Campaign Cash](#)

- Two months after Republican congressional candidate Derrick Van Orden lost his 2020 race, he joined [“stop the steal” rioters on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol](#)—and he paid for the trip with donor money left over from his failed campaign.
- Now Van Orden is running again, and has already scored major endorsements from senior GOP House leadership, including [Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy](#) (R-CA).
- Van Orden, a former Navy SEAL and small-time [actor](#), has previously [acknowledged](#) attending the Jan. 6 rally, but has [repeatedly](#) claimed he never entered the Capitol grounds. However, social media posts from the riot suggest that isn't true.
- A Facebook image from Jan. 6 shows Van Orden standing on a wall on the Capitol grounds that was inside a restricted area. (The Daily Beast recreated the photo on Friday and confirmed that Van Orden would have had to cross police barricades to reach that area.)
- As for Van Orden's campaign expenses surrounding Jan. 6, it's unclear how they relate to Van Orden's attendance. Federal Election Commission regulations state that travel expenses must be “directly related to the campaign.” Van Orden—who wrote off roughly \$4,000 in transportation and D.C. hotel costs around Jan. 6 for him, his wife, and a campaign staffer—lost his race in November and didn't declare his 2022 candidacy until April.
- Jordan Libowitz, communications director for campaign finance watchdog Citizens for Ethics and Responsibility in Washington, questioned the legitimacy of the expenses.

- “Campaign accounts are not personal slush funds. They must be used for campaign-related activities. Attempting to overthrow an election you just lost is not a proper campaign activity,” Libowitz told The Daily Beast. “If he did use his campaign to pay for travel for him and his staff to attend the rally-turned-insurrection, it would raise serious questions about his compliance with campaign finance laws.”
- In an [op-ed](#) published the week after the attack on the Capitol, Van Orden claimed he made the trip “for meetings and to stand for the integrity of our electoral system,” both “as a citizen and at the behest of my neighbors here in Western Wisconsin.” He didn’t specify the nature of those meetings, and did not reply to The Daily Beast’s questions about the trip.
- “If those were campaign-related meetings, he should say so,” Libowitz said. “If it was a personal trip as a private citizen, that’s another matter.”
- Van Orden’s op-ed went on to call the riot “one of the most tragic incidents in the history of our nation.”
- “At no time did I enter the grounds, let alone the building,” he said.
- But that Facebook [image](#), posted at 5:15 p.m. on Jan. 6, shows Van Orden clearly on the Capitol grounds. And in a Facebook Live video shared earlier that afternoon from the Washington Mall, one of the candidate’s friends said he was heading to meet Van Orden, who, according to the friend, was “on the wall” and had told him he “got a great spot to watch.”
- “I got off the phone with Derrick Van Orden. He and a bunch of his frogman buddies are on the wall,” the friend says in the video. “He said he got a—they got a pretty good vantage point on the wall to the left side of the building. So that’s where I’m aiming for. He said, ‘Come on up. We got a great spot to watch.’ So that’s kind of where I’m shooting for.”

- The video was posted around 2:15 p.m., when the attack was [in full swing](#). At one point, the friend says, “I can see people up on the steps. Apparently, last I heard they were inside the building at the door of the Senate.”
- In the op-ed, however, Van Orden claimed he “stood on the parapet that lines the perimeter of the grounds and watched what should have been an expression of free speech devolve into one of the most tragic incidents in the history of our nation.”
- He left, he said, when it became clear that “a protest had become a mob,” fearing his presence “could be construed as tacitly approving this unlawful conduct.”
- Van Orden’s attendance at the Capitol puts him in league with [a slew of political hopefuls](#) who [attended the insurrection](#) and have since [declared candidacies](#) for office. What sets Van Orden apart, however, is his support from powerful House Republicans and his strong showing in last year’s election. He lost by about 2.5 points to longtime incumbent Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI), who has held the seat since 1997. After the election, Van Orden [questioned](#) the vote count.
- Van Orden’s 2022 bid has already drawn [major endorsements](#). Since April, he has scored support from McCarthy, as well as House Minority Whip [Steve Scalise \(R-LA\)](#) and newly minted conference chair [Rep. Elise Stefanik \(R-NY\)](#). McCarthy, Scalise, and Stefanik all objected to the election results, as did two Wisconsin Republican congressmen who have also endorsed Van Orden—Rep. Tom Tiffany and Rep. Scott Fitzgerald.
- That tight 2020 race, which Kind [described](#) as “competitive since day one,” also attracted a record amount of campaign contributions. Federal disclosures show Kind raised about \$3 million, and Van Orden pulled in almost \$2 million—adding up to the district’s largest haul in [at least 20 years](#). The fight nearly drained both campaigns, and by the end of the year, Van Orden had about [\\$12,500](#) left.

- He spent about a third of it on the trip to what would become the Capitol riot.