

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

METROPOLITAN AFRICAN METHODIST
EPISCOPAL CHURCH,

1518 M St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20005

Plaintiff,

v.

PROUD BOYS INTERNATIONAL, L.L.C.;

c/o Jason L. Van Dyke
108 Durango Dr.
Crossroads, TX 76227

ENRIQUE TARRIO;

5730 SW 142 Ct.
Miami, FL 33184

and

JOHN DOES 1-8,

Defendants.

COMPLAINT

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

COMPLAINT

Plaintiff Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church (“Metropolitan AME” or the “Church”) is a historic Black church in the heart of Washington, D.C. It brings this suit against the Proud Boys, its leadership and certain of its members for engaging in acts of terror and vandalizing church property in an effort to intimidate the Church and silence its support for racial justice. The conduct of the Proud Boys in Washington, D.C. on December 12, 2020 amounted to a new and dangerous chapter in the long and terrible history of white supremacist mob violence targeting Black houses of worship. Metropolitan AME, by its undersigned attorneys, Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights

Under Law, Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs, and Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP, upon personal knowledge with respect to itself and its actions and otherwise on information and belief, alleges as follows:

Nature of the Action

1. On December 12, 2020, hundreds of members of the Proud Boys, an all-male group with ties to white nationalism and a pronounced history of violence, traveled to Washington D.C. for the purpose of committing further acts of violence intended to intimidate and silence individuals and organizations that support racial justice.

2. Arriving in droves from around the country, they created a violent riot in Washington, D.C., committed brutal assaults against protestors and passersby, destroyed property, and silenced peaceful speech by tearing down, igniting, and otherwise destroying signs and banners supporting the Black Lives Matter movement.

3. The Plaintiff in this case, Metropolitan AME, is a historically Black church in Washington D.C., known for its significant place in Black history and culture; it is renowned as a beacon of light for African Methodists in the United States. On December 12, Metropolitan AME, like other nearby churches showing support for the Black Lives Matter movement, was terrorized through coordinated acts of violence when Proud Boys members climbed over a fence surrounding the Church, came on to the Church's property and destroyed a large Black Lives Matter sign the Church was proudly displaying—attempting to silence the Church's support for the racial justice movement with violent acts of trespass, theft, and destruction of property.

4. The Defendants are Proud Boys International, L.L.C., a limited liability company that established—and governs—the organization known as the Proud

Boys; Enrique Tarrío, the Chairman of the Proud Boys, who conspired with other Proud Boys members to plan, promote and participate in violent events throughout the summer and fall of 2020, including on December 12; and the unidentified individual Proud Boys members who joined in the Proud Boys' conspiracy by converging on and rampaging through downtown Washington, D.C., intent on committing acts of violence against supporters of racial justice, including Plaintiff Metropolitan AME.

5. The Proud Boys are an all-male group with ties to white nationalism that glorifies and engages in violence against people and organizations that show support for racial and ethnic minorities, women, non-Christians and immigrants. Since their founding several years ago, the Proud Boys have frequently sought out, encouraged, and engaged in bias-motivated street violence. The organization has hundreds, if not thousands, of members (many dues-paying), bylaws, and a federated hierarchy consisting of national leadership and regional cells.

6. The Proud Boys' presence on Church property on December 12—and the acts of violence they incited—was no accident. For several months, Defendants planned and coordinated their efforts, both on the internet and in person. They exhorted each other with inflammatory language: “buy ammo [and] clean your guns” and “[t]onight we don't sleep Tonight we keep our enemies awake. Tonight we become nightmares.”

7. In countless messages transmitted over social media platforms and messaging services, Defendants and their co-conspirators promised that there would be violence in their wake, and, as the events of December 12 demonstrate, they made good on their promises.

8. The physical attacks on December 12 targeting Metropolitan AME and the Black Lives Matter movement—and the consequent damage, suffering, and emotional distress arising from those attacks—were motivated by bias based on race, color, and political affiliation.

9. Plaintiff Metropolitan AME seeks to hold Defendants responsible for their actions that harmed the Church—conspiracy, trespass, theft and property destruction—under federal laws and the laws of the District of Columbia. Plaintiff seeks compensatory, punitive, and injunctive relief, and aims, with this action, to ensure that nothing like this will happen again at the hands of Defendants, their affiliates, agents and co-conspirators—not to Metropolitan AME, and not to the thousands of other people and organizations that find themselves targeted for violence by the Proud Boys.

The Parties

10. **Plaintiff Metropolitan AME:** Metropolitan AME is a historic church located at 1518 M Street, N.W., in downtown Washington, D.C. It is affiliated with the African Methodist Episcopal Church, a predominantly African American Methodist denomination that has the distinction of being the first independent Protestant denomination founded by Black people.

11. Metropolitan AME was founded in 1872 after the merger of two segregated Black congregations. It is the oldest property in the District with an unbroken chain of Black ownership.

12. The Church is “renowned as a ‘beacon of light for African Methodists in the United States.’” Its vision is “to embrace God’s beloved community through worship, liberation, and service.”¹

13. Metropolitan AME’s congregation—a “magnificent temple” in the words of Rep. Robert Smalls, a former slave and Civil War veteran—holds a significant place in Black history and culture.

14. The Church has been the spiritual home of several notable African American leaders, including Frederick Douglass. The Church served as the meeting place for the Bethel Literary and Historical Association, a literary society that held discussions on topics such as racism, economic justice, and labor rights. The Church also has hosted speakers such as Ida B. Wells, Booker T. Washington, and Eleanor Roosevelt, and held the funerals of Douglass, Sen. Blanche Bruce, and Rosa Parks. President Barack Obama attended services there before his second inauguration.

15. Metropolitan AME is designated in the National Register of Historic Places for its significance as a “historic African American church.”²

16. The façade and signage of the Church make it clear to passersby that it is a Black church. The word “African” is engraved on the Church’s façade as part of its full name. “A.M.E.” is well known as a Black denomination. There are historical markers and other signs in front of the building clearly stating that it is a historic Black church. The front yard of the Church directly abuts the M Street sidewalk and is only approximately 10-20 feet deep, so all of the signs are easily seen from the sidewalk.

¹ Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church, *Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church Strategic Plan: 2016-2019*, *5 (2016).

17. Over generations, the Church has vocally and publicly supported movements for civil rights and racial justice, including Black Lives Matter.

18. **Defendant Proud Boys International, L.L.C.**: Proud Boys International, L.L.C. (“PBI”) is a Texas Limited Liability Company created to “establish, maintain, govern, improve and promote the welfare of a fraternal order to be known as the ‘Proud Boys.’”³ The rules and procedures governing the fraternal order are set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws of Proud Boys International L.L.C. (the “Bylaws,” attached hereto as Exhibit 1).

19. The leadership of the Proud Boys consists of the Proud Boys Elders Chapter (the “Elders Chapter”) and the Chairman. The Elders Chapter is comprised of eight Proud Boys who serve as the members of PBI. The Elders Chapter governs the affairs of PBI and coordinates with the Chairman on public messaging on behalf of the Proud Boys. The Elders Chapter is authorized to collect annual dues from the entire membership of the Proud Boys.

20. The Chairman of the Proud Boys is the highest role in the organization. The Chairman is elected by the Elders Chapter and presides over meetings of the Elders Chapter. The bylaws of PBI vest the Chairman with the sole authority to

² National Park Service, *Washington, DC: Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church*, <https://www.nps.gov/places/metropolitan-african-methodist-episcopal-church.htm>.

³ Ex. 1, The Constitution and Bylaws of Proud Boys International L.L.C., Art. I, § 1 (Nov. 24, 2018), available at <https://www.capitolhellway.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Proud-Boys-Constitution-and-Bylaws.pdf>.

serve as the public voice of the Proud Boys as a whole (including PBI),⁴ in coordination with the Elders Chapter.

21. The Proud Boys have ties to white nationalism—a form of white supremacy that seeks to develop and maintain a white racial and national identity—and have incited and committed acts of violence against members of the Black and African American communities, as well as women, Muslims, Jews, immigrants and other historically marginalized peoples and organizations that support those populations. The Southern Poverty Law Center has designated the organization as a hate group. The Anti-Defamation League describes it as an extremist gang that has engaged in multiple acts of brutal violence and intimidation.

22. Violence has been a key component of the Proud Boys since the group’s creation and the Proud Boys’ governing documents condition membership and advancement in the organization on engaging in acts of violence. The group’s bylaws mandate that membership in the Proud Boys is limited to men who undergo initiation rituals, including getting beaten by other members. The highest level of membership—referred to as the “fourth degree initiation”—involves “a material sacrifice or service,” which Proud Boys founder Gavin McInnes has described as getting arrested or committing a violent act in support of the Proud Boys.

23. The Proud Boys’ membership is controlled by local chapter leadership that reports to national leaders, and the organization’s membership list is not public, making it difficult to know the number of members (or the identity of most

⁴ Per the Bylaws, the fraternal order, referred to in the Bylaws and herein as the “Proud Boys” consists of PBI, the “active chapters established time to time throughout the world, Proud Boy Elders Chapter, and the members and probationers of the Fraternity.” *Id.*, Art. I, § 2.

members). Members frequently self-identify on social media or by appearing in public in apparel that displays their affiliation, including clothing in the Proud Boys' official colors, black and yellow.

24. When the Proud Boys assemble in large groups at public demonstrations, violence most often follows.

25. Proud Boys members plan and commit acts of violence under the guise of self-defense by responding to small slights with coordinated, brutal force. Chats from the messaging platform Telegram show Proud Boys members planning violence well in advance of an April 2019 rally in Providence, Rhode Island. One person posting on the platform wrote, "If any contact is made with you, that's assault. If they take your hat, spray you with silly string, spit, push... It's assault. We need to have all our guys there before we retaliate though if we can. The cops aren't going to let us fight long. We need to inflict as much damage as possible in the time we have."⁵

26. In advance of an August 2019 rally in Portland, Oregon, Proud Boys member Joe Biggs posted videos of himself holding a spiked baseball bat, telling the camera that "We're going to put this to good use." He also posed wearing a t-shirt reading, "I'm Just Here for the Violence."

27. On October 12, 2019, ten men connected to the Proud Boys were arrested following their violent attacks on protestors outside of a club on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. The Proud Boys involved in those attacks punched, kicked and "stomped" four protestors wearing black clothes and masks. The Proud Boys later

⁵ Andy Campbell, *Leaked Proud Boys Chats Show Members Plotting Violence at Rallies*, Huffington Post (May 22, 2019, 2:44 PM), https://www.huffpost.com/entry/proud-boys-chat-logs-premeditated-rally-violence-in-leaked-chats_n_5ce1e231e4b00e035b928683.

claimed that their members were “ambushed” by these protestors, but security camera footage revealed that a Proud Boys member initiated the street violence. Two of the arrested members—Maxwell Hare and John Kinsman—stood trial in State Supreme Court in Manhattan and were convicted by a jury on charges of attempted gang assault, attempted assault and riot. The other Proud Boys members involved in the attacks pled guilty to various charges, including riot, disorderly conduct and attempted assault.

28. In 2019, Proud Boys member Kyle Chapman, the white nationalist founder of Proud Boys’ paramilitary subgroup known as the “Fraternal Order of the Alt-Knights,” pleaded guilty to a second-degree felony charge of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon in Texas, and pleaded no contest to possession of a weapon at a rally in Berkeley, CA. And in August of 2020, Proud Boys member Travis Taylor attacked a journalist in Portland, OR and broke his finger.

29. **Defendant Enrique Tarrío:** Tarrío is a resident of Miami, Florida. Since 2017, he has been a member of the Proud Boys, and since November 20, 2018, Tarrío has been the Chairman—the highest role in, and the face of, the organization.

30. As the Proud Boys’ Chairman, Tarrío, in coordination with the Elders Chapter, acts “as the voice of the fraternity as a whole on matters of public concern,” according to the Bylaws. Tarrío frequently responds to requests for comment to media organizations on behalf of the Proud Boys. Tarrío also presides over meetings of the Elders Chapter and has authority to cast the tie-breaking vote in the event of a tied vote among the Elders.

31. Tarrío maintains an active presence on social media as the public face of the Proud Boys. Tarrío frequently coordinates and communicates with other co-conspirators on Parler, a social media site similar to Twitter that is popular among Proud Boys members. Consistent with his role within the Proud Boys, Tarrío’s handle on Parler is @NobleLead and Tarrío identifies himself as “ProudBoy Chairman” on the site.⁶

32. Tarrío frequently leads Proud Boys’ rallies, gives direction to Proud Boys’ members and speaks on behalf of the organization to media outlets. He conspired and agreed with other members of the Proud Boys, including the Defendant John Does, to commit intentional unlawful acts in an effort to attack those who support racial justice, including the Black Lives Matter movement.

33. **Defendants John Does 1–8**: The John Doe Defendants are Proud Boys members who participated in coordinated rioting and violence in downtown Washington, D.C. on December 12, including the attack on Plaintiff Metropolitan AME, and engaged more widely in the conspiracy set forth below. Their identities are presently unknown.

Jurisdiction and Venue

34. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 11-921.

35. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendants pursuant to D.C. Official Code §§ 13-422 and 13-423.

36. The actions from which this case arose took place within the District of Columbia.

⁶ See Enrique Tarrío (@NobleLead), PARLER, <https://parler.com/profile/NobleLead/posts> (last visited

37. All Defendants engaged in a conspiracy to attack supporters of racial justice, such as the Church and others who support the Black Lives Matter movement, and acted in furtherance of the conspiracy within the District of Columbia.

38. Defendants have substantial contacts within the District of Columbia. These include engaging in commerce within the District—such as renting hotel rooms and purchasing food and beverages from District establishments.

Relevant Facts

Black Lives Matter

39. Black Lives Matter is a racial justice movement that advocates against police brutality, systemic racism, and racially motivated violence against Black people. It affirms that Black lives are no less valuable than other human lives and draws attention to violence perpetrated against Black people.

40. Black Lives Matter began in 2013 with a social media hashtag, #BlackLivesMatter, after the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the shooting death of Trayvon Martin, an African American teenager. The movement grew in the years since its inception, expanding nationally in response to additional needless, violent deaths of Black people at the hands of both law enforcement officers and vigilantes around the country.

41. The movement reached even greater national prominence—and gained further international attention—in 2020, in connection with protests related to the killings of George Floyd by a Minneapolis, Minnesota police officer and Breonna Taylor by Louisville, Kentucky police officers. It is estimated that between 15 and 26 million

Jan. 2, 2021).

people participated in the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests following their deaths, making Black Lives Matter one of the largest movements in United States history.

42. As of 2020, Pew Research polls show that most Americans support the Black Lives Matter movement.

43. The movement's primary means of advocacy is nonviolent street protests that aim, through peaceful collective action, to amplify Black voices, eradicate white supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes.

44. Individuals, businesses and organizations around the country have publicly expressed support for the movement in a variety of ways, including by placing Black Lives Matter signs in windows, on vehicles and in front of buildings in a show of solidarity.

45. Metropolitan AME supports the Black Lives Matter movement and other efforts to advance civil rights and promote racial justice. As a historic gathering place for civil rights advocates for more than 100 years, it views the Black Lives Matter movement as the latest chapter in the struggle for racial justice. In support of the movement, the Church hung a large Black Lives Matter sign in its yard.

The Proud Boys Publicly Oppose the Black Lives Matter Movement

46. The Proud Boys and its members have made it clear that they oppose the Black Lives Matter movement and its supporters. They have manifested this opposition through repeated and persistent acts of violence against racial justice demonstrators and other supporters of the movement.

47. On July 29, 2020, numerous demonstrators, including those affiliated with Black Lives Matter, were in Weatherford, Texas, protesting a Confederate

statue. Proud Boys members aligned themselves with racist hate groups like the KKK and Boogaloos, which showed up in Weatherford and assaulted and threatened to shoot the protestors.

48. Similarly, on several occasions in August 2020, the Proud Boys violently confronted Black Lives Matter protests in Portland, Oregon following the police killing of George Floyd.

49. The Proud Boys came to the Oregon protests armed with bear mace, clubs, paintball guns and an actual gun. Proud Boys members engaged in multiple acts of violence at the protest, including, on August 15, spraying a journalist with bear mace and, on August 22, charging and severely beating protestors affiliated with the Black Lives Matter movement.

50. At the August 22 protest, Proud Boys member Alan Swinney was captured on film pointing a gun at protestors.



51. Swinney was arrested and charged with 12 separate counts of criminal activity, including second-degree assault, unlawful use of a weapon, unlawful use of mace, pointing a gun at another person and menacing.

52. The Proud Boys opposition to Black Lives Matter is consistent with the organization’s well-documented ties to white supremacy.

53. When Jason Kessler organized the Unite the Right rally—an openly white supremacist rally that took place in Charlottesville, Virginia on August 11-12, 2017—he was an active member of the Proud Boys. Many other Proud Boys members—including Tarrio—attended and participated in that violent rally, at which dozens of hate crimes were committed, a protestor was killed, and many others were injured.

54. And as recently as November 2020, Kyle Chapman announced that he intends to rebrand the Proud Boys as an explicitly white supremacist group.

55. Given the Proud Boys ties to white supremacy—and their well-documented desire to use violence—it is no surprise that they consistently meet supporters of Black Lives Matter with violence.

Proud Boys Increased Prominence and Coordinated Efforts to Incite Violence

56. The Proud Boys reached new social and political prominence in the fall of 2020, when President Donald Trump referenced them in the first debate of the 2020 Presidential election. In the debate, President Trump was asked to condemn white supremacists; he demurred, eventually saying, “Proud Boys—stand back and stand by.”⁷

57. The Proud Boys took President Trump’s words as a rallying cry.

58. Following his statements, the Proud Boys saw a spike in new recruits and increased participation from their membership at protests and rallies.

⁷ Sheera Frenkel and Annie Karni, *Proud Boys celebrate Trump’s ‘stand by’ remark about them at the debate*, NY Times (Sept. 29, 2020), <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/29/us/trump-proud-boys-biden.html>.

59. Proud Boys leaders have been emboldened by—and capitalized on—the organization’s increased visibility.

60. Joe Biggs, a prominent member of the Proud Boys who identifies himself as one of the leaders of the Proud Boys and hosts WarBoys, an internet show popular among the Proud Boys membership, encouraged his followers to attend a November 14, 2020 rally in Washington, D.C. and to “[b]uy ammo [and] clean your guns” in advance of the rally.

61. Tarrío also notified his followers of the November 14 event, directing members to show up in person, and implicitly telling them to incite violence, stating: “We’re rolling out. Standby order has been rescinded.” This message was viewed by over 80 thousand Parler users.

62. Proud Boy members responded that they heard the call and would obey Tarrío’s instruction. One member observed, “As soon as I’m 100 percent back to full strength I’m gonna take out so many liberals that I’ll be able to stack the bodies as high as the heavens.”⁸

63. Throughout the night of November 14, Defendant Tarrío took to social media to urge his followers to seek altercations with perceived enemies of the Proud Boys, stating, “Tonight we don’t sleep Tonight we keep our enemies awake. Tonight we become nightmares.”

64. In response to the directives issued by leaders of the organization, members of the Proud Boys instigated numerous violent clashes with protesters during the November 14 protest and in its immediate aftermath.

The December 12, 2020 Protests in Washington D.C. and Attack on Metropolitan AME

65. The Proud Boys, its leaders, and its members conspired to engage in violence, property destruction, and other unlawful acts in the District on December 12, 2020, for the purpose of deliberately harming and intimidating their perceived enemies, including supporters of the Black Lives Matter movement. Their rampaging through the streets on that day were acts in furtherance of this conspiracy to deprive civil rights, including but not limited to the attack on Metropolitan AME

66. On December 12, Proud Boys leaders once again coordinated the Proud Boys' membership descent on Washington D.C.

67. The Proud Boys leaders used social media channels to direct other Proud Boys' members and affiliates to come to D.C. and to seek out opportunities for violence and altercations once they were there.

68. In response to the call issued by their leaders, approximately 400 members of the Proud Boys showed up at Freedom Plaza.

69. Consistent with the instructions from their leaders—including Defendant Tarrío—the Proud Boys executed a coordinated attack on protestors and passersby all throughout Washington D.C., targeting supporters of racial justice, including supporters of the Black Lives Matter movement.

70. Over the course of the night, clashes were reported near Black Lives Matter Plaza, Franklin Square, Harry's Bar, Thomas Circle, and other locations around downtown. As the night went on, social media channels were flooded with videos

⁸ Robin Young (@iamRobbinYoung), TWITTER (Nov. 15, 2020, 1:31 AM), <https://twitter.com/iamRobbinYoung/status/1327861691669856259/photo/4>.

showing Proud Boys members initiating physical violence around the city, including by (a) punching a Black woman on the 1500 block of K Street; (b) attacking protestors in the middle of a crowd and repeatedly kicking them while they lay on the ground; and (c) attacking multiple bystanders with weapons and throwing them to the ground.⁹

71. Additionally, while dozens of Proud Boys rallied outside Harry's Bar, a crowd singled out and attacked a solitary Black bystander, Philip Johnson, trapping him against a wall and beating him until police intervened.

72. The Metropolitan Police Department is continuing to search for the Proud Boys that committed various other assaults on the night of December 12, 2020.

73. The Proud Boys also caused violent property destruction throughout the city, with a particular focus on property related to the Black Lives Matter movement.

74. Proud Boys members tore down and violently destroyed multiple Black Lives Matter signs as they moved through the city, including Black Lives Matter signs hung on the property of historically Black churches.

75. A Black Lives Matter sign was attacked and destroyed at Asbury United Methodist Church, the oldest Black Methodist church in the District. The sign, which had been attached to church property, was ripped down and thrown on the ground.

⁹ See, e.g., ChuckModi, (@ChuckModi1), TWITTER (Dec. 17, 2020, 2:26 p.m.), <https://twitter.com/ChuckModi1/status/1339653320370229249?s=20> ("This is a full slo-motion of man with Proud Boys throwing a punch at her."); Indesist, (@Indesist), TWITTER (Dec. 12, 2020, 11:37 p.m.), <https://twitter.com/indesist/status/1337979973924163586?s=20> ("#ProudBoys ruthlessly assault a non-violent couple tonight in DC. #DCProtests); Hannah Allam (@HannahAllem), TWITTER (Dec. 12, 2020, 8:36 p.m.) <https://twitter.com/HannahAllam/status/1337934372759068673?s=20> ("Seeing some ugly, violent scenes tonight in downtown DC. Brawls beatings, harassment of anyone perceived by Proud Boys as "antifa.").

Members of the Proud Boys—including Defendant Enrique Tarrío—then poured an accelerant on the sign and lit it on fire.

76. Plaintiff Metropolitan AME’s property was also destroyed as part of the Proud Boys’ December 12 riot.

77. Metropolitan AME is located approximately six blocks north of the White House, directly in the path of the December 12 protests. Plaques noting Plaintiff’s history and importance to the Black community in D.C. are prominently placed in the yard outside the Church, which is surrounded by a wrought iron fence that marks its property line.

78. The Church had a hard, plastic sign that was approximately 3’ x 6’ and said in large letters “Black Lives Matter” prominently posted inside the fence in front of the building.

79. During the December 12, 2020 protests, members of the Proud Boys leapt over Metropolitan AME’s fence and entered the Church’s property for the purpose of removing and destroying the Church’s Black Lives Matter sign.

80. The Proud Boys’ members then broke the zip ties that held the sign in place, tore the sign, and threw it to the ground. The assailants stomped on the sign.

81. Video posted on Twitter shows approximately five to eight men in Proud Boy colors and apparel participating in the trespass and destruction of Metropolitan AME’s sign. Others then leapt over the iron fence onto Metropolitan AME’s property to join in the celebration of the sign’s destruction.

82. The remnants of the destroyed sign were stolen and carried away. The Church was forced to order a replacement for the sign.

83. The Proud Boys attacked Metropolitan AME’s Black Lives Matter sign because they oppose the Black Lives Matter movement and its efforts to advance racial justice.

84. A Twitter video of the attack on Metropolitan AME shows one Proud Boy, wearing a black beret with yellow insignia, breaking from the pack to turn to the sidewalk and raise both hands in the “ok” hand signal—a hand signal used by members of far-right organizations to express support for white supremacy. This hand signal is commonly used by Proud Boys members including Defendant Tarrío, as shown in the photo below.



85. The use of this hand signal is further support for the fact that the Proud Boys’ conspiracy to unleash a coordinated, violent attack on the Black Lives Matter movement was motivated by bias based on race, color, and/or political affiliation.

86. The Proud Boys’ attack on Metropolitan AME caused substantial harm to the Church and its members, both tangibly and intangibly, beyond simply the destruction of the sign. Plaintiff Metropolitan AME diverted and expended resources to respond to this attack and ensure the safety of its congregation, including time spent by

staff as well as expenses related to reviewing and expanding the Church's security practices. Because this incident occurred on December 12, the diversion of the Church's clergy was particularly impactful, as they would normally spend this time preparing for and engaging in Christmas activities. Pastor William H. Lamar IV personally led the response to this incident and assuaged his congregation.

87. The congregation was outraged by the attack. During a time of year that is meant to be joyous and restful, the congregants, staff, and church leadership instead had to endure and respond to a hate crime. While the congregation remains determined to continue Metropolitan AME's legacy of fighting for racial justice, the attack has created a sense of heightened awareness of how dangerous it can be for Black people to speak out against white supremacy. The attack was a reminder to them of the long and terrible history of violence directed at Black churches.

The Proud Boys Took Credit for the December 12, 2020 Attacks

88. Numerous media outlets reported on the Proud Boys' violent and hateful attacks on the night of December 12. The Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") and the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department ("MPD") announced an investigation into the destruction of property at Metropolitan AME and other churches, noting specifically that they were investigating the attacks as a possible hate crime.

89. Tarrío took credit for the Proud Boys' December 12 attacks almost immediately.

90. Appearing on an episode of WarBoys on December 17, 2020, Tarrío confessed to burning the Black Lives Matter sign at the Asbury United Methodist Church. Tarrío stated that he was "damn proud" of his actions and made clear that the

purpose of the attack was to target the Black Lives Matter movement, which he described as a “movement that has terrorized the country and burned down cities.”

91. Tarrío made a similar statement on his Parler account. As with his video confession, Tarrío made clear that the Black Lives Matter movement was his target, and that he claimed pride for his violent actions.

92. On December 19, Tarrío shared an image of a news article bearing the words “Proud boys chairman says he is ‘damn proud’ for burning the Black Lives Matter banner of a historic Black church after Trump march.” Tarrío commented on the image as follows: “I’ll say it again... and I’ll say it loud for the people in the back... I’M DAMN PROUD I DID IT!”



93. Tarrío’s words have been met with support from his co-conspirators. Other Proud Boys leaders appearing alongside Tarrío on WarBoys, including Joe Biggs and Rufio Panman, expressed the pride they felt from Tarrío’s

actions. Immediately after Tarrío confessed his involvement in the December 12 attacks, Joe Biggs said, “Proud of your f*cking boy, Enrique.” Other Proud Boys leaders and members have similarly expressed support on social media and, on information and belief, through private channels.

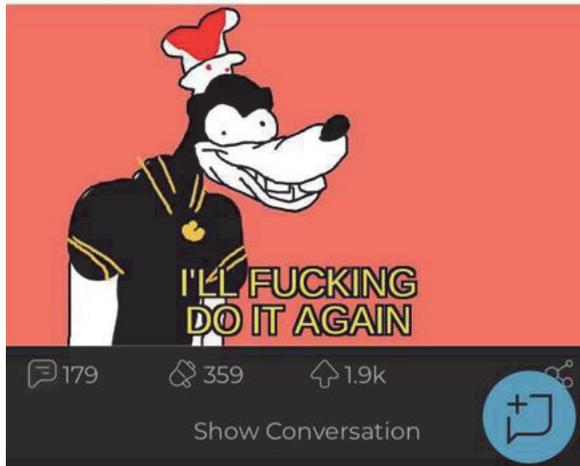
94. Tarrío has also stated his specific intent to repeat the violent and destructive attacks of December 12, including attacks against historically Black churches like Plaintiff Metropolitan AME and against the Black Lives Matter movement and its supporters.

95. On December 22, 2020, Tarrío shared on social media a graphic purportedly depicting a statement from the FBI that burning a Black Lives Matter banner is a hate crime, above a cartoon described as Tarrío himself, stating, “I’ll f*cking do it again,” clearly referencing the December 12 seizure and burning of Black Lives Matter signs for which Tarrío took credit.



FBI:"NOOOO you can't burn a BLM banner! thas a hate crime!"

Enrique Tarrío:



96. In order to make his intentions perfectly clear—and to signal to his fellow Proud Boys that they should participate in the same kind of attacks as their leader—Tarrío shared a statement above the graphic: “Ayo...pass me the lighter.”

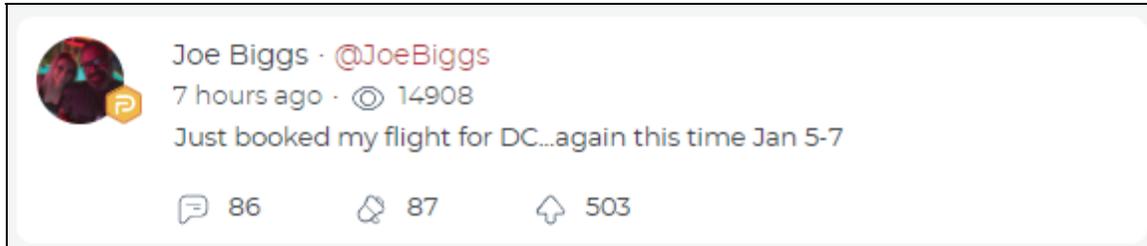
97. Tarrío’s statements make clear that he intends to commit additional acts of violence, by engaging in such actions himself, by inciting other Proud Boys members to do the same, and by ratifying the Proud Boys’ unlawful conduct after it occurred.

The Proud Boys Are Planning to Come Back to the District on January 6 and January 20, 2021

98. The Proud Boys have made clear that they plan to return to Washington, D.C. in the coming weeks to continue their conspiracy to engage in violent

and destructive acts against their “enemies,” including racial justice activists and supporters of the Black Lives Matter movement.

99. **January 6:** Joe Biggs told his followers on multiple social media accounts that he booked a flight to Washington, D.C. for January 6, encouraging other Proud Boys members to do the same:

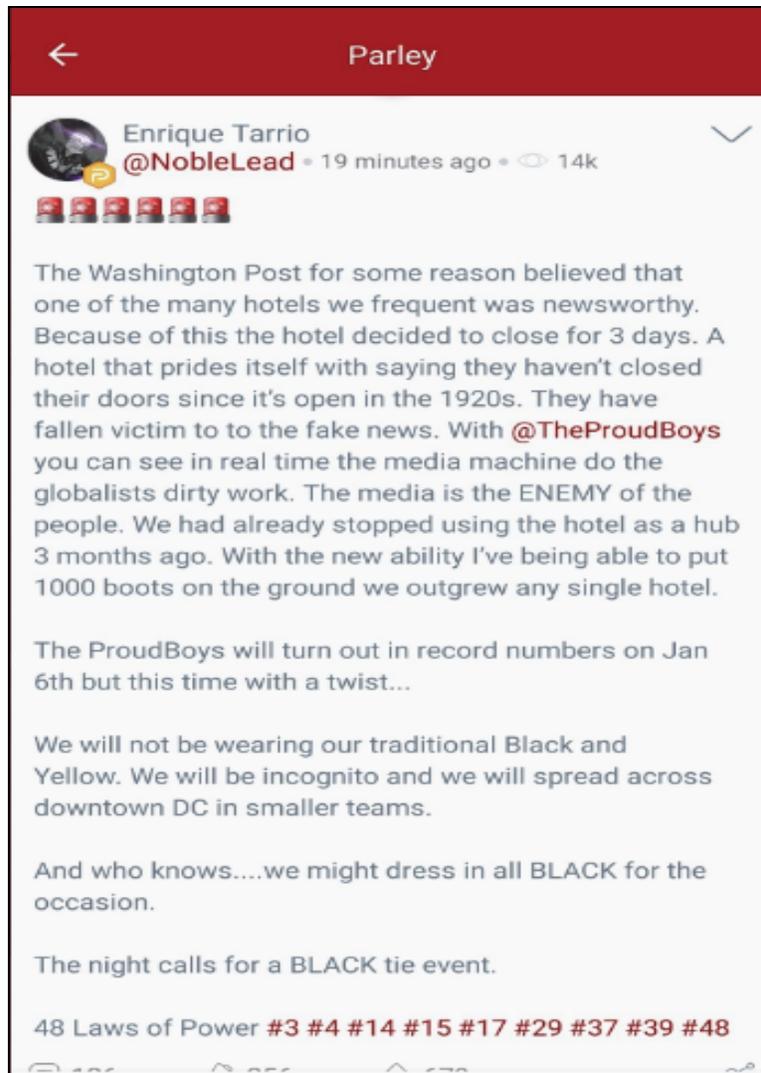


100. Tarrío has claimed credit for coordinating the Proud Boys’ planned violence on January 6, stating that he will be able to put “1000 boots on the ground.”

101. Tarrío went on to state that the Proud Boys will “turn out in record numbers on Jan 6th but this time with a twist...” He then detailed the coordinated steps the Proud Boys planned to take to ensure that they could move through Washington D.C. covertly and commit violence without identifying themselves as members of the organization, including that they would collectively dress “incognito,” rather than

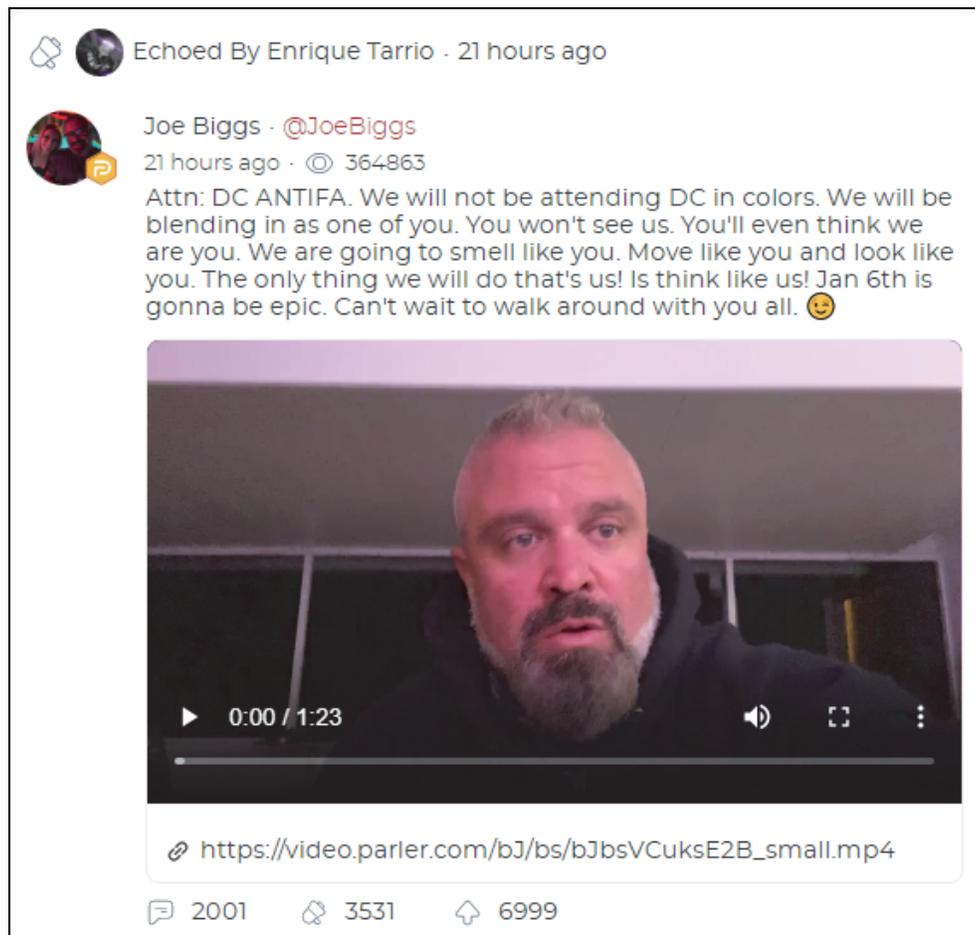
wearing the “traditional Black and Yellow” colors set forth as the mandatory dress code in the Bylaws.¹⁰

102. Tarrío explained that Proud Boys members had been instructed to “spread across downtown DC in smaller teams” than they had traveled in when they congregated in the past, and instructed Proud Boys to (i) “conceal your intentions,” (ii) “pose as a friend, work as a spy,” (iii) “crush your enemy totally,” (iv) “keep others in suspended terror,” (v) “plan all the way to the end,” and (vi) “stir up waters to catch fish.”



¹⁰ Ex. 1, Art. VI § 3(b) (“The official fraternity colors shall be black and yellow.”).

103. Later the same day, Biggs issued a similar directive. In a video message appended to his announcement, Biggs identified himself as a leader of the Proud Boys responsible for issuing the directive to Proud Boys members regarding the group's tactics on January 6, 2021.



104. **January 20:** The Proud Boys have also stated their intention to return to Washington, D.C. on January 20, 2021 to disrupt President-Elect Joe Biden's inauguration.

105. On a November 20, 2020 episode of WarBoys, Tarrío urged his followers to attend the inauguration in Washington, D.C. and engage in violence,

exhorting the Proud Boys to “take over” and using inflammatory rhetoric intended to paint the Proud Boys’ actions as “revolution[ary].”

106. Specifically, Tarrío gave the following orders to his followers on a November 20, 2020 episode of WarBoys:

- “Revolt mother*ckers.”
- “Do whatever you go to do to f*cking get your tickets [to the inauguration].”
- “You show up there in Biden gear and you turn his inauguration into a f*cking circus, a sign of resistance, a sign of revolution.”
- “You f*cking kick off this presidency with f*cking fireworks.”

107. As described in the Bylaws, Tarrío is the ultimate “voice of the fraternity as a whole on matters of public concern.” Together, Tarrío and the Elders Chapter make decisions on behalf of the group. When Tarrío and the Elders direct the members to attend rallies for the purpose of engaging in violent acts, they speak on behalf of the organization.

The Proud Boys Are Likely to Target Metropolitan AME Again

108. Tarrío has made abundantly clear that he views the destruction of Black Lives Matter signs as integral to the Proud Boys’ goal of intimidating and threatening supporters of the Black Lives Matter movement.

109. Accordingly, Tarrío and the Proud Boys members who follow him will likely undertake such actions when they reconvene to protest on January 6 and January 20, 2021.

110. This puts Metropolitan AME at significant risk.

111. By January 6, 2020, the replacement Black Lives Matter sign Metropolitan AME ordered following the Proud Boys' December 12 attack is scheduled to be hanging in front of the Church, making the Church once again a highly visible target for violence.

112. Damage to the Church building itself—a national historic landmark that is over 100 years old—could result in an irreparable loss to the District's history, culture, and Black community.

113. Additionally, the Church operates a catering company from its premises. Because both January 6 and January 20 fall in the middle of the work week, there will likely be individuals affiliated with the Church and the catering company on the property on those days.

114. Accordingly, there is additional risk that the Proud Boys' targeting of Metropolitan AME for violence will result not only in property damage, but in violence to the individuals present on that day.

CLAIMS FOR RELIEF

COUNT I

Bias-Related Conspiracy, Theft and Defacement of Private Property, D.C. Code §§ 22-3211, 22-3212.01, 22-3704 (Against All Defendants)

115. Plaintiff restates and realleges all other paragraphs of this Complaint, which are incorporated by reference as is set forth fully herein.

116. This claim arises under the D.C. Bias-Related Crime Act of 1989, D.C. Code §§ 22-3701(1)-(2) and 22-3704, which provides victims of crimes demonstrating bias with a private right to action, irrespective of any criminal prosecution for those acts.

117. Defendants entered into an agreement to participate in unlawful acts in furtherance of their goals of targeting the Black Lives Matter movement through use of violence. Some of the known unlawful acts consequent to the conspiracy include trespass, theft, and destruction of property.

118. Plaintiff Metropolitan AME incurred injuries due to Defendants' intentional actions in furtherance of this conspiracy, including from theft and destruction of Plaintiffs' property and the aftermath of those events.

119. The Defendants' actions—which targeted the Black Lives Matter movement and its supporters, such as Plaintiff Metropolitan AME—were motivated by bias arising from actual or perceived race, color, and/or political affiliation. Metropolitan AME's injuries resulted from the Defendants' prejudice.

120. As discussed above, the Proud Boys targeted Black Lives Matter for racially discriminatory reasons—because Black Lives Matter represents Black people.

121. These actions violate several sections of the criminal code of the District of Columbia that constitute predicate offenses under the D.C. Bias-Related Crime Act, including D.C. Code § 22-1805a (which prohibits conspiracies), D.C. Code § 22-3211 (which prohibits theft), and D.C. Code § 22-3312.01 (which prohibits defacement of public or private property).

122. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' actions, Plaintiff has suffered and is entitled to compensatory, consequential, and punitive damages, in an amount to be determined by the Court. In addition, because Defendants are a continued threat to Metropolitan AME, Metropolitan AME is entitled to injunctive relief.

COUNT II
Conversion (Against All Defendants)

123. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates all prior paragraphs of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

124. Defendants entered into a civil conspiracy by forming an agreement to participate in intentional acts of violence in furtherance of their goal of harming, intimidating, and silencing supporters of the Black Lives Matter movement.

125. On December 12, 2020, pursuant to that agreement, the John Doe Defendants made an illegal entry into Plaintiff Metropolitan AME's property by leaping over a wrought iron fence.

126. They then seized and destroyed an article of Metropolitan AME's personal property in which AME has a legal interest: a sign that said "Black Lives Matter" that was purchased and hung by the Church to show the Church's support for a movement which seeks to eradicate white supremacy and amplify Black voices through peaceful collective action.

127. The Defendants' unlawful possession and destruction of the Black Lives Matter sign was in denial and repudiation of the Church's right to such property: it interfered with Metropolitan AME's right to display the sign and publicly support the Black Lives Matter movement.

128. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' conversion, Plaintiff has suffered damages. Plaintiff is entitled to compensatory, consequential, and punitive damages, in an amount to be determined by the Court.

129. As co-conspirators, Defendants Tarrío and PBI are civilly liable for the actions of all individuals who acted in pursuit of the common conspiratorial scheme.

COUNT III
Trespass to Chattel (Against All Defendants)

130. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates all prior paragraphs of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

131. Defendants entered into a civil conspiracy by forming an agreement to participate in intentional acts of violence in furtherance of their goal of intimidating and silencing supporters of the Black Lives Matter movement.

132. On December 12, 2020, pursuant to that conspiracy, members of the Proud Boys intermeddled with and dispossessed Plaintiff Metropolitan AME of the use of its property by seizing and destroying the Church's "Black Lives Matter" sign, leaving the Church unable to display the sign and use it to publicly support the Black Lives Matter movement.

133. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' trespass, Plaintiff has suffered damages. Plaintiff is entitled to compensatory, consequential and punitive damages, in an amount to be determined by the Court.

134. As co-conspirators, Defendants Tarrío and PBI are civilly liable for the actions of all individuals who acted in pursuit of the common conspiratorial scheme.

COUNT IV
Trespass to Realty (Against All Defendants)

135. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates all prior paragraphs of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

136. Defendants entered into a civil conspiracy by forming an agreement to participate in intentional acts of violence in furtherance of their goal of intimidating and silencing supporters of the Black Lives Matter movement.

137. On December 12, 2020, pursuant to that conspiracy, members of the Proud Boys, including John Does, made an illegal entry into Plaintiff Metropolitan AME's property by leaping over a wrought iron fence.

138. The Defendants interfered with the Church's possessory interest in its property by seizing and destroying the Church's "Black Lives Matter" sign and thus interfering with the Church's ability to use its property to support the Black Lives Matter movement.

139. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' trespass, Plaintiff has suffered and is entitled to compensatory, consequential and punitive damages, in an amount to be determined by the Court.

140. As co-conspirators, Defendants Tarrío and PBI are civilly liable for the actions of all individuals who acted in pursuit of the common conspiratorial scheme.

COUNT V
Intentional Damage or Destruction of Religious Property
18 U.S.C. § 248(a)(3)
(Against All Defendants)

141. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates all prior paragraphs of this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

142. This claim arises under the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act ("FACE Act"), 18 U.S.C. § 248(a)(3), which prohibits intentionally damaging or destroying the property of a place of religious worship.

143. Defendants entered into a civil conspiracy by forming an agreement to participate in intentional acts of violence in furtherance of their goal of harming, intimidating, and silencing supporters of the Black Lives Matter movement.

144. On December 12, 2020, pursuant to that agreement, the John Doe Defendants seized and intentionally destroyed the Church's "Black Lives Matter" sign.

145. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' destruction of the sign, Plaintiff has suffered damages. Plaintiff is entitled to compensatory and punitive damages in an amount to be determined by the Court.

146. As co-conspirators, Defendants Tarrío and PBI are civilly liable for the actions of all individuals who acted in pursuit of the common conspiratorial scheme.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests that judgment be entered in its favor and against Defendants as follows:

- a. for compensatory damages, including direct, indirect, consequential and incidental damages, sufficient to compensate Metropolitan AME for the property and emotional damage caused by the Defendants;
- b. for punitive damages and attorneys' fees and costs arising from the nature of the Defendants' actions;
- c. for declaratory relief stating that the Defendants have committed crimes that were motivated by bias under the D.C. Bias-Related Crime Act; and
- d. for any other relief this Court may deem appropriate, including any appropriate injunctive relief.

JURY DEMAND

Metropolitan AME demands a trial by jury on all issues so triable.

Dated: January 4, 2021

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Exhibit 1

The Constitution and Bylaws
of
Proud Boys International L.L.C.

Revised November 24, 2018

Proud Boys International L.L.C.
c/o The Van Dyke Law Firm P.L.L.C.
108 Durango Drive
Crossroads, TX 76227

WITH MEMBER NAMES AND EXHIBITS REDACTED
FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

Article I: Purpose, Scope & Governing Law

Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of Proud Boys International, L.L.C., a Texas Limited Liability Company (the “Company”), shall be to establish, maintain, govern, improve and promote the welfare of a fraternal order to be known as the “Proud Boys” (the “Fraternity”), which shall have for its objects: the mutual benefit and assistance of its members; the binding by closer bonds of its members one to another; the rendition of mutual assistance to its members during life and after their death to their dependents; the extending of charity to all who need such assistance; the promotion of western civilization including free speech and the right to bear arms; the promotion of good citizenship; the training and developing of men to become positive role models as husbands, fathers, entrepreneurs, and civic leaders; and true patriotism.

Section 2. Composition of Fraternity

- (a) The Fraternity shall consist of the Company, active chapters established and existing from time to time throughout the world, Proud Boy Elders Chapter, and the members and probationers of the Fraternity. No other Company, association or other body shall be deemed to be a constituent part of the Fraternity except as set forth in these bylaws.
- (b) References in these bylaws to “brothers” shall, unless otherwise specified or unless the context clearly requires otherwise, mean persons that have completed the second degree of initiation. The term “members” shall mean all brothers and probationers of the fraternity.

Section 3. Use of Name.

Except for the entities and individuals identified in the first sentence of Section 2 of this Article 1, no entity or individual shall have the right to use the name “Proud Boys”, or any insignia of the Fraternity, or any recognizable variant of any of the foregoing, in whole or in part, as a part of its name, or to identify itself or himself, or to claim affiliation with the Fraternity, without express written permission of this Company, which permission may be limited to a stated period of time.

Section 4. Governing Documents.

The Constitution and Bylaws of Proud Boys International L.L.C., (the “Bylaws”) shall be the supreme law of the Fraternity. Except as provided in these bylaws, the governing law of the Fraternity shall be the resolutions of the Proud Boy Elders Chapter. Any bylaw, regulation, legislation, or resolution of any chapter of the Fraternity in conflict with any of the foregoing shall be null and void. Any private rituals of the Fraternity, as may be promulgated by the Elders Chapter from time to time, shall be incorporated into these bylaws.

Article II: Elders Chapter

Section 1. Name, Role and Powers

The terms “Elders Chapter” or “Proud Boys Elders Chapter” shall mean and refer collectively to the members of the Company. The Elders Chapter shall be the administrative, executive, and judicial head of the Fraternity, and shall have, in addition to the powers expressly provided for elsewhere in these Bylaws, the power to decide all questions concerning the meaning and interpretation of these Bylaws, and the power to adopt such other resolutions, not inconsistent with these Bylaws, as shall be necessary or appropriate for the welfare of the Fraternity. The manager of this company shall be JLVD Holdings L.L.C. However, the manager of the Company shall not have a vote in any affairs of the Fraternity.

Section 2. Composition.

The Elders Chapter shall consist of eight brothers elected from the Fraternity at large. Except as provided by Section 7 of this Article II, brothers of the Elders Chapter shall be elected for a term of one year, with such terms to expire following the election of a member to replace them.

Section 3. Chairman.

The Elders Chapter shall elect, from among the brothers of the fraternity, a ninth brother to act as Chairman and to have the powers of the Chairman set forth in these bylaws.

Section 4. Elders Chapter Powers

The sole powers of the Elders Chapter shall be as follows: (a) Through the Chairman, serving as the voice of the fraternity as a whole on matters of public concern; (b) Taking legal action on behalf of the fraternity; (c) To hold property in the name of the national fraternity and collect suggested voluntary dues for the benefit of the fraternity or for charity; (d) To establish organizations, funds or trusts to which both members and non-members of the fraternity could contribute for charitable purposes; and (e) To be the final authority on chapter status, membership criteria, and rituals of the fraternity.

Section 5. Chapter Autonomy; Elders Not Superior.

Except as set forth in these bylaws, each chapter of this fraternity is independent and autonomous from every other chapter of this fraternity. The Elders Chapter is not a chapter at all, but rather, a council intended to facilitate brothers with certain skills or abilities to use to such skills and abilities for the benefit of the fraternity as a whole. The members of the Elders Chapter do not hold rank or title that is superior to that of any other brother in the fraternity and, during their tenure in the Elders Chapter, shall remain a member of their local chapter.

Section 6. Chairman Duties

The Chairman is elected by the brothers of the Elders Chapter, but shall not be elected from *among* them. The Chairman may be any brother of the fraternity. The Chairman shall preside over the meetings of the Elders Chapter and, in the event of a tie among brothers of the Elders Chapter on any issue, shall be called upon to cast the tie-breaking vote. Unless otherwise

mandated by the members of the Elders Chapter, the Chairman shall act as the voice of the fraternity as a whole on matters of public concern.

Section 7. The First Elders Chapter

The initial eight members of the Elders Chapter shall be [REDACTED]. The first duty of the brothers the First Elders Chapter shall be to determine a method through which their successors will be selected upon the expiration of their terms. That method or such election must be approved by at least six of the eight Elders, reduced to written form, and added to these bylaws as an amendment in Section 8 below.

Section 8. Reserved for Expansion.

Section 9. Removal from Office.

No brother of the Elders Chapter shall be removed from office prior to the expiration of his term except for death, incapacity, incarceration, or good cause as determined by the Elders Chapter in its sole discretion. Removal shall be based on three fourths vote of all members of the Elders Chapter then in office. Any member of the Elders Chapter shall have the power to resign from the Elders Chapter with thirty (30) days written notice to the Chairman.

Section 10. Vacancies, How Filled

When, for any reason, a member of the Elders Chapter leaves office before the expiration of his term, the Elders Chapter shall select a successor by a majority vote. That member shall serve for the unexpired portion of the vacated term. If the Chairman resigns, the Elders Chapter shall select a new chairman by a majority vote. The resigning Chairman has the privilege, as his last act in office, of casting a vote to break any tie concerning his successor.

Section 11. Special Privileges of the Elders Chapter

- (a) The Elders Chapter may, by majority vote, confer the honor of the fourth degree of initiation on any brother of the fraternity who has met the criteria of Article VI, Section 2.
- (b) The Elders Chapter has the privilege of designating awards for merit, other than the fourth degree of initiation, which may be conferred upon a member from time to time subject to the criteria set forth by the Elders Chapter.
- (c) The Elders Chapter has the privilege of designating committees to perform certain functions related to the well-being of the members of this fraternity, provided that such functions do not constitute a prohibited exercise of power by the Elders. These committees may, but need not necessarily include, committees for bylaws, charity, merchandising, and social relations (to plan large events such as WestFest). The Elders chapter shall have the privilege of appointing one or more brothers who are not part of the Elders chapter to assist on such committees.

Section 12. Meetings

- (a) The Elders Chapter may meet from time to time at a place and manner as they may designate. Meetings may be conducted in person or through any means of electronic communication. If the Chairman is not present for the meeting, any Elder may act in place of the Chairman to keep order during the meeting.
- (b) Five members of the Elders Chapter shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, except that, if there are less than five members than in office, the remaining members may meet for the purpose of filling vacancies as provided in Section 10 of this Article II. A meeting at which a quorum has been established may continue to transact business notwithstanding the subsequent withdrawal of one or more members with the result that five members are no longer in attendance.
- (c) Except where a different vote is expressly required by another section of these Bylaws, a majority vote of those members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be sufficient to approve any action of the Elders Chapter.
- (d) Promptly following each meeting of the Elders Chapter, any action taken by the Chapter affecting the rights and privileges of members generally shall be communicated to the membership of the fraternity as a whole by any means that is both expeditious and reasonable under the circumstances.

Section 13. Financial Matters.

- (a) The Elders Chapter shall adopt, and monitor on a regular basis, an annual budget covering the revenues and expenditures of the Company. The Elders Chapter may select, from among their membership, a member to implement and monitor the budget.
- (b) The Elders Chapter shall have the authority, but not the obligation, to assess upon *voluntary* annual dues upon each member in an amount not to exceed \$25.00 per year. The revenue from this fee may only be used for the operations of the Fraternity or the other limited purposes set form in Section 4 of this Article II.
- (c) The payment of dues is a *voluntary assessment* and shall not be the determining factor of whether a person is a member in this fraternity.

Section 14. National Membership Records Forbidden

The Elders Chapter shall not keep or maintain a national list of members of this fraternity.

Article III

Establishment and Status of Active Chapters

Section 1. Names.

- (a) Subject to these by-laws, the active chapters shall be named by using “Proud Boys” followed by the city in which the chapter has been chartered. For example, a chapter chartered in Detroit shall be named “Proud Boys Detroit”. For chapters in smaller or less populous states where the use of the name of a city would be impractical, the name of the state may be used. For example, a chapter in Providence, Rhode Island would be named

“Proud Boys Rhode Island”. The same name shall not be given to more than one chapter, and the name once given to an active chapter in a particular geographic location shall not be withdrawn from that location.

- (b) The naming provisions of this bylaw are for chartering purposes only. It does not require that a chapter maintain any kind of legal existence. For those chapters which choose to have a legal existence (such as an LLC or a Corporation), this bylaw is not intended to impose any requirements or restrictions with respect to the naming requirements for that legal entity. Similar, this bylaw does not require the filing of any type of assumed name (d/b/a) certificate.

Section 2. Establishment of New Chapters.

- (a) The Fraternity shall seek to expand by establishing new active chapters, and for this purpose, the Elders Chapter shall have the *sole authority* to establish chapters in locations where it may determine there is an interest in the Fraternity. However, the Elders Chapter may delegate this authority to local bodies already responsible for overseeing the creation of chapters in their area, or such bodies which may be created in the future.
- (b) No currently existing chapters of the fraternity shall be required to reapply for chartering. After the date of the adoption of these bylaws, the Elders Chapter must approve any new chapter of the fraternity by a majority vote.
- (c) The Fraternity was formed in the United States of America and is an American organization. Chapters may be formed outside of the United States of America and its territories using the procedures set forth in these bylaws and all members of those chapters shall be recognized as brothers by other chapters. However, all chapters formed outside of the United States of America shall bear the responsibility of complying with all laws relating to the formation of a fraternal organization in their home country. All chapters formed outside of the United States of America shall, as an additional condition of chartering, agree to the jurisdiction of the Elders Chapter over their activities pursuant to these bylaws.

Section 3. Prohibition on Individual Member Discipline.

The Fraternity recognizes that local chapters are in the best position to render disciplinary actions against members. For this reason, any disciplinary actions against individual members by the Elders Chapter is expressly prohibited.

Article IV Organization and Conduct of Active Chapters

Section 1. General.

Each Chapter shall have the authority to create its own bylaws, which shall be the governing document for that chapter. The Elders Chapter shall have *no authority* to oversee the creation of bylaws for an individual chapter, except that it shall have the power to nullify any local chapter bylaw that conflicts with these bylaws.

Section 2. Active Chapter Officers.

Each chapter must, at a minimum, have a chapter president (or some person with a different title who fulfills the duties typical of a chapter president) for the purpose of receiving communications from the Elders Chapter concerning matters important to the fraternity. The bylaws of chapters may provide for such other additional officers as the chapters may desire. All officers of the active chapter shall be brothers.

Section 3. Selection of Active Chapter Officers

Officers of each chapter shall be elected periodically for a term set forth in the bylaws of that chapter, or by local custom. The procedures for the election of officers, filling officer vacancies, and removing officers are left to the discretion of each chapter. However, all chapter officers must be brothers.

Section 4. Scheduling of Active Chapter Meetings

Each chapter shall hold regular meetings at such a time, place, and frequency as the members of said chapter see fit, but at least once every sixty days. A “meeting” does not include any activity that occurs solely through electronic means.

Section 5. Conduct of Active Chapter Meeting.

The form of the meeting of a chapter shall be pursuant to the ritual attached as Exhibit “A” to these bylaws, with additional time permitted as necessary for initiation rituals and other matters to be discussed in that chapter’s meeting pursuant to the chapter’s bylaws or local custom. Under no circumstances shall any person that is not a probationer or member of this fraternity be permitted in chapter meetings.

Section 6. No Authority to Bind the Fraternity

No individual or group has the authority to legally bind the Fraternity in any manner unless taken pursuant to these bylaws or with the express written approval of the Elders Chapter by written resolution. This restriction includes, but is not limited to, any attempt to bind the Fraternity to an agreement or promise to indemnify a third party or accept liability on behalf of any other person or group.

Article V Membership

Section 1: Eligibility and Non-Discrimination.

- (a) Membership in the Fraternity shall be limited to persons who were born male, who currently identify as male, and who have been initiated through the *second degree* of initiation in accordance with these Bylaws.

- (b) No person eligible for membership in the Fraternity shall be discriminated against or denied membership in the Fraternity on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, veteran status, disability, religion, marital status or sexual orientation.
- (c) A person that believes in the inherent supremacy of any one race over another, or who is a member of any organization promoting the supremacy of any one race over another, may not become or remain a member of this Fraternity. This includes, but is not limited to, any person who currently identifies as white nationalist, white supremacist, or alt-right (or any person who is a member of an organization identifying as such). Similarly, members of terrorist organizations or cells, including but not limited to Antifa, are prohibited from membership in the fraternity.

Section 2: Brotherhood for Life

Any person that has completed the second degree of initiation for the Fraternity becomes a brother for life, except that he may be expelled for good cause as provided for in Section 6 of this Article V.

Section 3. Probationers

- (a) The term “probationer” refers to a person that has completed the first degree of initiation as set forth in Section 1 of Article VI of these bylaws. The vetting of probationers to become brothers shall be at the discretion of the chapters, provided that the chapter complies with Section 1 of this Article V.
- (b) The vetting of probationers through forced consumption of drugs or alcohol, physical training, corporal punishment, involuntary labor, sexual conduct, or any type of initiation or hazing ritual other than those rituals approved by Article VI of these bylaws is strictly prohibited.
- (c) Probationers may be removed from the fraternity by their chapter in accordance with any bylaw or local custom of that chapter, except for such rules or local customs that may be inconsistent with these bylaws.

Section 4. Brothers.

- (a) All persons given the honors of the second degree of initiation shall be brothers for life as provided in Section 2 of this Article V.
- (b) A chapter may, but shall not have the obligation to, keep a list of active members of its chapter. In no event shall the membership list of a local chapter be disclosed to any person who is not a brother of the fraternity. A chapter shall immediately notify the Elders Chapter upon receipt of any legal process (summons, subpoena, discovery request, etc.) compelling the turnover of such lists.

- (c) Any brother who relocates from one geographical territory to another shall be entitled to have his membership transferred to that territory, provided that he was a member in good standing of the chapter of which he departed.

Section 5: Dues and Fees

An active chapter may, as a condition of membership, impose annual or monthly dues for membership in the chapter. If a chapter imposes monthly dues for membership, it shall not require the payment of dues by any brother who is indigent or who is otherwise unable to pay dues due to financial hardship.

Section 6: Discipline of Members

- (a) **Authority.** Except as provided in these bylaws, the sole and exclusive authority, as well as the responsibility, for the discipline of members rests with the individual chapters. It is strongly recommended, but not required, that each chapter develop its own written “Proud Boy Sharia Court” procedures.
- (b) **Authorized Discipline.** A brother may only be disciplined for violations of these bylaws, of his chapter’s bylaws, or for a violation of state or federal law so grievous that a failure to discipline the brother would injure the name and reputation of the fraternity.
- (c) **Ex Post Facto Discipline Prohibited.** No brother may be disciplined for any violation of these bylaws, a chapter rule or bylaw, or other rules that occurred prior to the formal adoption and publication of said bylaw or rule.
- (d) **Methods of Chapter Discipline.** The following methods of discipline are approved for use by chapters of the Fraternity:
- i. **Reprimand.** This is a formal warning under which a brother is notified that he has violated the bylaws or other rules, and that further violations will result in additional discipline.
 - ii. **Fine.** Misconduct by a brother may be punished by a fine. The amount of the fine should be commensurate with the offense committed and the disciplinary history of the brother.
 - iii. **Probation.** A chapter may place one of its brothers on probation for a period during which time the brother’s activities (other than his right to vote), may be restricted.
 - iv. **Suspension.** A chapter may suspend a brother for a period of up to one year. During this time, the brother may not purport to be a member of the Fraternity and shall not be entitled to participate in any activities of the Fraternity. A brother that is suspended is no longer considered to be in good standing with the Fraternity and may not transfer his membership to another chapter.

- v. **Expulsion.** This is the ultimate sanction for a member and results in permanent separation from the Fraternity. Upon imposing this sanction, the chapter shall notify the Elders Chapter of the name of the brother who has been expelled and shall provide the Elders Chapter with a concise list of reasons for the expulsion. The chapter shall cooperate with any investigation of the Elders Chapter relating to expulsion.

- (e) **Disciplinary Appeals.** Unless the disciplinary action constituted a violation of these bylaws, the Elders Chapter lacks jurisdiction to consider appeals of reprimands, fine, probations, or suspensions. In the event of an expulsion, the Elders Chapter may, at its own discretion, consider the expulsion of the brother. If the Elders Chapter finds that the sanction was manifestly unjust and incompatible with the principles of fraternal brotherhood, it may pass a resolution censuring the chapter responsible for the expulsion and permit the brother to transfer to a different chapter.

- (f) **Automatic Suspension.** An active chapter may include provisions in its bylaws for automatic suspension of members who fail to meet chapter attendance standards or who fail to remain current on financial obligations to the chapter. An automatic suspension must permit automatic reinstatement of a member, with no further discipline, once noncompliance with the standard is cured.

Section 7. Voluntary Inactive Status

It is the policy of the Fraternity to accommodate members to the greatest extent possible. The Fraternity understands that it is possible that a brother could be placed in a position where his membership in the Fraternity could cause legal harm to the member or could be inconsistent with his legal obligations. For this reason, any member of the Fraternity who is a brother may request that his chapter place him on voluntary inactive status. A member seeking to return from voluntary inactive status must simply notify his prior chapter, or the president of any chapter to which he has transferred his membership, and pay any then due financial assessments of the chapter.

Section 8. Good Standing

A brother is considered in good standing unless he is suspended, expelled, or on voluntary inactive status.

Section 9. Privileges of Membership.

All brothers who are in good standing shall enjoy all of the privileges of membership granted by this Constitution and Bylaws or as may be granted by the Elders Chapter. They may attend any meeting of any Proud Boys chapter. They may address, vote, and hold office in their home chapter. They may purchase and wear the name, insignia, and colors of the Fraternity.

Article VI

Degrees of Initiation and Traditions

Section 1. Rites of Initiation

- (a) The first degree of initiation shall be a video or personal appearance at a meeting in which the probationer (a) states his true legal name; (b) states his desire to be a Proud Boy; and (c) recites the Fraternity Creed. Upon completion of the first degree of initiation, a person is considered a “probationer” and shall submit to his local chapter for vetting so as to ensure suitability for membership.
- (b) The second degree of initiation shall follow the following procedure:
- i. The second degree of initiation shall be explained fully to the probationer. After an explanation of the second degree, the brother supervising the second degree will ask the probationer if he understands what is about to happen to him.
 - ii. Upon receiving an answer in the affirmative, the supervising brother shall inform the probationer that it is not the desire of any brother that he suffer physical injury during the second degree, but a possibility exists that he may be injured. He shall then ask the probationer if he understands.
 - iii. Upon receiving an answer in the affirmative, the supervising brother shall inform the probationer that, upon completion of his second degree, he will be a brother for life and shall ensure that the probationer understands the implications of this fact (including his continued obligation to obey these bylaws).
 - iv. Once probationer has responded in such a manner as to ensure that the probationer understands the second degree and the implications thereof, the probationer shall be surrounded by a minimum of five brothers, instructed to stand with his arms at his sides with his hands protecting his genitals, and to recite the Fraternity together with the supervising brother.
 - v. Immediately after reciting the Fraternity Creed, the supervising brother shall instruct to probationer to name five breakfast cereals. At that time, the five brothers surrounding the probationer shall begin punching the probationer *only* in the arms and torso area of his body until such a time as he recites the names of five breakfast cereals. The supervising brother shall count the cereals aloud and the punching shall immediately cease once either (a) the fifth breakfast cereal is reached; or (b) the probationer indicates through words or actions that he is unable to continue and wishes to withdraw from the Fraternity. It is the responsibility of the supervising brother to protect the probationer undergoing his second degree from serious injury.
 - vi. Immediately following the second degree, the new brother should get a hug from the supervising brother and told “Welcome Aboard”. The same should then be done by all others who participated in the ritual of the second degree.

- vii. A chapter is *strictly prohibited* from performing a second degree on such individuals and in such circumstances where the performance of the ritual would subject the probationer, or any other participant, to unreasonable danger or risk of physical injury. If a probationer suffers from a medical condition that would make the performance of a standard second degree ritual unreasonably dangerous, the chapter shall inform the Elders Chapter. Upon receipt of such notification, the Elders Chapter shall either proscribe an alternative ritual or enter an order exempting the probationer from the second degree of initiation.
- (c) The third degree of initiation shall be a tattoo stating “Proud Boy” or “Proud Boys”. The *recommended* format for the tattoo is attached to these bylaws as Exhibit “B” and incorporated by reference herein. The third degree is meant to symbolize the commitment of a member to truly being a brother for life
- (d) No chapter shall add to or detract from the degrees of initiation set forth herein without the express written permission of the Elders Chapter. Permission for deviations shall only be granted in extraordinary circumstances.

Section 2. Fourth Degree of Initiation.

- (a) The fourth degree of initiation is purely honorary in nature. It symbolizes a formal recognition of a material sacrifice or service by a brother. The nature of such sacrifice or service may be for this Fraternity, for a brother in this Fraternity, or for the brother's country or community. Any requirement that a brother commit a violent or illegal act as a condition precedent to receiving a fourth degree is, by this bylaw, abolished.
- (b) Local chapters may award the fourth degree of initiation at their discretion, provided that their reasons for doing so are consistent with this Article VI, Section 2(a). No chapter may attempt to circumvent these bylaws by adopted a local requirement that any brother commit an illegal or violent act is a condition precedent to receiving the fourth degree.
- (c) As the founder of this fraternity, the fourth degree of initiation may be awarded *sua sponte* by Gavin McInnes at his discretion.

Section 3. Traditions

- (a) **Creed.** The Fraternity Creed is “I am a western chauvinist, and I refuse to apologize for creating the modern world”
- (b) **Colors.** The official fraternity colors shall be black and yellow.
- (c) **Crest.** The crest of the Fraternity shall be as shown on the document attached hereto as Exhibit “C” and incorporated by reference herein.
- (d) **Song.** The official song of the Fraternity is “Proud of Your Boy”, with music by Alan Menken and lyrics by Howard Ashman.

- (e) **Dress Code.** The dress code for all brothers of the Fraternity shall be a black polo style shirt with two lines of yellow piping on the collar and the arms, long pants or jeans, and closed toe shoes or boots. Probationers shall dress in a “casual” manner, but may not wear a prohibited item.
- (f) **Prohibited Items.** No member of the Fraternity shall wear flip flops, fedoras, or cargo shorts at any meeting or function of the Fraternity.
- (g) **No Wanks.** No heterosexual brother of the Fraternity shall masturbate more than one time in any calendar month the act occurs during a consensual sexual contact with a female who is not a prostitute. All members shall abstain from pornography.
- (h) **Founder and Founder’s Day.** Gavin McInnes shall be recognized as the founder of our Fraternity. Each chapter shall observe Founder’s Day on the seventeenth (17th) day of July and shall hold a Founder’s Day celebration on or around that day in honor of our Founder, the Fraternity, and its ideals.

Article VII Minimum Standards of Conduct

Section 1. Preamble.

Proud Boys is not a gang; it is a fraternity. Although the Elder’s Chapter has no right to discipline any member of the fraternity, it does have the right to set minimum standards of conduct for brothers in the fraternity. It also has the right to impose collective discipline on chapters that fail to discipline their members due to lack of proper vetting and/or poor Sharia Court procedures. Accordingly, the rules set forth in Article VII, Section 2 of these bylaws shall govern all chapters, members, and probationers of this fraternity.

Section 2. Proud Boy Law.

- (a) No member shall violate these bylaws.
- (b) No member shall assist another member in violating these bylaws.
- (c) No member shall engage in any conduct, or become a member of any group, that would make him ineligible for membership in this fraternity under Article V, Section 1 of these bylaws.
- (d) No member shall engage in sexual conduct with, or attempt to engage in sexual conduct, with the spouse, girlfriend, or boyfriend of any other member.
- (e) No member shall engage in any act of unlawful sexual contact or sexual misconduct.
- (f) No member shall cheat, steal from, or defraud any other member.

- (g) No member shall consume opiates, opioids, or crystalized methamphetamine. It is an exception to this bylaw if the brother is using the substance pursuant to a lawful prescription.
- (h) No member shall conspire with any other member to commit any criminal act against the laws of their state or country.
- (i) No member shall sell, use, or distribute illegal drugs at fraternity functions.
- (j) No member shall engage in any conduct that may reasonably be construed as an attack on another member's home, family, or employment.
- (k) No member shall unlawfully engage in violent conduct against a member or non-member. If a member is unlawfully attacked, that member and other members assisting him may only use such force as is reasonable and necessary under the circumstances to stop the other's unlawful use of force against the member who was attacked.
- (l) Members who are attending a fraternity function outside of their home state shall have a duty to attempt to retreat from any potentially violent situation, provided that they can do so without subjecting themselves to further danger.

**Article VIII
Miscellaneous**

Section 1. Fiscal Year.

The fiscal year of the Company shall be from January 1 – December 31.

Section 2. Amendments.

These Bylaws may be amended or supplemented by 3/4 vote of all members of the Elders Chapter then in office

Section 3. “10th Amendment” Provision.

Any matter not addressed by these bylaws is, by default, left to the discretion of the individual chapters with the intention that they operate as autonomously as possible.

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that, on the 25th day of November, 2018, these bylaws were ADOPTED with the votes tallied as follows;

86 - Aye
35 - Nay



Attorney for Proud Boys International LLC