

JAN. 6 U.S. CAPITOL RIOT

Panel requests interview from GOP leader McCarthy

BY FARNOUSH AMIRI
AND ERIC TUCKER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The House panel investigating the U.S. Capitol insurrection requested an interview and records from House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy on Wednesday, as it continues to seek first-hand details from members of Congress on former President Donald Trump's actions on the day hundreds of his supporters brutally beat police, stormed the building and interrupted the certification of the 2020 election.

Mississippi Rep. Bennie Thompson, Democratic chairman of the panel, requested that McCarthy, R-Calif., provide information to the nine-member panel regarding his conversations with Trump "before, during and after" the riot. The request also seeks information about McCarthy's communications with former White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows in the days before the attack.

"We also must learn about how the President's plans for January 6th came together, and all the other ways he attempted to alter the results of the election," Thompson said in the letter. "For example, in advance of January 6th, you reportedly explained to Mark Meadows and the former President that objections to the certification of the electoral votes on January 6th 'was doomed to fail.'"

Hours after the committee's request, McCarthy issued a statement saying he would refuse to cooperate. He said

the investigation was not legitimate and was an "abuse of power."

Without his cooperation, it remains unclear whether the panel will be able to gain testimony from McCarthy or any other congressional allies of Trump. While the committee has considered subpoenaing fellow lawmakers, that would be an extraordinary move and could run up against legal and political challenges.

Lawmakers are seeking a window into Trump's state of mind from an ally who has acknowledged repeated interactions with the then-president. The committee also wants to question McCarthy about communications with Trump and White House staff in the week after the violence, including a conversation with Trump that was reportedly heated.

The committee acknowledged the sensitive and unusual nature of its request as it proposed a meeting with McCarthy on either Feb. 3 or 4. "The Select Committee has tremendous respect for the prerogatives of Congress and the privacy of its Members," Thompson wrote. "At the same time, we have a solemn responsibility to investigate fully the facts and circumstances of these events."

Democrats have been seeking more information about McCarthy's communications with Trump since the former president's second impeachment trial last year. At one point in the trial, Democrats said they would try and call Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler, R-Wash., as a witness because she had described a potentially



Evelyn Hockstein/ pool, Reuters via AP

From left, House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., pay their respects to former Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., during a memorial service in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol as Reid lies in state Wednesday in Washington.

pivotal call between the two men after hearing an account from McCarthy.

Herrera Beutler's statement said McCarthy told her he had asked Trump to publicly "call off the riot" and had said the violent mob was made up of Trump supporters, not far-left antifa members.

She said in the statement, "That's when, according to McCarthy, the president said, 'Well, Kevin, I guess these people are more upset about the election than you are.'"

In the end, Democrats read a statement from Herrera Beutler into the record.

Trump, who had just left office, was acquitted by the Senate.

McCarthy had initially criticized Trump's actions after the 2020 election, saying he "bears responsibility" for the deadly Jan. 6 attack, which remains the most serious domestic assault on the building in its history.

"The saddest day I have ever had" in Congress, McCarthy said the night of the attack, even as he went on to join 138 other House Republicans in voting to reject election results.

The latest request from the panel also puts McCarthy

face-to-face with its vice-chair, Rep. Liz Cheney, whom he dumped from the No. 3 House leadership position last summer as her very public criticism of Trump's lies about his 2020 election loss reverberated through the Republican Party.

The GOP leader had counseled Cheney to stay on message, but as she continued to warn the party off Trump's falsehoods, McCarthy groomed a newly transformed Trump acolyte, Rep. Elise Stefanik, R-N.Y., as her replacement.

McCarthy is the third member of Congress the committee

has reached out to for voluntary information. In the past few weeks, GOP Reps. Jim Jordan and Scott Perry were also contacted by the panel but have denied the requests to sit down with lawmakers or provide documents.

The panel, comprised of seven Democrats and two Republicans, has interviewed almost 350 people and issued public subpoenas to around 50 people and organizations as it seeks to create a comprehensive record of the Jan. 6 attack and the events leading up to it.

On Wednesday, former White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany spoke to the panel virtually, according to a person familiar with the interview who requested anonymity to discuss it. The committee subpoenaed McEnany in November.

The committee says the extraordinary trove of material it has collected — 35,000 pages of records so far, including texts, emails and phone records from people close to Trump — is fleshing out critical details of the worst attack on the Capitol in two centuries, which played out on live television.

Thompson told The Associated Press in an interview last month that about 90% of the witnesses subpoenaed by the committee have cooperated despite the defiance of high-profile Trump allies like Meadows and Steve Bannon. Lawmakers said they have been effective at gathering information from other sources in part because they share a unity of purpose rarely seen in a congressional investigation.

RONNIE SPECTOR • 1943-2021

'60s icon who sang 'Be My Baby' dies at 78

BY MARK KENNEDY
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Ronnie Spector, the cat-eyed, beehived rock 'n' roll siren who sang such 1960s hits as "Be My Baby," "Baby I Love You" and "Walking in the Rain" as the leader of the girl group The Ronettes, has died. She was 78.

Spector died Wednesday after a brief battle with cancer, her family said. "Ronnie lived her life with a twinkle in her eye, a spunky attitude, a wicked sense of humor and a smile on her face. She was filled with love and gratitude," a statement said. No other details were revealed.

Tributes flooded social media, from Stevie Nicks to Brian Wilson, who wrote on Twitter: "I loved her voice so much and she was a very special person and a dear friend." Diane Warren called her "The voice of a million teenage dreams including mine."

The Ronettes' sexy look and powerful voices — plus songwriting and producing help

from Phil Spector — turned them into one of the premier acts of the girl-group era, touring England with The Rolling Stones and befriending the Beatles.

Spector, alongside her sister Estelle Bennett and cousin Nedra Talley, scored hits with pop masterpieces like "Baby, I Love You," "Walking in the Rain," "I Can Hear Music" and "Be My Baby," which was co-written by Spector, Jeff Barry and Ellie Greenwich.

"We weren't afraid to be hot. That was our gimmick," Spector said in her memoir. "When we saw The Shirelles walk on stage with their wide party dresses, we went in the opposite direction and squeezed our bodies into the tightest skirts we could find. Then we'd get out on stage and hike them up to show our legs even more."

Spector, born Veronica Bennett, and her multiracial bandmates grew up in the Washington Heights area of Manhattan. They began singing and dancing in clubs as Ronnie and the Relatives, becoming noteworthy for their liberal use of eye-

liner and mascara.

"The louder they applauded, the more mascara we put on the next time," she wrote in her memoir. "We didn't have a hit record to grab their attention, so we had to make an impression with our style. None of it was planned out; we just took the look we were born with and extended it."

In March 1963, Estelle Bennett managed to arrange an audition in front of Phil Spector, known for his big, brass-and-drum style dubbed the "wall of sound." They were signed to Philles Records in 1963. After being signed, they sang backup for other acts until Spector had the group record "Be My Baby" and "Baby I Love You."

The group's debut album, "Presenting the Fabulous Ronettes Featuring Veronica," was released in 1964. Five of its 12 tracks had made it to the U.S. Billboard charts.

"Nothing excites me more than just being onstage, having fun and flirting and winking to the guys and stuff like that," she told People magazine in 2017. "I just have so much fun. It's just the best feeling when I go out and they say, 'Ladies and gentlemen...' — my heart

stops for a minute — "... Ronnie Spector and the Ronettes!" Then I just go out there and the crowd reacts the way they react and I can go on singing forever."

After touring Germany in 1967, the Ronettes broke up. Spector married Ronnie in 1968, then she said he kept her locked in their Beverly Hills mansion. Her 1990 autobiography "Be My Baby: How I Survived Mascara, Miniskirts And Madness" tells an unhappy story of abuse. The couple divorced in 1974. Phil Spector was sent to prison in 2009 for the murder of actress Lana Clarkson and died in 2021.

Ronnie Spector's influence was felt far and wide. Brian Wilson became obsessed with "Be My Baby" and Billy Joel wrote "Say Goodbye to Hollywood" in Spector's honor. Amy Winehouse frequently cited Spector as an idol.

Martin Scorsese used "Be My Baby" to open his 1973 film "Mean Streets" and the song appears in the title sequence of "Dirty Dancing" and the closing credits of "Baby Mama." It also appeared on TV in "Moonlighting" and "The Wonder Years."

Deputy

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Jefferson County Sheriff Marc Heckathorn said Oliveira took at least a month of paid sick leave from work before returning and abruptly resigning, thus he was not internally investigated by the sheriff's office.

"I assumed he had a medical condition, and I assumed he'd be returning to work once he got better," Heckathorn said.

In a charging document filed Tuesday, prosecutors allege Oliveira sent sexually explicit photos of a woman to other people without her consent. Deschutes County District Attorney John Hummel confirmed Oliveira allegedly sent the images to people the woman previously dated.

Two of the allegations are from March and April and the other from July.

Oliveira was assigned a public defender. He is scheduled to enter a plea Feb. 16.

Oliveira is a graduate of Madras High School. He served in the U.S. Army from 2005 to 2006, according to The Madras Pioneer.

In 2006, he was hired as a control technician at the Jefferson County Jail, opening and closing doors. From 2009 to 2014, he moonlighted as a reserve officer with the Madras Police Department while continuing to work as a jail guard.

"I'm disappointed to hear the allegations of misconduct of a former employee," Heckathorn said. "And I'll be even more disappointed if he gets convicted."

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Author

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A nature lover, Tan said that when she does get to a place with strong outdoor appeal, she'll often linger a few days to ski or partake in a major interest of hers — and a major subject in her journals — birds.

"Oh my God. You have no idea," she said of how avid her interest in birds is.

Tan is highly active on Facebook groups related to birds and frequently posts her drawings of the sparrows, finches, hummingbirds, wrens, warblers, titmice and other varieties perched on feeders at home in Sausalito, California.

"I journal nearly every day about the birds I see in my backyard," she said. "I have seen probably 58 different species, but I have regular ones, and I follow their stories. I just write what I see, these daily dramas that are going on. It is a very big passion of mine."

Tan's bird curiosity took flight amid the political and social chaos of the past several years. The direction the country was heading in was frequently ruffling her feathers.

"It was in response to my feeling that our country was kind of out of whack ... and there was a lot of ugliness and

racism," Tan said. "I needed to find the beauty in my life again. So I started noticing birds."

Documenting the goings-on of the local bird community relates to her fiction writing work, Tan said.

"It's very much like the kind of observation that you have with writing fiction, but also with that curiosity and need to continue to ask questions about all the possibilities of what this behavior means, so it's a natural tie-in," she said. "It's storytelling, but from a different viewpoint. I am the bird in the story."

Next up in the Author! lineup is Tommy Orange, whose 2018 book "There, There" was a Pulitzer Prize finalist and winner of the 2019 American Book Award. An enrolled member of the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes of Oklahoma, Orange will present his program at 7 p.m. Feb. 3. "Sandman" and "American Gods" author Neil Gaiman's March 6 appearance (time to be determined) will conclude the 2022 series.

Tickets are \$35 per event, or \$90 for all three, and are available at dplfoundation.org. Money from ticket sales goes to support library programs and services that are not funded by tax dollars.

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Congress

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The winner will face the GOP primary victor from a field that so far includes former Happy Valley Mayor Lori Chavez-DeRemer and Jimmy Crumpacker, a Bend resident who finished fourth in the 2020 2nd Congressional District Republican primary won by now-Rep. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario. Both are staunch conservatives.

Schrader starts with a big financial advantage over any potential opponent, with \$3.3 million in the bank. DeRemer reported over \$300,000 raised prior to Oct. 1. McLeod-Skinner's campaign will officially report its first fundraising numbers later this month, but says it raised \$227,000 in November and December.

Redistricting created boundaries for the five existing and

one new congressional seat awarded Oregon for its increased population over the past decade. Under the new maps, incumbent U.S. Reps. Suzanne Bonamici, D-Beaverton in the 1st District, and Earl Blumenauer, D-Portland in the 3rd District, will run for reelection with strong Democratic voter edges. Rep. Peter DeFazio, D-Springfield in the 4th District — the longest-serving member of Oregon's congressional delegation — is not running for reelection. State Labor Commissioner Val Hoyle, a Democrat, and Alek Skarlatos, of Roseburg and DeFazio's 2020 Republican opponent, have announced they are running for the seat.

Bentz, the only Republican in Oregon's delegation, is running for his second term. His 2nd District became even more Republican-favored with redistricting as Democrats pulled Bend into the 5th District. Bentz was left as the incumbent of the rest of the area east of the Cascades and a portion of southwest Oregon around Medford.

The 6th District has a Democratic lean but no incumbent. A quirk in the U.S. Constitution does not require House members to live in their districts. McLeod-Skinner and DeRemer, in the 5th District race, are running from outside their district, but the largest number of such candidates filed in the 6th District. The seat, based around Salem, has drawn politicians from the Portland area.

Moore said having a strong donor list from state or local races is a big plus. But federal campaign finance rules and limits — and ways around them — don't automatically

translate into fundraising success in the jump to federal races. While raising money in Oregon is paramount, the Skarlatos campaign shows that big donations from national groups can tilt or even the political playing field.

"Where money makes a very interesting difference is in open seats," Moore said. "Oregon's CD 4 and CD 6 are in this category. Fundraising will tell us a lot about whether one party or the other truly thinks it can win either of these seats."

DeFazio's announcement that he wouldn't run just three months before the deadline to file shows uncertainty is built into the system. The races still have time to get scrambled further. Candidates have until March 8 to get in or get out. Once the fields are set, the money spigot will open wider.

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