

Fascist Kenosha shooter Kyle Rittenhouse released after posting \$2 million bail

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21 November 2020

After roughly two and a half months in custody, 17-year-old Donald Trump supporter and police fanatic Kyle Rittenhouse of Antioch, Illinois was released from a Wisconsin jail on Friday afternoon after his attorneys posted in full his \$2 million bail. Rittenhouse was able to gather the funds to secure his release by having his lawyers appeal for donations from the far-right and the Republican party.

Rittenhouse, who has become a symbol for the fascist right, is facing multiple serious charges including first-degree intentional homicide for the death of Anthony Huber, 26, of Silver Lake, first-degree reckless homicide for the death of Joseph Rosenbaum, 36, of Kenosha and attempted first-degree intentional homicide for the shooting of Gauge Grosskreutz, 26, of West Allis.

Lin Wood, one of Rittenhouse's defense attorneys and an open supporter of the fascist QAnon conspiracy theory, personally thanked MyPillow CEO Mike Lindell, an acolyte of President Donald Trump and Silver Spoons childhood actor Ricky Schroeder, for "putting us over the top," in securing the release of Rittenhouse. Wood has claimed that online defense funds set up for Rittenhouse have exceeded over one million dollars.

Wood is one of several lawyers on Trump's legal team attempting to undermine the presidential election result through undemocratic lawsuits to halt the certification of the vote or through throwing out hundreds of thousands of mail-in ballots in battleground states such as Georgia. Wood also represents Georgia Congresswoman-elect and fellow QAnon supporter Majorie Taylor Greene. Greene, who won her seat after running unopposed, routinely spouts bigoted and racist conspiracy theories including accusing Holocaust survivor George Soros of having

collaborated with the Nazis.

Kenosha was the site of three days of protests by multiracial youth and community members following the release of a social media recording of police shooting Jacob Blake, a 29-year-old Black man and father of six, on August 23. Blake was shot in the back seven times by 31-year-old Kenosha police officer Rusten Shesky leaving him paralyzed. Shesky has yet to be charged with a crime as state authorities slowly proceed with their "investigation."

A freedom of information request from the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* revealed last week that Shesky, who became a cop in 2013, has been the subject of five internal investigations, including for pulling gun on and handcuffing a misidentified suspect. Shesky has also been investigated for causing thousands of dollars in damage to police vehicles in three separate accidents.

The shooting of Blake capped a summer of thousands of protests against police violence that began with the May 25 murder of George Floyd by four cops with the Minneapolis Police Department. Throughout the summer and into the fall, police across the US have violently responded to protests with tear gas, baton strikes, and mass arrests as well as appealing to fascistic militia elements and racist street gangs, such as the Oath Keepers, Proud Boys and Patriot Prayer to assist them in terrorizing and suppressing demonstrations.

On the night of August 25 dozens of militia members, including Rittenhouse, were drawn to the anti-police violence protest by a group called the Kenosha Militia, which had posted a "Call to Arms" on Facebook in order to "protect our lives and property." Rittenhouse and his friend, 19 year-old, Dominick Black, who was recently charged with two counts of intentionally

giving a dangerous weapon to someone under 18, causing death, were seen in multiple videos carrying AR-15 rifles.

Despite illegally carrying a rifle after curfew, Rittenhouse and fellow militia members were not hassled by police forces leading up to the shooting. Video from the night of the shooting shows police offering water to and thanking militia members, including Rittenhouse, for “all their help” in threatening protesters.

Family and friends of the victims had previously called for a higher bail amount citing Rittenhouse’s previous attempts to flee, such as the night of the shooting when he walked past police after shooting multiple people before driving home to Illinois and turning himself in approximately an hour later. Anthony Huber’s father, John Huber, in an online court appearance earlier this month asked for a bail amount of \$10 million, while a lawyer for Grosskreutz called for a \$4 million bail.

In a video released by the *Washington Post* on Thursday, Rittenhouse said he had no regrets about illegally bringing a rifle to the streets of Kenosha to confront protesters. “I feel I had to protect myself,” Rittenhouse said. “I would have died that night if I didn’t.” The *Post* reported that Kyle’s older sister, Faith, watched the protests online with her brother who referred to demonstrators as “rioters” and “monsters.”

Demonstrating the support Rittenhouse has within the far-right and the White House, Proud Boys chairman and director of Florida Latino outreach for the Trump presidential campaign, Enrique Tarrio, led members of the Proud Boys in a “Free Kyle” chant outside the Washington Monument during the “Stop the Steal” rally on November 14.



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