DFW SUPPORT COMMITTEE
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Media Kit

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Overview

On July 4, 2025, approximately a dozen people gathered at the Prairieland ICE detention center in Alvarado, Texas, to make noise and show solidarity with those detained there. Some demonstrators chanted slogans while others lit fireworks into the air on the rainy summer night. As several participants left the facility as the protest wound down, Lieutenant Gross of the Alvarado Police Department arrived to the scene and, within seconds, drew his gun.

After the hectic seconds that followed, everyone present was arrested and held on multi-million dollar bonds, facing a variety of state and federal charges, including “material support to terrorists.” After the event 20 homes and one business were raided and eight more people were arrested and charged in relation to alleged efforts to hinder the investigation. Nineteen people now face criminal charges in one of the most egregious examples of government repression of our right to protest.

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On March 13, 2026, nine of the defendants were found guilty in a federal trial on most of the charges brought against them. This occurred despite the fact that the government's own witnesses confirmed that there was no plan for violence and any alleged illegal actions that occurred on the scene were conducted spontaneously. Those found guilty were sentenced in June of 2026 to terms ranging from 30 to 100 years, with most defendants present at the demonstration sentenced to 50 years.

The government has made extensive use of First and Second Amendment protected activity as evidence of a non-existent terrorist conspiracy, which they call the "North Texas Antifa Cell." If the verdict stands, it will mark an ominous precedent, allowing the federal government to imprison those defending our communities from state-sponsored violence and chill urgently needed dissent.

Defendant Support Websites

https://prairielanddefendants.com/

https://freedes.net/

The Defendants

Autumn Hill
Benjamin "Champagne" Song
Daniel "Des" Rolando Sanchez Estrada
Dario Sanchez
Elizabeth Soto
Ines Soto
Janette Goering
Joy "Rowan" Gibson
Lucy Fowlkes
Maricela Rueda
Meagan Morris
Rebecca Morgan
Savanna Batten
Zachary Evetts

The Night of July 4:
Narrative of events as described in federal trial

Amid a wave of ICE raids and widespread protests against mass deportations, a group of Texas residents gathered outside the Prairieland Detention Center in Alvarado, Texas, for a noise demonstration on the night of July 4, 2025. This is a common type of protest that intends to show solidarity with detainees in jails, prisons, and other detention facilities by using noisemakers, instruments, and megaphones to let the

detainees know that they are not forgotten and that people on the outside are fighting for them. Protesters chanted, yelled messages of “esperanza” [hope], made noise, and—because it was the 4th—some set off fireworks just outside of the Prairieland facility’s property line in front of a large window where detainees could see them.

The noise demonstration was successful! Detainees saw the fireworks, heard the noise, and gathered at the window to watch, giving signs of approval. By this time, some protesters had left, because they felt that they had accomplished their goal of communicating solidarity to the detainees.

This unusual gathering of detainees around the windows led to ICE detention center employees calling 911 and going outside to see what was going on. Sergeant Cindy Hart and Officer Dekeithan Reedy exited the building and walked towards towards some of the protesters and asked them to leave. The protesters, who were on the other side of the fences, complied. Then, the employees went to go check out the noise they heard in the open parking lot. Two more protesters ran past them without acknowledging their presence.

At that time, Lt. Gross of the Alvarado Police Department arrived at the detention center. He testified that he wasn’t expecting much because it was July 4, and most calls that night had been minor disturbances. He told the jury that he thought it might have been a disgruntled family member trying to get into the facility. Evidence revealed that, within seconds of arriving on the scene, Lt. Gross raised his weapon, unprovoked, and took aim at the backs of two unarmed protesters who were running away—a crucial detail he left out of his written statement and testimony until being cross-examined at trial. These protesters posed no threat as they ran, vulnerable and exposed, from an officer who chose escalation over restraint. In a split-second act that likely saved their lives, someone fired shots toward the ground to de-escalate the situation, disrupting Gross’s line of fire and preventing what could have been a tragic massacre. In hindsight, some believe that Gross may have lucked out: had things been different, perhaps he would be the one on trial.

Gross suffered a minor injury, likely caused by a ricocheted bullet fragment. Bodycam footage recorded a comment to Gross from another law enforcement officer who said, “It grazed you, bud.” The government has refused to release any medical records documenting Gross’s injuries. Despite only spending a few hours in the hospital, the government continues to describe Gross’s injury inaccurately, claiming it was much more severe than the evidence shows.

In the neighborhood adjacent to the facility, over 500 hundred yards away, Alvarado Police Officers Darius Bell, Daniel Mellow, and Carmen Solis approached Elizabeth Soto, Ines Soto, Savanna Batten, Maricela Rueda, and Seth Sikes. They wore a mix of street clothes, work uniforms, blue jeans, and black clothing, though the government would later falsely insist that they wore all black “tactical” clothing. They showed no signs of resisting, and the officers quickly escalated the encounter. From video evidence shown at trial, Bell shouted while drawing his weapon and pointing it at the protesters: “Don’t nobody reach for nothing. Sit down. Do not reach for your pocket! I will pop your ass today, do not even fucking play with me.” These protesters were illegally searched while detained—but not arrested—after they explicitly voiced on video that they did not consent to the search. Multiple government witnesses admitted they searched defendants in spite of the defendants voicing that they did not consent to a search.

Ultimately, Alvarado Police arrested nine individuals near the detention center and surrounding areas that night. One more was arrested at her home the next day. In the days and weeks that followed, state and federal agents blanketed the Dallas/Fort Worth region, raiding homes and surveilling people, including the spouse of a defendant. The spouse was later accused of hiding evidence for transporting a box of personal affects. Law enforcement raided nearly 20 homes and at least one business throughout the Dallas/Fort Worth region. In these raids, they damaged property, staged evidence, and detained occupants—including children—at gunpoint. In one instance, agents attempted to bribe a defendant's adult child to coerce testimony. In another instance, a 14-year-old, 6-foot-tall, 210-pound boy was held at rifle-point by multiple FBI agents, who mistook him for 32-year-old, 5'6?, 150-pound Champagne Song, who the state claims fired the shot that injured Lt. Gross. Song was arrested ten days later, after a multi-state manhunt that eventually led to another eight people being arrested.

An Unfair Federal Trial:
Description of the legal irregularities leading to convictions of defendants

After months of state and federal indictments, jail transfers, and changes in the government's story, the Department of Justice brought forward a federal trial against nine defendants in the North District of Texas. After a mistrial was declared on the original start date due likely to the Judge's perception that the jury pool was too biased against ICE, the trial lasted from February 23 to March 13, 2026, resulting in a guilty verdict on all protest-related charges. It featured dozens of officers from multiple state and federal agencies, several cooperating defendants, and a widely discredited "Antifa expert."

While the U.S. Constitution guarantees that those accused of a crime are innocent until proven guilty, this was not the case here. The defendants were imprisoned on bonds of up to $15 million since their arrest on state-level charges for 3 months before being indicted on federal charges. During this time, they had limited access to state public defenders (as some refused to visit them) and were not assigned federal public defenders. This meant that no defense experts were able to investigate the scene, while federal prosecutors began constructing their case. Discovery was withheld from defense attorneys, with some only receiving the latest batch of discovery a week before trial began. Some attorneys alleged in motions that the discovery remained incomplete. Additionally, Star attorney George Lobb, who had been hired to represent Maricela Rueda, was threatened with contempt and jail time by District Court Judge Mark Pittman if he didn't remove himself from the case. Judge Pittman, who has been admonished by the Fifth Circuit before, also issued multiple sanctions to federal defense attorneys for their zealous advocacy.

The defendants suffered many violations of their rights while in jail. They endured daily strip-searches, threats, and the denial of prescribed medications and meals that met their dietary restrictions. In the lead-up to and throughout the trial, the jails denied defendants adequate food, showers, and other elements of basic human dignity. Trans defendants were denied estrogen or the ability to shave, and sudden, heavy restrictions on the provision of court clothes hindered defendants' ability to present themselves professionally for trial. U.S. Marshals that watched over defendants in the courtroom instructed them not to express emotion and told them that if they cried, they would be removed from the courtroom. By keeping

the defendants tired, hungry, scared and sleep-deprived, the jail and the courtroom hindered their ability to represent themselves and mount a thorough defense.

During the trial, Trump-appointed Judge Mark Pittman made numerous irregular decisions that hampered the defense. He repeatedly targeted defense attorney MarQuetta Clayton, and used her blouse as an excuse to declare a mistrial to avoid seating a jury that was largely sympathetic to the defendants and against ICE. He then, in a highly unusual move, manipulated the jury selection process by questioning the jury himself to deny the defense an ability to question jurors directly. As he checked jurors for bias, Judge Pittman regularly pressed jurors who gave defendant-friendly opinions to find reasons to exclude them from the jury.

As the trial went on, the judge repeatedly overruled the defense's objections while giving the prosecution ample latitude when it came to repetition, leading questions, and testimony. Often, it appeared Judge Pittman was on the prosecution's side, rather than a neutral party. On multiple occasions, he interrupted the cross-examination of the government's witnesses when they were stumbling or giving testimony that was favorable to the defense (e.g., Lt. Gross, cooperating defendant Sharp). After it was revealed that Lt. Gross aimed his weapon at unarmed protesters, Judge Pittman granted the government's mid-trial motion that barred the defendants from claiming self-defense or defense of another. That motion argued defendants had justified Gross' use of force by launching fireworks and chanting over a loudspeaker prior to his arrival. To further add to the irregularity of this trial, Judge Pittman also held a private meeting with former Attorney General Bill Barr during the trial. While Barr described the meeting as a "tour" of the courtroom, he has been open about his belief in "antifa" conspiracy theories that paint people exercising their First Amendment rights as terrorists.

Throughout the trial, government witnesses left out parts of their story, were found to be unreliable, and contradicted the state's narrative. Officer Reedy, a Prairieland Detention Center officer, and one of the first people to investigate the noise protest outside the facility, testified that he did not write his own statement. He admitted he had never seen the statement, that it was written for him, and he did not know who wrote it. Lt. Gross's written statement was provided weeks after the incident. He admitted he saw the bodycam footage before writing it and received help from lawyers while crafting it. Finally, testimony of cooperating witness Nathan Baumann was found to be less than reliable after he admitted that he was advised to lie by his attorney. "My lawyer said I have to snitch, even if I have to make shit up," Baumann stated. As the trial progressed, key aspects of the defense's arguments were confirmed by the government's witnesses: there was no plan of violence, there was no unified organization or ideology held by all the defendants, there was no coordination around any illegal activity that night, and the intention of the demonstration was to make noise and show solidarity with the detainees.

It is significant that the prosecution did not present physical evidence of any defendant committing illegal activity. The majority of evidence included zines, flags, participation in book clubs, and being friends. Political literature taken from homes was touted as justification for a conspiracy. Normal privacy practices were evidence of criminal intent: using encrypted messaging apps and pseudonyms, and preventing location tracking on phones. The wearing of black clothing–even though many were not wearing black–was held up to claim material support for terrorism. The prosecution went so far as to use a photo of one defendant's black underwear as a lurid example of "black bloc." Lawfully owned firearms found in

people's homes were used to claim violent intent. And the state's star witness, from a discredited far-right think tank, described defendant's legally protected political beliefs and activities as "antifa fronts."

Defense attorneys on the case felt so confident that the prosecution did not meet their burden of proof, that they did not even mount a defense. For those who attended the trial, the March 13 verdict came as a shock.

On March 27, lawyers for all nine federal Prairieland defendants filed motions in an effort to overturn the verdict. Rule 29 and Rule 33 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure were used to demand judgments of acquittal from the court and, in the alternative, a new trial. Lawyers for Champagne Song (legal name Benjamin) argued that insufficient evidence existed to convict Champagne of attempted murder and alleged the government violated the due process rights of defendants by withholding exculpatory evidence at trial. The lawyer for Savanna Batten called for a new trial based on allegations of juror misconduct and possible coercion.

Despite the facts that came out during the trial debunking their narrative, the government continues to make false claims on its website that were disproved at trial. The suggestion that rather than a show of solidarity, this was the act of "North Texas antifa cell operatives" is completely nonsensical based on the evidence shown at trial. There is no such thing as a "North Texas antifa cell!"

Implications for Future Dissent:
How this case could impact protest going forward

- The Prairieland verdict fits into a larger pattern of the federal government's strategy of using legal repression to quash dissent. The legal precedent that this case sets is dangerous and should concern everyone in this country, not just activists on the left.
    - Department of Justice's June 12, 2025, email to 93 Attorney Generals
    - Attorney General Pam Bondi's September 29, 2025, memo to the FBI, ATF, US Marshal's, DEA, and AGs office, "Ending Political Violence Against ICE"
    - Trump's September 25, 2025, National Security Presidential Memorandum-7
    - Trump's June 7, 2025, memo, "Department of Defense Security for the Protection of Department of Homeland Security Functions"
- The case against the defendants relies on the tenuous argument that merely attending a demonstration or protest makes you responsible for all actions that occur there.
- These federal convictions assign guilt for property damage and vandalism (riot and terrorism) to protesters who were uninvolved, 500 yards away. Just being present at the protest makes you a terrorist.
- Alex Pretti, Renee Good, and Marimar Martinez were all swiftly labeled antifa terrorists for standing up to ICE. That playbook started with the Prarieland defendants, and we have to recognize this fallacy for what it is.
- The prosecution relied heavily on First Amendment-protected activity to set precedents and expand prosecutorial reach, arguing that the political beliefs of some of the defendants were evidence of their

intent to commit the alleged crimes:
    - Pamphlets. Daniel “Des” Rolando Sanchez Estrada, who was not present at the protest, was convicted on federal charges for allegedly transporting “Antifa material” (pamphlets) between two apartments the day after the rally.
    - Printers. Elizabeth and Ines Soto were subjected to a second house raid months later—while still in custody—targeting book printing equipment.
    - Thoughts. In line with Trump’s recent National Security Presidential Mandate-7, which directs federal agencies to, among other things, identify future criminals based on ideological profiles, defendants’ political beliefs are cited extensively in criminal complaints and state and federal indictments as “proof” of conspiracy.
- The administration is intent on redefining ordinary expressions of protest as “material support for terrorism.” Over the past decade, state and federal agencies have slowly advanced their efforts to criminalize dissent. In 2017, anti-Trump protesters were charged with conspiracy for dressing in black clothing and attending a protest in Washington, DC at Trump’s presidential inauguration. In 2023, activists in Atlanta were charged with racketeering for offenses ranging from distributing pamphlets to wearing black clothing. And now, in Texas, these same acts are being classified as material support for terrorism. If upheld, these precedents could dramatically narrow the space for lawful protest and free expression across the United States.

Charges:
Table of defendant names, charges, and convictions

Name	Federal Charges	State Charges	Status
Autumn Hill	*Riot, *Providing Material Support to Terrorists, *Conspiracy to Use and Carry an Explosive, *Use and Carry an Explosive, Attempted Murder of Officers and Employees of the US, Discharging a Firearm During, in Relation to, & in Furtherance of a Crime of Violence	Engaging in Organized Criminal Activity – Aggravated Assault Against Public Servant, Aggravated Assault with Deadly Weapon Against Public Servant, Terrorism	**Federal:** Sentenced to 50 years **State:** Trial Pending
Benjamin “Champagne” Song	*Riot, *Providing Material Support to Terrorists, *Conspiracy to Use and Carry an Explosive, *Use and Carry an Explosive, *Attempted Murder of Officers and Employees of the US, *Discharging a Firearm During, in Relation to, & in Furtherance of a Crime of Violence	Engaging in Organized Criminal Activity – Aggravated Assault Against Public Servant, Aiding in Commission of Terrorism, Aggravated Assault Against Public Servant	**Federal**: Sentenced to 100 years **State**: Trial Pending

Daniel “Des” Rolando Sanchez Estrada	*Corruptly Concealing a Document or Record, *Conspiracy to Conceal Documents	N/A	**Federal**: Sentenced to 30 years
Dario Sanchez	N/A	Hindering Prosectuion of Terrorism, Tampering with or Fabricating Evidence with Intent to Impair	**State**: Awaiting Trial
Elizabeth Soto	*Riot, *Providing Material Support to Terrorists, *Conspiracy to Use and Carry an Explosive, *Use and Carry an Explosive	Engaging in Organized Criminal Activity – Aggravated Assault Against Public Servant, Aggravated Assault with Deadly Weapon Against Public Servant, Terrorism	**Federal**: Sentenced to 50 years **State**: Trial Pending
Ines Soto	*Riot, *Providing Material Support to Terrorists, *Conspiracy to Use and Carry an Explosive, *Use and Carry an Explosive	Engaging in Organized Criminal Activity – Aggravated Assault Against Public Servant, Aggravated Assault with Deadly Weapon Against Peace Officer, Terrorism	**Federal**: Sentenced to 50 years **State**: Trial Pending
Janette Goering	N/A	Hindering Prosectuion of Terrorism	**State**: Awaiting Trial
Joy “Rowan” Gibson	Material Support of Terrorists	Engaging in Organized Criminal Activity – Aggravated Assault Against Public Servant, Aggravated Assault with Deadly Weapon Against Peace Officer, Terrorism	**Federal**: Sentenced to 15 years **State**: Trial Pending
Lucy Fowlkes	N/A	Hindering Prosectuion of Terrorism, Tampering with or Fabricating Evidence with Intent to Impair	Awaiting State Trial

Maricela Rueda	*Riot, *Providing Material Support to Terrorists, *Conspiracy to Use and Carry an Explosive, *Use and Carry an Explosive, Attempted Murder of Officers and Employees of the US, Discharging a Firearm During, in Relation to, & in Furtherance of a Crime of Violence, *Conspiracy to Conceal Documents	Engaging in Organized Criminal Activity – Aggravated Assault Against Public Servant, Aggravated Assault with Deadly Weapon Against Public Servant, Terrorism	**Federal**: Sentenced to 70 years **State**: Trial Pending
Meagan Morris	*Riot, *Providing Material Support to Terrorists, *Conspiracy to Use and Carry an Explosive, *Use and Carry an Explosive, Attempted Murder of Officers and Employees of the US, Discharging a Firearm During, in Relation to, & in Furtherance of a Crime of Violence	Engaging in Organized Criminal Activity – Aggravated Assault Against Public Servant, Aggravated Assault with Deadly Weapon Against Peace Officer, Aiding in Commission of Terrorism	**Federal**: Sentenced to 50 years **State**: Trial Pending
Rebecca Morgan	Material Support of Terrorists	Engaging in Organized Criminal Activity – Smuggling of Persons, Hindering Prosecution of Terrorism	**Federal**: Sentenced to 15 years **State**: Trial Pending
Savanna Batten	*Riot, *Providing Material Support to Terrorists, *Conspiracy to Use and Carry an Explosive, *Use and Carry an Explosive	Engaging in Organized Criminal Activity – Aggravated Assault Against Public Servant, Aggravated Assault with Deadly Weapon Against Public Servant, Terrorism	**Federal**: Sentenced to 50 years **State**: Trial Pending
Zachary Evetts	*Riot, *Providing Material Support to Terrorists, *Conspiracy to Use and Carry an Explosive, *Use and Carry an Explosive, Attempted Murder of Officers and Employees of the US, Discharging a Firearm During, in Relation to, & in Furtherance of a Crime of Violence	Engaging in Organized Criminal Activity – Against Public Servant, Aggravated Assault with Deadly Weapon Against Public Servant, Terrorism	**Federal**: Sentenced to 50 years **State**: Trial Pending

*Indicates charges that they have been convicted of

Next Steps for Supporters

- **Donate for Legal Fees!**
  The nine defendants convicted during the February federal trial are innocent and deserve to come home. They will continue to fight their convictions through appeals and other legal means. They also have pending charges on the state level. Supporters are encouraged to throw fundraising events to support the ongoing legal costs and write letters to the defendants while they are unjustly imprisoned. Donations can go to https://www.givesendgo.com/supportDFWprotestors and letter writing information is available on https://prairielanddefendants.com.
- **Support Upcoming Trials!**
  Dario Sanchez, charged with hindering prosecution of terrorism and tampering/fabricating physical evidence for removing someone from Discord or Signal group chats, is scheduled to begin trial on June 22 in Cleburne, Texas. It's expected that the trial will last one to two weeks. Supporters are encouraged to attend trial and show support for Dario Sanchez as he battles these outrageous charges.
- **Spread the Word!**
  Please share the new facts about the case that came out during trial. There is much misinformation circulating about what happened and the Department of Justice continues to spread misinformation and a narrative that was dis-proven during the trial.

Timeline of Events

- July 4, 2025: Noise demonstration in solidarity with immigrant detainees at the Prairieland Detention Center in Alvarado, Texas, a rural town south of Fort Worth, Texas.
- July 4, 2025: Nine people arrested including: Nathan Baumann, Megan Morris, Joy Gibson, Zachary Evetts, Seth Sikes, Ines Soto, Elizabeth Soto, Savanna Batten, Maricela Rueda.
- July 5, 2025: Raid on Megan Morris' house, Autumn Hill is arrested.
- July 5-18, 2025: FBI conducted raids on homes of activists, their families, friends, etc. Update from fundraiser states: Defendants' friends and family report raids of their homes where agents deployed flashbang grenades, caused extensive damage, and detained spouses, family members and housemates without cause. In one instance, federal agents tackled the child of a defendant and put a bag over their head before arresting them and transporting them to jail. "I was terrified, I had no idea what was going on," the child later said. During this interrogation, agents offered this person monetary bribes in exchange for information, which of course were refused. Police also attempted to extort them by offering to "get rid of a warrant" if they cooperated with the law enforcement investigation.
- July 6, 2025: Daniel "Des" Estrada Sanchez is arrested transporting "zines" from home in Garland to Denton, TX. Des' house is raided along with the apartment in Denton, TX. No arrest made in Denton household.
- July 8, 2025: Raid on John Thomas' house. Thomas questioned and cooperated.
- July 10, 2025: John Phillip Thomas is arrested, held on $5 million bond for a smuggling of persons charge.
- July 13, 2025: Lynette Sharp is arrested, held on a $2.5 million bond for a charge of hindering prosecution of terrorism.

- July 15, 2025: Dario Sanchez is arrested.
- July 15, 2025: Benjamin Song and Rebecca Morgan are arrested.
- August 7, 2025: Susan Kent arrested. Charged with “engaging in organized criminal activity” and “hindering prosecution of terrorism.”
- August 20, 2025: Dario Sanchez is bonded out, per DA agreement.
- August 28, 2025: Dario Sanchez is arrested again. DA decided to add more charges and make the bond higher so he had to self-surrender and go through another hearing. Indicted on hindering prosecution of terrorism and tampering with physical evidence. As of May 10, 2026, Dario does not have federal charges, only state charges.
- September 2, 2025: Dario Sanchez is released.
- September 22-23, 2025: 14 defendants had federal arraignments which was the first federal legal movement in the case since the initial arrests in July.
- September 22, 2025: Dario Sanchez is arrested again for “violation of parole” for a google search that was actually conducted by his parole officer and not Dario himself.
- September 23, 2025: Rebecca Morgan and Lynette Sharp listed under federal custody.
- September 24, 2025: Dario Sanchez is released once again.
- Late September: Right before they were moved to federal custody Liz and Ines Soto’s house was raided again and the printers were taken.
- September 30, 2025: Federal preliminary hearing.
- October 1, 2025: The state of Texas indicted 14 defendants on their state charges, adding an additional charge of “engaging in organized criminal activity” for all 14. Many will be fighting concurrent federal and state cases and hence will require legal representation on both fronts.
- October 15, 2025: Federal indictments filed. Autumn Hill and Zachary Evetts, were indicted by a federal grand jury Wednesday on three counts of attempted murder of officers and employees of the United States, three counts of discharging a firearm during a crime of violence and one count of providing material support to terrorists. Patrick McLain, Evetts’ attorney, said his client has already pleaded not guilty to the charges. Evetts, he said, was exercising his First Amendment rights while protesting current immigration policy at the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention center, and there’s no evidence he fired shots.
- October 21, 2025: Janette Goering is the 18th person arrested and charged in relation to the Prairieland noise demo case. As of April 11, 2026, she only has state charges.
- October 27 – November 12, 2025: The government threatened all 16 federal defendants with indictment unless they accept plea deals, resulting in seven guilty pleas, five of which were based on cooperating plea deals. Seth Sikes, Rebecca Morgan, Joy Gibson, Lynette Sharp, John Thomas, Nathan Baumann, and Susan Kent sign federal plea deals to one count each of “Providing Material Support to Terrorists.” They each face up to 15 years in prison and will be sentenced in June. Kent has pleaded not guilty to state charges of engaging in organized criminal activity and hindering the prosecution of terrorism, both first-degree felonies.
- November 13, 2025: Superseding federal indictment filed against nine defendants: Savanna Batten, Zachary Evetts, Autumn Hill, Meagan Morris, Maricela Rueda, Daniel “Des” Rolando Sanchez Estrada, Benjamin “Champagne” Song, Elizabeth Soto, and Ines Soto.
- November 25, 2025: Des is released from ICE holding facility.
- December 4, 2025: Des turns himself into federal custody.

- December 10, 2025: Second superseding indictment is filed against the same nine defendants with the government adding a forfeiture notice.
- January 5, 2026: Lucy Fowlkes is the 19th person arrested on state charges in relation to the Prairieland noise demo case.
- January 14, 2026: Status conference: Judge Pittman orders defense attorneys not to file “frivolous” motions, thus making it harder for the defense to preserve issues on the record for appeal. He also fines three defense lawyers $500 each for filing a routine motion to compel discovery.
- February 17, 2026: Judge Pittman declares a mistrial, alleging that a defense attorney’s shirt irreparably prejudiced the jury pool.
- March 3, 2026: Judge Pittman grants the prosecution’s motion to preclude defendants from presenting self-defense or defense of another legal arguments.
- March 13, 2026: The Prairieland federal trial concluded with a jury finding nine people guilty of federal felonies, eight of whom were found guilty of “material support of terrorism.”
- March 27, 2026: Defense attorneys for all nine defendants filed motions for acquittal and a new trial , Rule 29 and Rule 33, respectively, under the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure.
- June 11, 2026: Federal sentencing for two Prairieland defendants who took non-cooperating plea deals.
- June 18, 2026: Federal sentencing for nine Prairieland defendants who went to trial.
- June 22, 2026: Dario Sanchez’s state trial is set to begin in Cleburne, Texas.

Commonly Confused Facts

- Evidence and testimony clearly showed that no violence was planned. This was confirmed in the trial by the government’s own witnesses, who testified on the stand that there was no intention or plan for violence.
- There were no bombs or military explosives present at the noise demonstration on July 4, 2025. Some noise demonstrators brought consumer-grade fireworks. The alleged explosives they were convicted of possessing were consumer-grade fireworks with tongue-in-cheek names: “Mortar-style,” “Mega Bangers,” and “Artillery Shells.”
- Video footage also showed that fireworks were never aimed at the Prairieland facility, they were aimed into the air. State witness Reedy confirmed the fireworks did not cause any damage to the facility during trial.
- Lt. Gross, Alvarado police officer with a history of using excessive force, testified that he pointed his gun at the backs of two unarmed protesters. As mentioned in attorney Hayes’ cross-examination**,** Lt. Gross drew his weapon and aimed it at the person running away before seeing anyone else. The person running was the first person he engaged.
- Video evidence showed shots being fired into the ground as suppressive fire, meaning shots designed to distract and de-escalate, after Lt. Gross took a shooting stance and aimed his gun at the back of a fleeing, unarmed protester.
- Lt. Gross was not shot in the neck. The only evidence purporting to show the injury to Lt. Gross were a couple of photos of the back of an unidentifiable man that did not include his face or whole head, and in those photos it appears a shot grazed the skin of his upper back near his left shoulder. He

was in the hospital for only a few hours and no medical reports were released.
- Many protesters were wearing blue jeans, sneakers, tank tops, or work uniforms; not wearing black bloc clothing, military-grade armor, or masks.
- Des's box of zines was actually a box of personal affects including love letters, children's schoolwork, all dated prior to 2022 and thus having nothing to do with the noise demonstration on July 4, 2025.

Existing Reporting:
Articles and other media discussing the case

A chronological list on existing reporting can be found at
https://prairielanddefendants.com/in-the-media

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