



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on March 7, 2022

Truckers From “People’s Convoy” Circling Washington, D.C.

Hundreds of trucks, recreational vehicles, and cars made their way to the outskirts of Washington, D.C., on Sunday, aiming to slow traffic around the nation’s capital as part of a protest against the ongoing COVID-related state of emergency.

The largest group of truckers, called “[The People’s Convoy](#),” started in Adelanto, California, last week and has merged with several other organized convoys to converge on D.C. in a protest similar to those that halted Canadian government operations in [Ottawa](#) in January and early February.



AP Images

[According](#) to *The Washington Post*, the convoy organizers said they circled the Beltway — a 64-mile interstate highway surrounding Washington, D.C., and its inner suburbs in Maryland and Virginia — twice on Sunday, causing a traffic standstill by 3 p.m. EST.

The convoy is currently staged at the Hagerstown Speedway in Maryland.

One of the convoy’s organizers, Brian Brase, told the outlet the convoy plans to stay at the speedway until “at least” Sunday, expressing his hope that “this is all over by Wednesday.” Brase did not share the group’s plans for the rest of the week, “but said convoy members are working on plans to meet with lawmakers this week.”

Brase mentioned that one of the lawmakers offered the truckers his help in getting together “all Congress, Senate, whatever necessary to come and listen [to the truckers].”

If Congress fails to pay attention to the protesters and refuses to speak with them, then more trucks will come to the D.C. area.

“I’m hopeful that we have successful dialogue with congressmen and women and senators that help get what we’re looking for pushed through in a timely fashion,” said the trucker. “If they don’t come to the table to meet with us or they ignore us, then every day it will escalate.”

The convoy’s main demand is that the United States government rescind the coronavirus-inspired state of emergency. The national state of emergency was first declared on March 13, 2020 by President Donald Trump under the National Emergencies Act (NEA). President Joe Biden extended it in February 2021, and then again in February 2022.

The group also demands government accountability for the pandemic response “through full and transparent congressional hearings,” per their [official statement](#).

Brase shared that the group has no plans to go to the city “at this time,” or block the Beltway altogether. Such moves, the organizer believes, would be unpopular among the locals and would cost the truckers their support.



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Maureen Steele, another People's Convoy leader, [said](#) last week that shutting down the Beltway or going into the city would be illegal. "Like we've announced from the beginning, we don't have any intention of being unlawful," she said.

She added, "After January 6, what went on there, there was never any intention of going into DC proper. We've discouraged other people from doing it."

The group's statement reads,

We are NOT going into DC proper, and we will NOT be there for the State of the Union

We are NOT associated with Bob Bolus or other convoys who are planning to go into DC

Bob Bolus is a Pennsylvania-based trucker who leads another truckers' convoy, this one from Scranton, Pennsylvania. He said previously that his group was planning to shut down D.C. While he said that they would leave one lane open for emergency vehicles, Bolus told [Fox](#) on February 21, "I'll give you an analogy of that of a giant boa constrictor. That basically squeezes you, chokes you and it swallows you, and that's what we're going to do [to] D.C."

However, Dan Fitzgerald of the "Freedom Convoy" mentioned that a couple of trucks may wind up at Pennsylvania Avenue.

"I can tell you now that there will be select trucks going to the White House," he said during a Friday morning livestream, per the [Daily Mail](#). "I don't want people thinking we are invading D.C. This is not the convoy going into D.C. commons. These are a few select drivers."

On Monday, the People's Convoy plans to loop around the Beltway just once, Brase told the *Post*, but will occupy two lanes instead of one and drive at the minimum legal speed limit. Brase also noted that his group is coordinating with local law enforcement.

Officials in the district have been stepping up security since late February in preparation for the truckers allegedly coming to Washington, D.C., on March 1, the day of President Biden's State of the Union address. As a part of preparations, a razor-wire-topped, seven-foot-tall fence had been [reinstalled](#) around the Capitol complex. In addition to that, the Pentagon approved the deployment of 700 unarmed National Guard troops to the nation's capital to help local law enforcement control the traffic.

On Sunday, the Capitol Police Board, the overseer of the police force that protects Congress and Capitol Hill, issued an emergency declaration in response to the convoys' arrival, according to [CNN](#).

Announcing the emergency, the House Sergeant at Arms William Walker advised members of Congress and their staffers to consider telework options and the use of public transportation to avoid traffic delays, per the outlet.

[Bloomberg](#) explained that the emergency declaration allows police to ask for help from the National Guard and permit payment for officers' hotel and food costs.



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