

JANUARY 2021

**BUILDING
SECURITY
FAILURES
AT THE
U.S. CAPITOL**

A CASE STUDY



PHOTO BY CALEB FISHER

On January 6, 2021, the country watched as people from a political rally marched to the United States Capitol Building in Washington D.C.. As part of a political statement, a group of rioters sought to gain access to the building. Within the course of just 22 minutes, those rioters breached police lines and crossed through Statuary Hall. While the actions of those rioters was unprecedented, the concern about security became all too real. The Capitol building is one of the most prominent structures in the country, and on a day when both the House of Representatives and the Senate were convened, it took rioters just moments to break through windows and doors to gain access to the building.

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WHY WAS IT SO EASY TO BREACH THE U.S. CAPITOL?

Throughout its history, the Capitol building has undergone numerous renovations and improvements. After September 11, a [private company](#) was hired to install "security" film to preexisting windows throughout the D.C. area, including a number of the windows at the Capitol. Unfortunately, the film installed was only intended to meet a minimum level of security, namely, to keep the glass together upon impact. Most "security" films on the market are intended to protect against high winds, debris, and accidental damage from projectiles. Only a handful of windows in the building have bullet-resistant glass (there is no such thing as bullet proof).

The "security" film used at the Capitol was never meant to keep an attacker out of the building. This was seen clearly in [the video](#) of a rioter who broke a window with a police officer's riot shield. While the film did its job of keeping the glass together (to protect the individuals on the other side from glass shards), the film was not properly anchored in place, which allowed the full glass panel to easily fall away inside the building. This failure, along with others like flag poles going through windows, allowed for the rioters to easily remove the windows and gain entry to the building. Unfortunately, with many large-scale projects that need to be completed quickly, customers will turn to readily-available, lower-quality materials. Customers who are truly seeking protection from attackers, should invest in a product that will actually slow the attacker down. This will give the people inside more time to find shelter and give law enforcement more time to respond.

Low-quality security glass and film products provide a false sense of security. Numerous federal employees, politicians, and American citizens were blown away by how easily individuals could gain entry to the building. Aside from the human security failures, many people were surprised by how easily people could breach windows and doors. Most of us assume that there would be better physical security (not just human security), especially considering the building and the individuals inside. A former FBI agent shared with us that he was under the impression that the building was outfitted with bullet-resistant glass. A false sense of security is more dangerous than no security at all because it allows people to let their guard down. This was evident when Capitol police had to rush to request adequate backup.

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THE PROBLEM WITH TESTING & CERTIFICATION

Around the world, airports, schools, healthcare facilities, and even private businesses have added building hardening to their security and safety budgets. Building hardening in the United States has grown in priority since the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in 2012. For customers, though, the choices to harden glass can get very confusing and misleading. When looking at all of the safety and security glass and film products on the market, it's really important for customers to know what to look for. It can be deceiving to find a product with an affordable price tag that's labeled "Safety & Security," only to find out it has a low threshold against real attacks.

One of the underlying issues with these companies is that many of them are paying for the private, independent testing of their products for a certification they created, in order to sell their own products. Former Air Force special forces operator and current transportation administrator, Dana Nelson, was quoted saying that these types of certifications are dangerous. They seem to be nothing more than a marketing avenue to sell their own products but they aren't held to any industry standards, only to their own standards. The certifications for these types of glass and film products should be created by experts in the fields of glass, security, ballistics, and engineering in order to ensure a quality product that lives up to how it's sold. These certifications should only come from world-recognized organizations like [UL](#) and [ASTM](#) who have long-standing histories and reputations for their quality testing measures to ensure a product's integrity.



A BETTER SOLUTION: SHOOTER- ATTACK CERTIFIED BULLET- RESISTANT GLASS & FILM

At Armoured One, we carry products that our competitors cannot beat in both quality and integrity. We have two separate lines, [Shooter-Attack Certified Bullet-Resistant Film](#) and [Shooter-Attack Certified Bullet-Resistant Glass](#). Our products go through a FILTI UL-observed Shooter-Attack test where the product is shot by an AR-15 .223 round ten times then struck with a 100 pound ram at varying amounts of force. Tests like this show end users what they can expect from a quality product in attacks like the riot at the Capitol building. No other film product on the market has passed this Shooter Attack UL-observed test.



THE ARMoured ONE ADVANTAGE

Shooter-Attack Certified Bullet-Resistant Film

- 23MIL Shooter/Attack Film

Shooter-Attack Certified Bullet-Resistant Glass

- 5/16 inch Shooter/Attack Glass
- 3/8 inch Shooter/Attack Glass
- 1/2 inch Shooter/Attack Glass
- 3/4 inch Shooter/Attack Glass
- 1 inch Shooter/Attack Glass
- 20 Minute Fire-Rated Attack Glass
- 45 Minute Fire-Rated Attack Glass
- 60 Minute Fire-Rated Attack Glass
- 90 Minute Fire-Rated Attack Glass

LET'S WORK TOGETHER

At the end of the day, our goal is to help end users become informed buyers. Where there is perceived safety and security, there is the potential for dangerous situations and possibly death. We want to show consumers that products do exist on the market that they can be confident in to protect their patrons, employees, and students. Products that can live up to their claims of both quality and integrity and truly help save lives.

If you're interested to learn more about our products, please [reach out](#) to [our team](#) today. We would love to work with you on your safety, security, and building hardening solutions.



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