

SENATE OF VIRGINIA

SUHAS SUBRAMANYAM
32ND SENATORIAL DISTRICT
PART OF LOUDOUN COUNTY

P.O. Box 302
ASHBURN, VIRGINIA 20146



COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:
AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND
NATURAL RESOURCES
COURTS OF JUSTICE
GENERAL LAWS AND TECHNOLOGY
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

August 12th, 2024

Dr. Lisa Coons
Superintendent of Public Instruction
Virginia Department of Education

Superintendent Coons,

My office has received communication from Virginia DECA, a Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO), indicating that your office has directed them to implement a tiered membership structure that "should not include any program-related competitive events." As you are aware, Senate Bill 707, which was passed unanimously by the legislature and signed by the Governor, mandates equal access for all public middle and high schools to establish CTSOs, regardless of course offerings.

It appears that your department may be attempting to circumvent SB 707 by instructing CTSOs to create a tiered membership system that potentially denies public school students the full benefits of CTSOs, including participation in competitions. I urge your department to fully comply with the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia and refrain from undermining them through flawed guidance.

I am deeply concerned about the apparent guidance your CTE office has issued, and the allegations made by the State Advisor of DECA. I will continue to advocate for parents and students who have brought this issue to the forefront, ensuring that all public middle and high school students in Virginia have the opportunity to participate in CTSOs, explore Career and Technical Education (CTE), and realize their dreams and aspirations.

Our shared goal should be to ensure that all students, regardless of race, socioeconomic background, geographic location, or whether their school can afford to offer certain classes mandated by the VDOE, have equal access. Organizations like DECA, HOSA, FBLA, and others play a crucial role in providing these opportunities, which should not be limited by course offerings determined by the VDOE.

I am requesting a thorough investigation into these matters and a report on your actions related to SB 707 to my office or the Senate Education and Health Committee by August 19th, 2024. The school year is quickly approaching, and my constituents are eager to participate in CTSO events

SENATE OF VIRGINIA

SUHAS SUBRAMANYAM
32ND SENATORIAL DISTRICT
PART OF LOUDOUN COUNTY

P.O. Box 302
ASHBURN, VIRGINIA 20146



COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:
AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND
NATURAL RESOURCES
COURTS OF JUSTICE
GENERAL LAWS AND TECHNOLOGY
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

and competitions that they are entitled to under SB 707 but have been unable to access due to the hindrance from your CTE office.

I look forward to your prompt action to ensure compliance with the law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Suhas Subramanyam".

Senator Suhas Subramanyam

cc: Virginia Board of Education

The Honorable Glenn Youngkin, Governor of Virginia

The Honorable Aimee Guidera, Virginia Secretary of Education

Senator Ghazala Hashmi, Chair, Senate Education & Health Committee

Senator Schuyler VanValkenburg, Chair, Sub-Committee on K-12 Education