

SENATE OF VIRGINIA

BILL DeSTEPH
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PART OF THE CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH

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COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
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TRANSPORTATION

July 28, 2020

The Honorable Ralph S. Northam
Governor of Virginia
Patrick Henry Building
1111 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23218

Dear Governor Northam:

I write with grave misgivings over the current state of our Commonwealth. As the Senator representing the 8th district of Virginia, nothing is more important to me than the safety and security of our citizens. This has never been more imperative than now, as we confront the challenges presented by COVID-19 and the many restrictions that have been placed on our fellow Virginians.

While I share your concern regarding public health and minimizing the spread of the Coronavirus, I believe the larger and more important issue requiring your immediate attention is Law and Order. Richmond has been besieged by riots and lawlessness that put our state and its residents at great peril. I implore you to work with Mayor Stoney to focus on public safety. We must restore Law and Order in the Commonwealth.

As the "Top State to Do Business" (CNBC, 2019) Virginia has enjoyed good financial health, with tremendous job growth and expansion. Allowing this lawlessness to continue jeopardizes the economic viability of our Commonwealth and risks plummeting our business-friendly status to the bottom. Employers will leave our state. Every job lost in Richmond for the next decade will be a direct result of the chaos that you and Mayor Stoney are enabling.

Riots in the guise of peaceful protests are unacceptable. You cannot permit these violent demonstrations to continue unfettered and without consequence. The statues that initially incited these riots are gone—what purpose is being served to allow them to continue? In recent weeks we have seen picture after picture of public and private property destroyed. These images are both heartbreaking and disturbing. What kind of message does it send to our constituents if our Governor cannot even keep his own capitol city safe? If, as you have touted during your Coronavirus press conferences, public safety is paramount, then ensuring these riots stop should be a top priority.

Your quick response to this urgent appeal is greatly appreciated.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill DeSteph".

Bill DeSteph