

SENATE OF VIRGINIA

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SENATOR DESTEPH CALLS FOR REPEAL OF VIRGINIA OVERTIME WAGE ACT

During this past session of the General Assembly, legislation was introduced in the House of Delegates that moved quickly through both chambers, passing purely on party line. HB 2063, requiring employers to compensate workers for overtime hours, failed to consider individual worker preferences for overtime pay. This bill was a perfect example of the democrat majority using their numbers and power to push forward controversial legislation with damaging consequences to constituents on both sides of the political aisle. I voted against this legislation, as did every other Senate Republican.

Now, at a time when the stress of public service has reached an all-time-high, this hastily passed legislation has stripped the ability of our public safety officers, our critical infrastructure personnel, and other essential city employees, to earn time off. For many employees, this “comp-time” is the preferred form of compensation in lieu of overtime pay. In fact, many of our front-line workers deem comp-time as invaluable and necessary for their continued well-being.

I have heard from numerous law enforcement officers, public safety employees, sewer, water, and other essential city personnel, pleading for this form of compensation to be restored through the repeal of the Virginia Overtime Wage Act. While monetary compensation is welcomed by some, for the majority, the time off is what allows employees to recover from the demands of public safety work. The pandemic has wrought tremendous job strain for many employees and comp-time provides a needed and welcomed break. Our police officers, our firefighters, our EMS personnel—all our essential city workers—desperately need this opportunity for additional time-off.

I am tremendously grateful for the service and sacrifice that all our public safety employees make every day and recognize the value this time off brings to their physical and mental health. I am calling for a full and immediate repeal of HB 2063 during the Special Session of the Virginia General Assembly beginning next week.

About Senator Bill DeSteph (SD-8): Elected to the Senate of Virginia in 2015 and 2019, Senator DeSteph is a veteran, entrepreneur, leader, and father whose chosen pursuit is to serve and protect our nation's citizens. Senator Bill DeSteph represents the 8th District in the Senate of Virginia. The 8th District includes portions of the City of Virginia Beach. More information can be found at <http://billdesteph.com/>.