

TO: Sen. John Bell, Chair of VSDB Board of Visitors

CC: Sen. Ghazala Hashmi, BOV Vice Chair
Del. Sally Hudson
Del. John Avoli
Mike Asip
Vera Wilson
Carolyn Berry
JH Cline
Daphne Cox
Ronald Lanier
Christine Ogden
Glenn Youngkin, Governor of Virginia
Aimee Guidera, Va Dept. of Education Secretary
Patricia Trice, VSDB Superintendent
Michele VanBoxLaere, VSDAA President

FROM: Race Drake

DATE: June 22, 2023

This is Race Drake, a former VSDB Principal of the Department for the Deaf, retired in 1995 after 32 years of service to VSDB. I am positive that you are aware of a rally taking place in Staunton this coming weekend (VSDB Movement Rally).

I need to express my concern about how one member of the VSDB Board of Visitors being treated. What prompted me to write this message of my concern was that I was aghast when I viewed a video recording of the March 8, 2023 BOV meeting on YouTube in which the BOV member Daphne Cox expressed her frustrations in her effort to work with BOV and VSDB administration and how she has been treated. I detected symptoms of audism. Generally audism does not sit very well with ANY deaf community, be it local, state, or national level. IF audism did actually exist among the BOV members, VSDB administration or staff it needs to stop.

Daphne is a product of VSDB. I found her to be very resourceful from her many years of work at Gallaudet University where she had lots of contacts across the nation with whom she worked and associated. The BOV and VSDB would be remiss in not utilizing Daphne's expertise.