

RICHARD HUDSON
8TH DISTRICT, NORTH CAROLINA

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September 17, 2019

Marilyn Que Tucker, Commissioner
The North Carolina High School Athletic Association
P.O. Box 3216
Chapel Hill, NC 27515

Dear Commissioner Tucker,

It has recently come to my attention that cheerleaders at North Stanly High School were put on probation for the remainder of their season because they were pictured with other students holding a political sign at a football game.

As the representative of Stanly County, I am appalled these students are being punished for exercising their First Amendment right to free speech.

As leaders, we should be encouraging America's youth to participate in our democracy and political process – not punishing and silencing them. These North Stanly students respectfully displayed a sign and took a picture. They did not cause a scene, participate in a protest or break any school code of conduct.

In fact, the *Stanly News and Press* reported, “the school system did not discipline any of the students because there were no violations of the student code of conduct.” Why were they put on probation by the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) and what specific NCHSAA rule(s) did they violate?

At the end of the day, these students have a First Amendment right to free speech, and the NCHSAA should immediately reconsider this unfair punishment. I ask this not only as the federal representative of Stanly County, but also as a proud graduate of North Carolina public schools and a former NCHSAA athlete.

Sincerely,



Richard Hudson
Member of Congress (NC-08)