

# Education board member gets booted after defending Constitution, speaking out against socialism

Senate of Virginia votes not to confirm board of education member who championed 'traditional American values'

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[Education board member booted after defending Constitution, denouncing socialism](#)

Virginia senators nixed Suparna Dutta's nomination to the education board one week after she sparred with another member over the Constitution and socialism.

A woman who championed "traditional American values" was booted from the Virginia Board of Education one week after sparring with another board member over whether public schools should present socialism as "incompatible with democracy."

"I thought people celebrated diversity. Whether it's diversity of thought, diversity of viewpoint or diversity of any of the many characteristics?" Suparna Dutta, who immigrated to the United States from India, told Fox News ahead of the vote. "I'm flummoxed."



Gov. Glenn Youngkin appointed Suparna Dutta to the Virginia Board of Education in July 2022. (Fox News Digital)

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Republican Gov. Glenn Youngkin appointed Dutta to the [Virginia Board of Education](#) in July. Dutta was set to be confirmed by the Senate of Virginia Tuesday night along with a host of other appointees to various government positions.

But Virginia state Sen. Ghazala Hashmi [introduced a last-minute amendment](#) removing Dutta from the nominations. The amendment passed on a party-line vote, according to [a progressive group](#) that tracks the state's General Assembly.

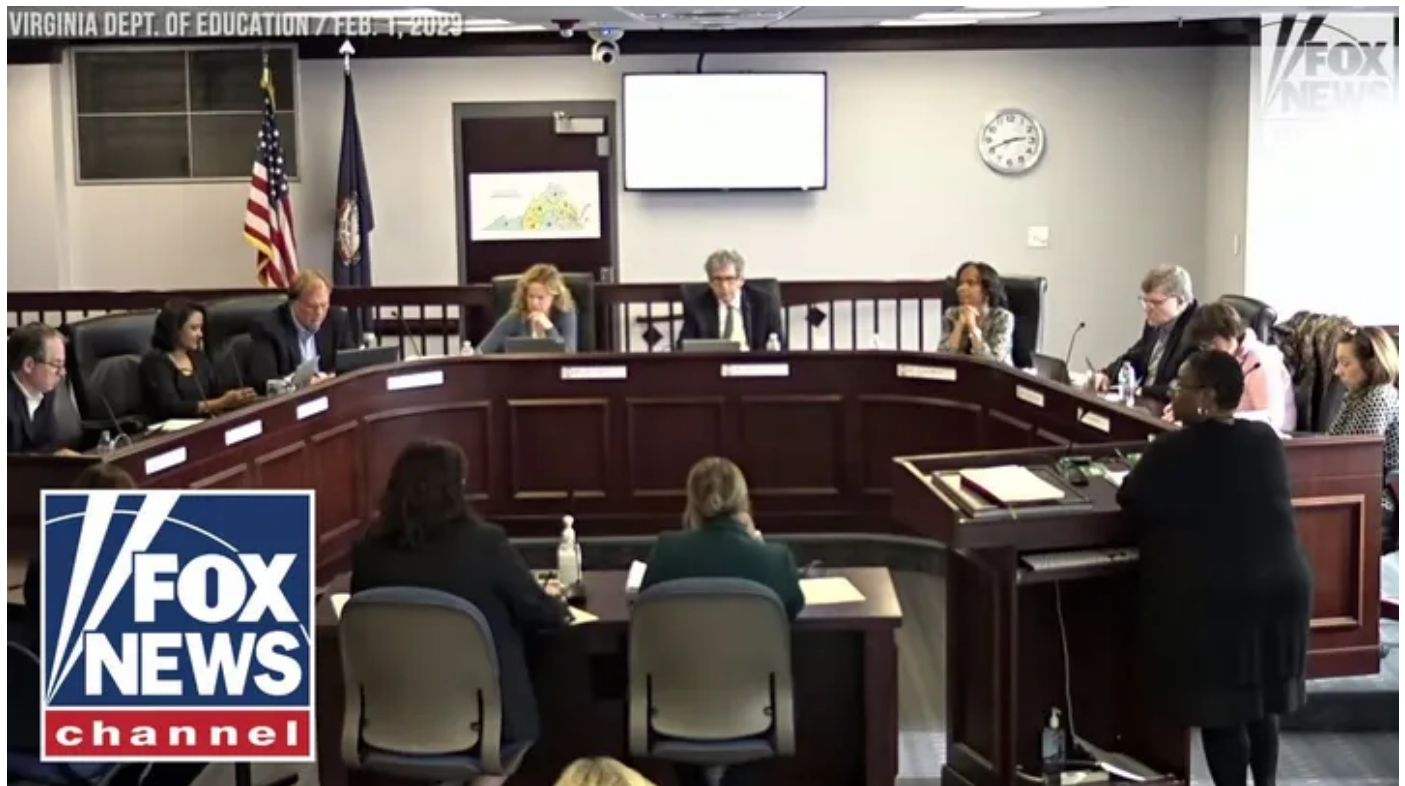
Senate Democrats "voted to remove Suparna Dutta, shockingly claiming that a public school parent isn't qualified to serve on the Board of Education," Youngkin said in a statement. "She is a mother and advocate for parents' rights, she is an immigrant and an advocate for Asian American rights, she is an engineer and advocate for STEM in education."

"She is not only qualified, she epitomizes parental involvement in our schools and we need her voice on our Board of Education," the governor continued.

Dutta's ousting follows a contentious exchange last week [during a board meeting](#) reviewing proposed changes to history and social science

standards in Virginia public schools. Two of the foundational principles [outlined in the learning standards](#) are that the "Declaration of Independence and the Constitution are remarkable documents" and that socialism and communism are "incompatible with democracy and individual freedoms."

## **EDUCATION BOARD MEMBER BOOTED AFTER DEFENDING CONSTITUTION, DENOUNCING SOCIALISM:**



[Video](#)

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Board member Anne Holton — who is married to [Democratic Sen. Tim Kaine](#) — said she was "uncomfortable" with that language.

"You cannot reference the Declaration of Independence and Constitution as remarkable documents without also acknowledging that they contain fundamental flaws of enshrining slavery and limiting the protections that they provided for only to white, propertied men," she said.

Holton conceded that communism is not compatible with democracy, but said "plenty of governments" call themselves socialist democratic governments.

"So is socialism compatible with democracy?" Holton asked. "That would be a great debate to have in a 12th grade government civics class."

Minutes later, Dutta chimed in to [defend the Constitution](#) and excoriate socialism.

"I think socialism is just about as bad as communism," Dutta said. "It co-opts the important decisions belonging to families and individuals."

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"Somebody had to jump in and challenge that viewpoint," Dutta told Fox News Tuesday. "America is great. America's founding documents are great. And I do believe that socialism is very destructive, coming from a country which was founded as a socialist country."

Drafting of the new standards began under Democratic Gov. Ralph Northam and restarted in August after Youngkin took over and appointed new board members, including Dutta, according to [local news outlet WRIC](#).

Swift backlash followed, with many who spoke at public hearings voicing outrage over proposed changes — including describing Native Americans as the United States' first immigrants — and accusing Youngkin's administration of whitewashing history.

Dutta was labeled a "far-right extremist" by the democratic [Virginia Grassroots Coalition](#), which started a campaign against her confirmation. The coalition called her divisive, disruptive and "not qualified" to be a board member, and [pointed to controversial remarks](#) she made during previous meetings, such as branding colonialism, enslavement and racism

"questionable concepts."

Dutta denied the allegations.

She also said in a prior meeting that she would like to see public school curriculums based on "traditional American values."



Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin slammed Democrats for refusing to confirm Dutta to the Board of Education. Youngkin said Dutta "epitomizes parental involvement in our schools" and was qualified to serve on the board. (Al Drago/Bloomberg via Getty Images)

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Ahead of the confirmation vote, Dutta said no matter the outcome, she would "always be thankful to be in America" and participate in democracy.

"Only in America can a common person be heard ... and be part of the process," she said. "And I will continue to fight for education for our children."

To hear more from Dutta, [click here](#).

*CORRECTION: A previous description for the embedded video misstated Dutta's position on socialism. We regret the error.*

Hannah Ray Lambert is an associate producer/writer with Fox News Digital Originals.