

Resolution to Support the Alexandria’s School Board’s Decision to Resist Governor Youngkin’s Order Restricting School Boards’ Ability To Manage the COVID-19 Pandemic by Joining 7 other Jurisdictions in a State Lawsuit

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WHEREAS, Article VIII, Section 7 of the Virginia Constitution gives the power to supervise schools in each school division to a school board;

WHEREAS, bipartisan legislation signed into Virginia law on March 30, 2021 [1] currently requires that in-person instruction be provided in a manner that adheres, to the maximum extent practicable, to any currently applicable mitigation strategies provided by the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, Governor Youngkin issued Executive Order Number Two [2], which permits parents to send their children to school without protective masks, and without requiring parents to provide any reason or basis for doing so;

WHEREAS, the school boards of several Virginia school divisions, including the Alexandria City Public Schools, have joined in a lawsuit [3] challenging Governor Youngkin’s executive order Number Two as being contrary to state law; and

WHEREAS, Governor Youngkin’s Executive Order Number Two conflicts with the local authority of school boards and state law, and undermines the good faith COVID-19 mitigation efforts undertaken by school divisions in the Commonwealth, thereby placing public health in those school divisions and communities at greater risk.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alexandria Democratic Committee

- Commends the Alexandria City School Board for continuing to prioritize the public health needs of its students and staff and encourages other school boards in Virginia to do the same; and
- Encourages our legislative delegation in Richmond to work to bring attention to this issue and to continue to support our Virginia School Board’s right to enact and supervise their school policies.

References:

[1] <https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?212+sum+SB1303>

[2] <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/74---eo/74--eo/EO-2---School-Mask-Mandate-Executive-Order-Exception.pdf>

[3] <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/face-masks-virginia-schools-lawsuit-youngkin/>