



VIRGINIA SENATE REPUBLICAN CAUCUS

News Release

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Republican Caucus Chairman

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Sen. David R. Suetterlein
Sen. Jill Holtzman Vogel

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
20 July 2019

**SENATE REPUBLICANS EXPRESS DISAPPOINTMENT OVER DECISION BY
GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEMOCRATS TO BOYCOTT COMMEMORATIVE SESSION**

"NOT 'THE VIRGINIA WAY'"

WILLIAMSBURG, VA, 20 JULY 2019: Senate Majority Leader Thomas K. Norment, Jr. (R-James City) today issued the following statement regarding the announcement by House and Senate Democratic leaders of their intention to boycott 2019 Jamestown commemorative ceremonies attended by the President of the United States:

"Sadly, it is no longer exceptional when elected leaders make partisan concerns paramount in their decisions. The decision by the Senate and House Minority Leaders, and the Senate and House Democratic Caucus Chairs, to boycott the commemorative session because of President Trump's participation is disappointing and embarrassing.

"I consider it an honor - and a recognition of the historic importance of this commemoration - to have the President of the United States attend. I would be similarly

~ more ~

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honored were Speaker of the House Pelosi able to join us. Sharing the views of the leader holding an elected office is not a prerequisite for showing respect for the office.

"It is ironic that thousands of immigrants travel hundreds of miles, risking life and liberty, to come to America, but Virginia Democrats refuse to travel to Jamestown, the site of this nation's birth. Considering the events of this year, I expected better of those holding leadership positions in the Democratic Caucuses.

"Next month, Governor Northam will address a joint meeting of the Senate Finance Committee, the House Appropriations Committee, and the House Finance Committee on the current state of the Commonwealth's finances. Every legislator who will be attending is a member of a caucus that has called on the Governor to resign. But, I am unaware of any legislator who has indicated they will not be attending the joint meeting because the Governor refused their caucus's call to step down.

"In order to conduct any business, the Senate of Virginia requires a majority of senators be in attendance, and the Republican Caucus is the majority caucus. Yet despite the credible and deeply disturbing allegations made against our chamber's presiding officer, Lt. Governor Fairfax, no senator of either party boycotted a single session. We fulfilled our duty to the Commonwealth and the citizens we are entrusted to serve.

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"Calls by both Democratic caucuses for the resignations of Governor Northam and Lt. Governor Fairfax did not deter the leaders of the House and Senate Democratic Caucuses - and many Democratic legislators - from participating in the Governor's June 4 news conference, where he was flanked by the Lt. Governor and Attorney General Herring.

"History is an essential driver of Virginia's tourism economy. No state can match what Virginia has to offer those who love history and those who want to learn more about it. The participation of the President of the United States in the commemorations at Jamestown is an honor for Virginia, just as it was when President Roosevelt attended the 1907 Jamestown Exposition or when President Bush participated in the 2007 commemorations.

"I urge the leaders of the House and Senate Democratic Caucuses to reconsider their decision to boycott the commemorative session and respectfully ask them to join their Republican colleagues in Jamestown on July 30."

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