



VIRGINIA SENATE REPUBLICAN CAUCUS

News Release

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Senate Republican Leader

Sen. Ryan T. McDougle
Caucus Chairman

Sen. Mark D. Obenshain
Caucus Co-Chairman

Sen. William M. Stanley, Jr.
Sen. Bryce E. Reeves
Senate Republican Whips

Sen. Stephen D. Newman
*Senate Republican Leader
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Sen. Jill Holtzman Vogel

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
4 June 2020

STATEMENT BY SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP ON GOVERNOR NORTHAM'S ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING LEE STATUE

WILLIAMSBURG, VA, 4 JUNE 2020: Senate Republican Leader Thomas K. Norment, Jr. (R-James City), Caucus Chairman Ryan T. McDougle (R-Hanover), Caucus Co-Chairman Mark D. Obenshain (R-Rockingham), Caucus Whips William M. Stanley, Jr. (R-Franklin) and Bryce E. Reeves (R-Spotsylvania), and Republican Leader Pro-Tempore Stephen D. Newman (R-Bedford) today issued the following statement regarding Governor Northam's announcement that the Lee statue would be removed from Monument Avenue:

"Like all Virginians, we were outraged and deeply saddened by the murder of George Floyd. His brutal and senseless death has shocked the entire nation. We renew our commitment to ensuring our criminal justice system is fair to all, providing protections to everyone from the unnecessary use of force which ended Mr. Floyd's life.

"Virginia's law enforcement professionals place themselves in harm's way every day, ensuring our

~ more ~

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neighborhoods, homes, businesses, and streets are safe for all. They have earned and deserve the support of all Virginians, and they most certainly have ours. During these challenging days, they have protected the First Amendment rights of those protesting and strived to prevent escalations that result in the loss of life and property. In our experience, Virginia's law enforcement professionals are committed to preventing any who employ excessive force from remaining in their ranks, and we support them and stand ready to assist them in those efforts.

"The Governor's decision to remove the Lee statue from Monument Avenue is not in the best interests of Virginia. Attempts to eradicate instead of contextualizing history invariably fail. And because of this Governor's personal history, the motivations of this decision will always be suspect. Like Senator Chase's idiotic, inappropriate and inflammatory response, his decision is more likely to further divide, not unite, Virginians.

"We remain committed to a Virginia that offers opportunity for all, one where racism and bigotry are not tolerated. We stand ready to work on behalf of all Virginians in achieving that ideal."

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