

County of Giles

Jeffrey Morris
Central District Supervisor

Perry Martin
Eastern District Supervisor

John Lawson
Western District Supervisor



Paul "Chappy" Baker
At-Large Supervisor

Richard McCoy
At-Large Supervisor

Board of Supervisors

1 TAYLOR AVENUE, SUITE 2
PEARISBURG, VIRGINIA 24134

OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED HOUSE BILL 1374, WHICH WOULD AMEND TITLE 23.1 OF THE VIRGINIA CODE TO EFFECTUATE THE DISSOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF VISITORS OF THE VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE AND PLACE THE GOVERNANCE OF THE VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE UNDER THE BOARD OF VISITORS OF VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

WHEREAS, House Bill 1374 has been introduced in the 2026 General Assembly Session, which, in sum, dissolves the Board of Visitors of the Virginia Military Institute and places the Institute under the governance of the Board of Visitors of Virginia State University; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Military Institute (hereinafter VMI) was founded in 1839 as America's first state-sponsored and supported military college and is the oldest public senior military college in the United States; and

WHEREAS, in 1839, Lexington and Rockbridge County citizens, led by an esteemed Lexington resident and native son of Virginia, developed the foundational design and principles of VMI, which they later gained Commonwealth approval to implement, establishing the citizen-soldier model later adopted nationally; and

WHEREAS, in keeping with its founding principles and unlike any other Senior Military College in the United States, VMI enrolls cadets only, awards bachelor's degrees exclusively, and grants degrees in disciplines in engineering, science, and the liberal arts; and

WHEREAS, VMI has produced approximately 26,000 graduates during its 186 years of existence, many of whom have served the United States of America, the U.S. Navy, U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force, and the U.S. Marine Corps, including over 285 graduates who have obtained the rank of general or flag officer; and

WHEREAS, VMI is the only Virginia Institution of Higher education with a State Cadet program that graduates citizen-soldiers to work directly for the Commonwealth and benefit all citizens and has produced leaders in the military, education, medicine, law, and engineering; and

WHEREAS, VMI, as a treasured part of the history of the Commonwealth of Virginia, has more than earned the right to govern itself under its own Board of Visitors as it has done for over 186 years; and

WHEREAS VMI and the VMI Family are essential parts of Giles County's society and economy whose future and governance should not be conducted from afar by those who have no stake in the County, its residents, or businesses; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Giles County, Virginia Board of Supervisors hereby expresses and affirms its strong opposition to House Bill 1374, which amends Title 23.1 of the Code of Virginia to dissolve the VMI Board of Visitors and place VMI under the governance of the Board of Visitors of Virginia State University, and urges the General Assembly to reject said legislation, a copy of which is attached hereto.

This Resolution was adopted by the Giles County Board of Supervisors on this 4 day of March 2026.

	Voting For	Voting Against	Abstain	Absent
Morris	<u> x </u>	_____	_____	_____
Lawson	<u> x </u>	_____	_____	_____
Martin	<u> x </u>	_____	_____	_____
McCoy	<u> x </u>	_____	_____	_____
Baker	<u> x </u>	_____	_____	_____

Attest: 
Chris McKlarney, Clerk