



COUNTY OF PAGE

103 South Court Street, Suite F
Luray, Virginia 22835
(540) 743-4142
Fax: (540) 743-4533

Board of Supervisors:

Clifton "Bucky" Thomas – Chairman – At- Large
Jeremy Baldwin – District 1
Allen Louderback – District 2
Ryan Cabbage – District 3
Susan Kile – District 4
Jeff Vaughan – District 5

County Administrator:

Amity Moler

RESOLUTION

REGARDING OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED HOUSE BILL 1374, WHICH WOULD AMEND AND RENACT § 23.1-2501 OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA, RELATING TO THE VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE; BOARD OF VISITORS; MEMBERSHIP

WHEREAS, House Bill 1374 has been introduced in the 2026 General Assembly Session, which, in sum, fundamentally and substantially changes the Board of Visitors of the Virginia Military Institute and eliminates the requirement for any VMI alumni to serve on the Board while significantly limiting the number of alumni/ae that can serve to eliminate any majority; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 1374 increases the number of required non-alumni board members who may have no experience with, nor support VMI, its founding principles, honor code; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 1374 reduces the number of required Virginia residents who serve on the Board to create the opportunity that control of VMI will be by a majority of members who are neither Virginians nor VMI Alumni/ae; and

WHEREAS, the VMI board serves the vital role of hiring and evaluating superintendents, reviewing disciplinary appeals, setting strategic direction, influencing funding priorities, determining long-term institutional posture, and ultimately, the structure, application, oversight, operation, and existence of the Honor Code, Honor System, Ratline, Corps System, and Class System; 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, Virginia Governor Campbell (D) opined in 1839 warning of implementing changes to VMI motivated by the political ideologies of the day vice the best interests of Virginia, "...as time goes on the experimenting and compromising with fundamental and unchanging principles of discipline become ever more costly with loss of efficiency and just at the time they are most needed to make of the Institute a model for the country as a whole which is suffering sorely from progressive education."; and

WHEREAS, VMI and the VMI Family are essential parts of Page 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 Page 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, in any form a copy of which is attached hereto.

This Resolution was adopted by the Page County Board of Supervisors on this 2nd day of March 2026.

Clifton Thomas

Clifton Thomas, Chairman-at-Large

Amity Moler

Amity Moler, Clerk



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RESOLUTION

IN RE: OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED HOUSE BILL 1377, WHICH WOULD CREATE A TASK FORCE TO EXAMINE HIGHER EDUCATION AT THE INSTITUTE

WHEREAS, House Bill 1377 has been introduced in the 2026 General Assembly Session, which in sum creates a task force to determine whether the Virginia Military Institute should be fundamentally changed, continue to be a state-sponsored institution of higher education in the Commonwealth of Virginia, or be consolidated into other Virginia institutions; and

WHEREAS, HB1377's adversarial framing asserts contested historical and cultural conclusions, including accusations of treason, and conclusions that VMI and its cadets committed treason against the United States with such language dividing Virginians instead of uniting us; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force does not include any Department of War representation to assess that impact, nor any Department of Justice Civil Rights Division to assess the racial, nor any Department of Education representatives to investigate gender and Title IX are within Federal responsibilities and not the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the 2021 State Investigation of VMI cited in House Bill 1377 found no explicit racist or sexist policies, no overt Honor Court bias, full Title IX compliance, and minority retention rates exceeding peer group schools in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Task Force questions the replaceability of a federally integrated military institution,

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.

WHEREAS, the concept and design of VMI and its founding principles were developed and adopted by the citizens of Lexington, Virginia, in Rockbridge County in 1839 led by an esteemed Lexington, Virginia, resident and a native son of Virginia, and later became the standard of the citizen-soldier throughout the United States,

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, the Virginia Military Institute has produced approximately 26,000 graduates during its 186 years of existence, many of whom have served the United States of America in 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, medicine, law, education, engineering, and business; and

WHEREAS, VMI and the VMI Family are treasured and essential parts of Page County's and Virginia's society and economy; and

WHEREAS, VMI has more than proven itself worthy of the Commonwealth of Virginia's investment of public funds in producing citizen-soldiers who have served the Commonwealth and the Republic of the United States of America for over 186 years; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Page County, Virginia Board of Supervisors that it states and confirms its strong opposition to the House Bill 1377 in any form which proposes to create a task force to investigate and "examine" VMI as well as retains a requirement that the task force assess whether other public institutions could "replace the role of VMI", and if VMI should continue to be a state-sponsored institution of higher education in the Commonwealth of Virginia so as to preserve a direct analytic pathway to defunding the Institute and accordingly urges the General Assembly to reject said legislation, a copy of which is attached to this resolution.

This Resolution was adopted by the Page County Board of Supervisors on this 2nd day of March 2026.

Clifton Thomas

Clifton Thomas, Chairman

Amity Moler

Amity Moler, Clerk