

(HB1876)

GOVERNOR'S VETO

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6, of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 1876, which criminalizes an individual's possession of a firearm in a building owned or operated by a public institution of higher education.

My position on this policy is unchanged since it came to my desk last year. While I am committed to ensuring well-secured and safe college campuses in Virginia, this legislation does not adequately consider the numerous variations in Virginia's diverse geographic, cultural, and societal norms across different regions of the Commonwealth.

While these institutions may be partially government-owned, funding comes from various sources, including student-paid tuition. In this context, the autonomy of these campuses is crucial, and the Boards of Visitors at Virginia's institutions of higher education already have the authority to regulate their respective campuses, including implementing firearms prohibitions which are currently in place on most of Virginia's college campuses. This allows for the flexibility to consider the differences across regions and students' unique circumstances.

In the case of a threat, law enforcement can legally retrieve a firearm through avenues such as a search warrant or a substantial risk order.

Accordingly, I veto this bill.