

(HB1621)

GOVERNOR'S VETO

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6, of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 1621, which requires the addition of nonvoting faculty and staff representatives to the governing boards of baccalaureate public institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth.

Our esteemed public higher education institutions uphold the Commonwealth's commitment to education, overseen by Boards of Visitors endowed with broad statutory powers to regulate academic and financial affairs. The Boards of Visitors hire employees to fulfill their duty to the people.

The proposal would also exclude these representatives from General Assembly confirmation, subject only to an internal selection process, and they would be beyond the Governor's authority for removal due to misconduct, solely accountable to their peers.

Boards of Visitors "do not exist for their own sake or that of any particular institution but for the benefit of the public at large" (2023 Op. Va Att'y Gen. 52). Their governance should follow their public role, with members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the General Assembly rather than by unelected faculty or staff.

Accordingly, I veto this bill.