

Senator Favola's Public Comment on Youngkin Administration's Proposed New Policies for the Treatment of Transgender Students

(September 27, 2022)

“On behalf of my constituents in Arlington, Fairfax, and Loudoun counties and transgender school children throughout the Commonwealth, I register my intense opposition to this proposed policy. In addition to potentially violating both the Virginia Human Rights Act and Sections 22.1-23.3. of the Code of Virginia that directs school districts to adopt policies that are respectful and inclusive of transgender students, this proposed policy is hurtful and cruel.

Our schools should be places where students can learn and socialize in an environment that encourages them to be their authentic selves. Forcing teachers to out students to parents who may not accept them puts those children at higher risk of emotional and physical abuse. Moreover, we know from research that students experience better mental health outcomes when teachers and school officials respect their gender and use their chosen names. We also know that prohibiting transgender students from using the bathrooms of their choice can lead to embarrassment and negative health consequences.

Virginia's education policies should be both compassionate and evidenced-based, this proposed policy is neither. I strongly encourage the Department of Education to rescind it.”