

TOPIC: History

POSITION STATEMENT

Virginia has given localities the authority to remove Confederate monuments.

SUGGESTED USE

- What is Virginia doing about the Confederate monuments?

CORE MESSAGES

- Virginia has signed legislation giving localities the power to remove Confederate statues in public places, and many localities have done so, including Richmond, the former capital of the Confederacy.
- Virginia residents are passionately adding their perspectives to conversations about history.
- The state is developing initiatives to reimagine and add to historical sites so that they tell more inclusive stories.

PROOF POINTS

- In April of 2020, Governor Northam signed a bill giving localities the power to “remove, relocate, contextualize, or cover” Confederate statues in public spaces beginning July 1.
- As of February 2021, most monuments on city-owned properties have been removed in Richmond, former capital of the Confederacy.
- The Robert E. Lee monument at the affectionately renamed Marcus-David Peters Circle in Richmond has become a centerpiece of this conversation, with extensive statements against racial injustice by community members; as such, it has been featured on the cover of *National Geographic*.
- Governor Ralph Northam unveiled a proposal in December 2020 to invest about \$25 million to reimagine four of Virginia’s historical sites — including nearly \$11 million to transform Monument Avenue in Richmond — in an effort to help “tell the true story of our past.”
- While leaders in cities like Richmond and Norfolk moved quickly to remove monuments during widespread protests over the summer, leaders in six rural

counties — Charles City, Franklin, Halifax, Lunenburg, Tazewell and Warren — decided to exercise their new authority to put the question to voters.

- Many Virginia colleges are examining the legacy of Confederates at their universities, and schools like Virginia Military Institute and Virginia Commonwealth University have begun removing Confederate symbols from their campuses.

AUDIENCE SEGMENTS

- Black travelers
- Non-Black travelers interested in inclusive experiences
- Non-Black travelers who don't understand or appreciate inclusive experiences