

TOPIC: History

POSITION STATEMENT

Virginia's history is best represented when its full story is shared.

SUGGESTED USE

- Why is Virginia trying to rewrite history?

CORE MESSAGES

- Virginia's history represents an opportunity to explore and better understand the culture and context of a place. And that can only be done when we hear stories that represent ALL perspectives and lived experiences of a time and place.
- Virginia is committed to telling the whole story of our history in an inclusive, authentic way.
- Sites are broadening the historical narrative to be inclusive of multiple voices.
- Virginia is home to historical sites that are leading the way in telling the full story of American history.

PROOF POINTS

- 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.” Northam's proposal also includes a \$9 million investment to develop a Slavery Heritage Site, helping to preserve the Devil's Half-Acre as a historical site, and improving the Slave Trail in Shockoe Bottom.
- With Governor Northam's creation of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in 2019, Virginia is becoming a national exemplar in addressing the historical injustices and inequities that have existed for the last 400 years within all systems across our Commonwealth.
- Examples of how sites/organizations are bringing to light parts of the historical narrative that have been underheard include the movie *Harriet*, Monticello's traveling exhibition “Paradox of Liberty: Slavery at Jefferson's Monticello”; Montpelier's exhibition “The Mere Distinction of Colour”; the archeological dig at Colonial Williamsburg to uncover one of America's first Black churches; as well as exhibits at Mount Vernon, Fort Monroe, American Civil War Center, and Jamestown Settlement & American Revolution Museum at Yorktown.

- On August 24, 2020, Governor Ralph Northam signed Executive Order Thirty-Nine, which established the Commission on African American History Education. The Governor charged the group with reviewing Virginia's history standards, and the instructional practices, content, and resources currently used to teach African American history in the Commonwealth. The Commission was also charged with making recommendations on the professional development support needed to equip all teachers for culturally competent instruction.

AUDIENCE SEGMENTS

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