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VEA Fund Recommends Ralph Northam in Governor's Race

ROANOKE—Lt. Gov. Ralph Northam has earned the recommendation of the VEA Fund for Children and Public Education, the Association's political arm, for this year's gubernatorial election. The announcement came this evening during a meeting of Fund directors at VEA's annual convention.

"Ralph understands the foundational role public education plays in the future of our state," said VEA President Jim Livingston, who also serves as chairman of the VEA Fund. "He's the best candidate for our students, schools and educators, and he has an excellent track record of working to meet their needs."

Northam, a pediatric neurologist and a Democrat, served in the Virginia Senate from 2007 until 2013, when he was elected lieutenant governor. As an elected official, he's worked to increase investment in early childhood education and in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) efforts, and has been an advocate for increasing pay for Virginia's teachers, which lags some \$7,000 behind the national average. He's also a member of Virginia's first Children's Cabinet, which is dedicated to the education, health, safety and welfare of Virginia's young people.

"We took a good look at the candidates," said Livingston, noting that Democratic candidate Tom Perriello and Republican candidate Ed Gillespie participated in the recommendation process, "but Ralph is clearly the best qualified to be our next governor."

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