



Two Virginia ballot measures threaten parental rights

Amy McInerny 8/21/26

Back to school season is upon us and there is excitement in the air.

The fun of shopping for school supplies, the anticipation of being on the brink of an adventure, the promise of new friends and activities all ignite a sense of hope for students of every age.

For parents, it is a special time when we marvel at watching our young ones take the next step and are thankful we can be there to guide and keep them safe along the way. Protecting our children as they grow is a singular responsibility and joy. Indeed, it is a sacred trust.

That is why parents — and all Virginians who care about our future generations — must be aware that our commonwealth is facing a historic threat to the safety and well-being of our minor children and the God-given authority of parents. Two attempts to amend the Constitution of Virginia will be before voters this coming election season from Sept. 18 to Nov. 3. Both threaten religious liberty and must be defeated for the safety of our children and parental authority.

Ballot Question 1 is the deceptively named “Reproductive Freedom Amendment” and is a dangerously vague amendment to the Virginia Constitution that creates risky loopholes that would enable unlicensed abortion providers to threaten the health of mothers and even healthy babies up till birth.

Because it extends this so-called fundamental “right” to every individual, minor children are included. It lets courts and the government take away the right of parents to be involved in health care decisions for their minor children thus creating family conflict and division.

Virginians may disagree about where to draw the line on abortion but passing an amendment that would make abortion the only invasive medical procedure that a minor could have without parental permission goes too far. Moreover, this creates a safe space for sex-traffickers and predators to prey upon our daughters.

Proposals to include a parental consent provision to the proposed resolution were rejected by the Virginia General Assembly in 2025 and 2026. Parents must not be pushed out of life-altering, irreversible decisions affecting their minor children's health and safety.

A "no" vote will stop this gross political overreach.

Without this amendment, Virginia's abortion laws — already some of the broadest in the nation and allowing abortion through all nine months in certain circumstances — will not change.

Ballot Question 2 is equally extreme and out of step with the values of most Virginians. The goal of this resolution is to repeal the definition of marriage as an institution between one man and one woman, which is currently in our constitution. It seeks to embed in the highest law of Virginia the lie that marriage can be between any two adults.

However, of particular concern to parents is the fact that the language of the resolution distinguishes between sex and gender as if they are two distinct things. This means that someone can claim that the body he or she is born in is not the same as their gender. Embedding this false gender ideology into our constitution will serve as a Pandora's box of unintended negative consequences such as allowing boys into girls' locker rooms and eradicating women's safe spaces.

So, after the school shopping is done and the carpool schedule is settled, please take some time to learn more about how you can protect our precious children and create the future of Virginia that will allow everyone to thrive in authentic freedom. Learn more at CatholicsVoteNo.com and be sure to cast your "no" vote early beginning Sept. 18.

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