EXPANDED PARK AUTHORITIES

ENSURING COMMUNITIES CAN ENGAGE IN RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES SAFELY IS A FUNDAMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT

The Fairfax County Park Authority enriches the quality of life for community members by maintaining an enduring park system that promotes healthy lifestyles, preserves natural and cultural heritage, and promotes opportunities for recreation.

Ensuring the safety of our communities is a cornerstone of government's responsibility at all levels. Fairfax County is committed to ensuring all residents can enjoy our public parks, lands, and facilities for recreation without fear for their safety or that of their families.

On December 6, 1950, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors created the Fairfax County Park Authority pursuant to the Park Authorities Act, now codified at Va. Code 15.2-5700 et seq. The Park Authority was authorized to make decisions concerning land acquisition, park development and operations in Fairfax County, Virginia.

A PUBLIC SAFETY GAP IN THE CODE OF VIRGINIA

Va. Code § 18.2-370.2 provides that an adult convicted of certain sex offenses after a certain date is prohibited "from going, for the purpose of having any contact whatsoever with children who are not in his custody, within 100 feet of the premises of any place owned or operated by a locality that he knows or should know is a playground, athletic field or facility, or gymnasium". This prohibition does not extend to such facilities owned or operated by a park authority. As a result, facilities managed by the Fairfax County Park Authority are left without critical protection, posing a greater degree of risk to residents' and children's safety.



FAIRFAX COUNTY'S LEGISLATIVE POSITION

Support this initiative to protect our communities.

Fairfax County urges the General Assembly to ensure that all community members can enjoy local parks and recreation facilities by supporting legislation to ensure the security of certain facilities operated by park authorities. **Support amendments to Va. Code § 370.2 that will place certain facilities owned or operated by a park authority in a similar category to those owned or operated by a locality.**

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT LEGISLATIVETEAM@FAIRFAXCOUNTY.GOV

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