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**VIRGINIA DELEGATE KAYE KORY INTRODUCES LEGISLATION REQUIRING PUBLIC INSTRUCTION TO START AFTER 8 AM: Public Health Research Shows Starting before 8 AM Is Harmful for High School Students and Dangerous for Drivers**

Virginia Delegate Kaye Kory (D-38) introduced legislation (HB1894) that would require public instruction to start after 8 a.m. "Since my time on the Fairfax County School Board, I have been committed to healthier start times for secondary school students," stated Kory. "With more and more scientific evidence coming out each day in support of later start times, we are past the point of debate. Now is the time for action."

Delegate Jim Scott (D-53) previously introduced legislation to require later high school start times and Federal legislation was introduced by Representative Zoe Lofgren (D-CA). Many school districts in Virginia already start high schools at or after 8 a.m. Fairfax is one of several school districts nationally focusing on shifting to later high school start times.

There is a groundswell of support for such legislation coming from advocates around the country who are frustrated by delay or lack of action on the part of local school boards. "Legislation like Del. Kory's ensures that school divisions can resolve this public health problem for high school students while retaining safe, daylight commutes for elementary students," said Terra Ziporyn Snider, Ph.D., Executive Director and Co-Founder of Start School Later, a national organization dedicated to ensuring safe, healthy equitable school hours.

Opponents to later start times focus on budget concerns, or argue that later start times will interfere with extracurricular activities, like sports or jobs. They also frequently maintain that students should simply go to sleep earlier to get the recommended nine (9) hours of sleep needed each day."

"Hormonally-influenced sleep patterns of adolescents make it nearly impossible for most adolescents to fall asleep much before 11 p.m.," stated Phyllis Payne, MPH, Co-Founder of SLEEP (Start Later for Excellence in Education Proposal). "As for budget and extracurricular activities, nothing can be more important to public schools than the health and safety of our children. Furthermore, the evidence shows this change is cost-effective and school divisions with later dismissals continue to provide competitive extra-curricular programs, so those speculations prove to be unfounded."

A recent report by Brookings Institute economists showed that the benefits to cost ratio of changing middle and high school start times to later is 9 to 1 when using single tier bussing, the most expensive transportation approach.

Recent studies have linked lack of sleep to a host of ills including obesity, depression, and drowsy driving. There are also a number of documented benefits to starting high schools later in the morning, including improved performance and higher graduation rates, decreases in absenteeism, truancy, discipline problems, levels of depression, as well as reduced car crash rates.

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