



## **Position Statement on Virginia HB 158**

The Naturist Action Committee OPPOSES VA HB 158 and urges you to join us in opposition. This bill would prohibit licensing of campgrounds, etc., that sponsor nudist youth camps where the parent, grandparent, or legal guardian of any camper is not registered at the camp.

Our concern about this bill is based on three issues:

### **1. Parental Rights**

Parents have a fundamental right to raise their children according to their own beliefs. Just as members of a particular religion can send their children to a religious camp, nudists should be able to send their children to a camp where the nudist way of life is taught and where the children can associate with other nudist children. An important facet of nudist youth camps is leadership training and we believe that this requires some separation from the parents.

### **2. Protection of Children**

We acknowledge that the State has an obligation to enact laws to protect young people, such as establishing a minimum drinking age and special driver licensing rules and we recognize that these laws may conflict with parental rights. However, any such laws must derive from clear and present dangers to the individuals or society. In the case of nudist youth camps no such dangers have been shown. We have over a decade's experience with nudist youth camps in Virginia, Florida, and Arizona with no problems. Strict rules, a high staff-to-camper ratio, and top quality staff are the keys to this record of success.

Children who are brought up in nudist families and who live in or regularly visit nudist parks have a different reaction to nudity than do non-nudist children. Nudist children and youths accept non-sexual nudity and are as comfortable with it as non-nudist children are with clothing. In this respect experience with non-nudist children simply does not apply. The proof of the pudding is the record of good behavior at the camps and the fine young people who have come out of them.

### **3. Tolerance and Equal Protection**

Nudists are a minority; we are misunderstood and looked down upon by many. However, under our Constitution laws that unfairly and arbitrarily target minorities are not acceptable.

The nudist youth camps take place on private property and all participants are consenting adults and their consenting children. No one is affected against their will in any way.

This bill should be rejected because it unfairly targets nudists and its claim of protecting children has no basis in reality.

For further information contact::  
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