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Address:
P.O. Box 15512
Richmond, VA 23227

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July 5, 2020

The Honorable Ralph S. Northam
Office of the Governor
Patrick Henry Building, 3rd Floor
1111 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Governor Northam,

I write to you regarding the status of Former Governor L. Douglas Wilder's gubernatorial documents and encourage you to require that the Library of Virginia provide a timeline of the plan to make these records from his term publicly available.

As the country's first elected Black Governor and a founding member of the VLBC, Governor Wilder's time and work as Governor of Virginia was an important and significant moment in the history of our Commonwealth and nation. I trust that you agree it is imperative to make these records public as soon as possible. As we work together to tell the true history of African Americans in Virginia, we must expedite the release of these records. Too often the contributions of African Americans in the political sphere have not received the proper respect and acknowledgement and it is unfortunate that the delays regarding Governor Wilder's records are consistent with this pattern. We believe that it is far overdue for these archives to be processed with the care and respect they deserve.

As we recognize 30 years since Governor Wilder's inauguration and prepare to celebrate his 90th birthday in January, we must fully process papers from his term before continuing to act on the papers from his successors. Given your continued partnership with this caucus, we know that you would agree that to do anything else is simply disrespectful and unacceptable. We cannot settle for the excuse that this process has "fallen off the radar" as an adequate response to these delays. Such responses are indicative of a lack of respect towards the importance of these historical records. Thus, we expect that Governor Wilder's records will be processed with the utmost speed and care.

Sincerely,



Lamont Bagby
Member, 74th District
Virginia House of Delegates
Chair, Virginia Legislative Black Caucus

cc: Library of Virginia