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News Release

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Statement of Senate Majority Leader Norment on the 97th District Convention

Williamsburg, Virginia, May 3, 2019: Senate Majority Leader Thomas K. Norment, Jr. (R-James City) today issued the following statement regarding tomorrow's 97th House District Convention:

“I have always preferred, whenever practical, that primaries be chosen as the method of nomination for our party. But in this case, on January 19, the 97th House Legislative District Committee selected a Convention to be held on May 4 and approved a Call. Their decision was consistent with the Party Plan and with various court rulings regarding the conduct of party nominations in the Commonwealth.

“Subsequent to the issuing of the Call, the Republican unit committees of Hanover, King William, and New Kent Counties issued their respective Calls for Mass Meetings to elect their delegations to the Convention. Both campaigns actively and aggressively competed to file prospective delegates and to turn out their voters at the Mass Meetings on April 9, 11, and 18.

“The selection of either of the two candidates who have properly filed to contest this nomination is not my concern. However, those who attended the Mass Meetings held in New Kent on April 9 and in King William on April 18 are my constituents. The 574 Delegates and Alternates elected to represent King William and New Kent are voters in the 3rd Senatorial District. I feel a genuine responsibility to stand up for their rights, which are currently under assault.

“Those Delegates and Alternates were subsequently certified to the Legislative District Committee. Their elections are completed and they are entitled and empowered to represent their communities at Saturday’s Convention, and to participate in a process that was fair.

“No challenge to the Call issued on January 19 was ever filed. No challenges to the Calls issued by the Republican Committees of Hanover, King William, and New Kent were ever filed. No appeal of the elections of the nearly 1,700 delegates and alternates has ever been produced nor – to the best of knowledge – is one currently pending. As best I can determine from publicly available information, no appeal of this convention is currently pending before either the 1st Congressional District Republican Committee or the State Central Committee.

“These individuals have been duly elected. Cancelling the Convention after these individuals have been elected would be comparable to cancelling a general election at 6:00 p.m. on Election Day because of dissatisfaction with those who turned out to vote.

“In issuing a statement asserting that tomorrow’s Convention is anything but a duly-called Convention, Chairman Wilson has overstepped his authority and usurped the powers reserved for the State Central Committee.

“This Convention is taking place because it must. Not holding it would be breaking faith and dismissing the verdict of those who attended the Mass Meetings so their voices could be heard.

“I thank those who have worked diligently to ensure this Convention occurs and commend them for remaining calm in the midst of turmoil and headwinds. Godspeed.”

Senate Majority Leader Thomas K. Norment, Jr. represents the 3rd District in the Senate of Virginia. The 3rd District includes Gloucester, King and Queen, King William and New Kent Counties and the City of Poquoson, and portions of Isle of Wight, James City, Surry, and York Counties, and the Cities of Hampton and Suffolk.
