



**For Immediate Release**

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### **Founding Freedoms Law Center Files Suit Against Goochland School Board Members**

**RICHMOND, VA** – Today, the Founding Freedoms Law Center filed a lawsuit in Goochland County Circuit Court against four members of the Goochland School Board in their personal capacities on behalf of School Board member Angela Allen. The lawsuit is in response to defamatory statements published by the defendants through a formal Censure Resolution against Ms. Allen at the board’s May 9, 2023 meeting.

“The defendants made knowingly false statements against Ms. Allen to disparage her reputation all because she exposed a policy they apparently wanted to remain hidden from their constituents,” said Josh Hetzler, Legal Counsel for Founding Freedoms Law Center. “These board members must be held accountable for wrongfully attacking Ms. Allen and for harming her reputation.”

According to the lawsuit, the board members, knowing their claims to be false, wrongfully declared that Ms. Allen had violated the Board’s Code of Ethics in multiple ways, had violated and encouraged violations of federal law and the U.S. Constitution, and had acted recklessly. They issued this Censure Resolution against her for merely providing the public with information on her Facebook page and for requesting the community’s input. Her social media post stated: “This week I learned that GCPS students are allowed to use restrooms different from their biological gender. Is this our community’s expectation?” The lawsuit sets out that this neutral statement by Ms. Allen was entirely appropriate and in no way merited the false attacks brought by the defendants.

After the defendants refused the option of rescinding their accusations against her, Ms. Allen filed this lawsuit for defamation and civil conspiracy against them, in their personal capacities, to remedy reputational harm. State law allows for school board members to be held personally liable for intentional misconduct.

Ms. Allen said, “For me, this case is primarily about my reputation for integrity and about accountability for school board members who think that they can unfairly punish a fellow board member simply because I informed the citizens of what the schools were actually doing and then asked them what they thought about it. In other words, they punished me for doing exactly what I was elected to do. Ultimately, if they can get away with this without consequences, then this can happen to any school board member in any district, so I feel I have a responsibility to stand up to it.”

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