



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on February 9, 2019

Fairfax Refuses to Resign After Second Accuser Steps Forward

The man who everyone thought might become the governor of Virginia upon the resignation of Governor Ralph Northam won't get the job after all, if top Democrats have their way.

A second woman has accused Lieutenant Governor Justin Fairfax of forcing himself upon her in 2000 when they were students at Duke University.

Fairfax denies the allegations, but Democrats have said enough is enough and that Fairfax must resign. If he doesn't, he might be impeached.



Rape Described

Woman No. 2 is Meredith Watson. "The details of Ms. Watson's attack are similar to those described by Dr. Vanessa Tyson," Watson's lawyer, Nancy Erika Smith, [told the *New York Times*](#).

"It was her sophomore year at Duke and his senior year, and they were hanging out," Smith told the newspaper. "They had never dated. She had dated one of his friends. They did not have a romantic relationship. He gets up and walks out. Comes back in. Shuts off the light and locks the door. She knew things were going south when he locked the door."

A friend of Watson's, Kaneedreck Adams, [told the *Washington Post*](#) and the *Times* that Watson accused Fairfax when they were in college. "She told me she had been raped, and she named Justin," Adams told the *Post*.

"She said she couldn't speak, but she was trying to get up and he kept pushing her down," Adams told the *Post*. "She said he knew that she didn't like what was happening, but he kept pushing her down."

[Adams told the *Times*:](#)

"I said, 'Did you say no?' and she said, no she couldn't say no," Ms. Adams said. "And she said she was trying to get out of there, get away, remove herself from the situation, and she said Justin kept pushing her down."

Watson came forward, [her attorney wrote](#) in a prepared statement, because she "was upset to learn that Mr. Fairfax raped at least one other woman after he attacked her. The details of Ms. Watson's attack are similar to those described by Dr. Vanessa Tyson."

Watson "has no interest in becoming a media personality or reliving the trauma that has greatly affected her life," Smith wrote. "She is not seeking any financial damages."

All Watson wants, Smith wrote, is for Fairfax to resign.

Meanwhile, the [Times also tracked down](#) friends of Fairfax's first accuser, Vanessa Tyson.



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“Six people said that Dr. Tyson told them over the last two years that she had been sexually assaulted at the convention and that her account was consistent with her public statement this week,” the newspaper reported. “The people said she provided varying levels of detail, but three of them said she identified the assailant as either a lieutenant governor or a politician on the rise or specifically as Mr. Fairfax.”

Democrats Pile On

Top Democrats have said Fairfax must quit. Most significantly, Virginia’s Democratic Party has said Fairfax must go. But other calls for his resignation have come from presidential candidates Cory Booker and Kamala Harris and Virginia’s two left-wing senators, Tim Kaine and Mark Warner.

Another Democrat, Patrick Hope, who represents Arlington in the General Assembly, [said Fairfax](#) must resign by Monday or face impeachment.

Hope has not explained how impeachment would work given that the crimes of which Fairfax is accused occurred before he was elected. The [state constitution says](#) an official can be impeached for “malfeasance in office, corruption, neglect of duty, or other high crime or misdemeanor.”

Fairfax has refused to resign and demanded “full investigation into these unsubstantiated and false allegations.”

[Fairfax vowed](#) to “clear my good name” and said he has “nothing to hide. I have passed two full field background checks by the FBI and run for office in two highly contested elections with nothing like this being raised before.”

The accusations against Fairfax have somewhat eclipsed the racial troubles of Northam and Attorney General Mark Herring.

[Northam has also refused to resign](#) despite being caught in photo doing something of an Al Jolson routine. After admitting that he costumed himself in blackface and apologizing, Northam recanted and said he was not in the photo, which also features someone in the white regalia of the Ku Klux Klan.

[Herring demanded](#) that Northam resign for that transgression, but then he too admitted that he had donned black face.

[Northam’s advocacy](#) of infanticide is, apparently, no longer a concern in Virginia.

Photo of Lt. Gov. Justin Fairfax: AP Images



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