



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on June 10, 2020

Judge Temporarily Blocks Lee Monument's Removal. Vandals Working Overtime.

A circuit court judge in Richmond has  blocked leftist [Governor Ralph Northam's plan](#) to remove the Robert E. Lee Monument in Richmond.

Judge Bradley Cavedo issued a 10-day stay of execution for Marse Robert, pursuant to a lawsuit that says the state, which owns the statue and land, cannot remove it because of its contract with the original landowners.

Another lawsuit seeks to block removal because it would trespass rules set by the National Registry of Historic places.

The Lawsuit

[Cavedo's injunction](#) granted the request of William Gregory, whose great grandparents, Roger Gregory and Bettie F. Allen Gregory, deeded the land to the state in 1890. Governor P.W. McKinney signed the deed on behalf of the commonwealth.

"Acting by and through the governor of the Commonwealth and pursuant to the deed and joint resolution," [the lawsuit argues](#) that Virginia "accepted the Deed in token of the acceptance of the conveyance and guaranteed that it would hold the statue and pedestal and circle of ground 'perpetually sacred' to the purpose of memorializing Robert E. Lee, and that the Commonwealth would 'faithfully guard it and affectionately protect it.'"

The lawsuit argues that the signed deed is binding on Northam and the Commonwealth, and that he has failed to protect the monument from vandals who have "repeatedly desecrated, damaged, and altered" it. The lawsuit continued,

If the injunction is not granted, the defendant will be free to remove the Lee Monument. The removal would inherently result in irreparable harm to the Plaintiff. His family has taken pride for 130 years in the statue resting upon land belonging to his family and transferred to the Commonwealth in consideration of the Commonwealth contractually guaranteeing to perpetually care for and protect the Lee Monument.

Cavedo was convinced.

Gregory, [he wrote](#), is "likely to prevail on his claim," and "there is a likelihood of irreparable harm to the statue if removed as proposed by defendants."

Cavedo ruled "that it is in the public interest to await resolution of this case on the merits prior to removal of the statue by defendants, and the public interest weighs in favor of maintaining the status quo."

Last, "little harm will be suffered by defendants by the issuance of a temporary injunction."

Northam will also contest the second lawsuit from William Davis, who argues that Northam and his gang of iconoclasts have not met removal requirements set by the National Register of Historic Places, [Richmond.com reported](#).

Northam's director of state historic preservations disagrees.



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His counsel, Rita Davis, said the statue is coming down. “That is by no means the end of the issue,” she said of Cavedo’s order.

Northam has been planning to remove the monument for more than a year, [she told](#) Richmond.com. “It is only the beginning.”

All Monuments Are Coming Down

Famous for wearing blackface in medical school, Northam ordered the statue removed amid last week’s unhinged chaos and mass riots over the death of career criminal George Floyd at the hands of police.

The 12-ton, 60-foot tall monument is the work of French artist [Marius Jean Antonin Mercié](#), who also created the monuments to [Francis Scott Key](#) in Baltimore and the [Marquis de Lafayette](#) in Washington, D.C.

Workers began preparing to remove the 130-year-old statue on Monday.

Lee’s statue is the most prominent work of art on Monument Avenue, but not the only target of the leftists who run the state and city.

[Mayor Levar Stoney promised](#) to do away with statues of Generals Stonewall Jackson and J.E.B. Stuart and Confederate Navy Commander Matthew Fontaine Maury when a new law that permits localities to remove memorials as they see fit takes effect in July.

On Saturday, vandals at Virginia Commonwealth University [used ropes to pull down a statue](#) of Confederate General Williams Carter Wickham, and last week, the Confederate statue in Alexandria, Virginia, [was removed](#) from its pedestal, albeit peacefully.

[Vandals also struck](#) the Confederate monuments in Luray, Virginia.

Confederates aren’t the only targets of the vandals.

Last night, vandals hit two statues of Christopher Columbus. In Richmond, again using ropes, [they toppled a statue of Columbus](#) and tossed it in a lake. In Boston, [they decapitated](#) a Columbus statue.

[Vandals scrawled](#) “was a racist” under Winston Churchill’s surname on his statue in London, England; toppled a statue of Edward Colston, a 17th-century British politician and slave trader; and even [defaced a statue](#) of Mahatma Gandhi.

Photo: AP Images

R. Cort Kirkwood is a long-time contributor to The New American and a former newspaper editor.



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