



Jan 22, 2024

SwimRVA writes to endorse and support House Bill No. 354, a bill to amend and reenact § 32.1-248.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to public pools; regulations.

SwimRVA is the non-profit community hub for aquatics in the Richmond Region. Its mission is to change lives through aquatics with a vision to Drownproof Richmond. Since opening its doors in 2012, SwimRVA has collaborated with other organizations and facilities to serve the community and attack the devastating statistics of drowning. They have infused the community with water safety programming and education, serving thousands of youth and adults; saving lives, building a workforce, and transforming communities.

Now, this collaboration must extend beyond local organizations and attack these issues on a broader scale.

Over the last several years, SwimRVA and other aquatic agencies have been in repeated and open communication with the Virginia Department of Health regarding adopting minimum safety standards based primarily on the Model Aquatic Health Code. We are pleased with the outreach and the eagerness of the Department of Health to seek industry input, and support their mission to help us all promote safer aquatic environments.

According to the Virginia Department of Health Agency Review published in January 2023, out of the 26 states east of the Mississippi river, only four, including Virginia, do not have statewide standards for injury and drowning prevention. The time is right for Virginia to move forward on this issue.

Sincerely,

Adam Kennedy

Executive Director
SwimRVA