MEMORANDUM

To: VMI Corps of Cadets

From: The Superintendent, General J. H. Binford Peay, III

Subject: Marriage/Parenthood Policy

Distributed: August-2005

VMI enforces the following policy prohibiting any cadet from being married or a parent while a member of the VMI Corps of Cadets.

> *Pursuant to the policy adopted by the Board of Visitors, any cadet who marries or becomes a parent is expected to resign from the Corps. Absent voluntary resignation, should the Institute confirm that a cadet is married or the parent of a child, such cadet shall be separated from the Corps, for failure of eligibility, at the end of the semester in which the information is received and confirmed. For the purpose of this policy, the responsibilities of parenthood are deemed to begin upon a cadet's learning that a child has been conceived as a result of his or her conduct.*
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> *All cadets shall, upon matriculation and return each fall, sign a statement confirming their knowledge and understanding of this policy. This regulation shall not be enforced against any cadet on account of any parenthood existing on the date of its adoption*.*

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF VISITORS:

WHEREAS the distinctive, values driven, education experience provided by the Virginia Military Institute is directed not only to academic achievement but, equally, to character development and leadership training - both of which are central to the Institute's educational mission: and

WHEREAS the values and behaviors inculcated by a VMI education include responsibility, accountability and keen senses of duty and honor; and

WHEREAS the duties of a Cadet at the Virginia Military Institute are developed and imposed, as part of the Institute's unique educational mission, with the intention that they induce a high level of stress and demand near exclusive attention in their performance: and

WHEREAS performance of the duties of a Cadet is intended to require mutual reliance and foster a commitment to the good of the whole, that supercedes individual needs and interests, such that men and

women who choose to attend VMI choose to commit themselves to the Institute, its method and, most importantly, to each other; and

WHEREAS the military structure and operation of the Institute's program relies on the egalitarian premise that all individual members of the Corps are equally subject to the rules and regulations that govern cadet life and therefore circumstances which might form the basis for the need to make exceptions to the Institute's expectations should, as much as possible, be eschewed; and

WHEREAS the duties that accrue to an individual who chooses to marry or who becomes a parent are duties of time, attention and loyalty that the Institute respects, values and supports as having a primary claim to the loyalty of the individual who accepts them; and

WHEREAS, by its educational program, the Institute hopes to communicate to Cadets an understanding, appreciation and respect for the duties of marriage and parenthood in a manner that will encourage the deliberate and responsible undertaking of marriage and parenthood and their attendant responsibilities; and

WHEREAS to permit an individual to undertake, at once, the demanding and near exclusive duties of time, attention and loyalty required of a Cadet and duties of such primary value and importance as those owed by a spouse or a parent, would be entirely inconsistent with the demands of Cadet life, would severely undermine the good order and discipline of the Corps and would be contrary to the lessons of character that the Institute seeks to teach; and

WHEREAS causing pregnancy or becoming pregnant by voluntary act, without marriage, but while a cadet, constitutes irresponsible conduct unbecoming a cadet; and

WHEREAS any policy governing marriage and parenthood or pregnancy must be even handed in its treatment of male and female cadets;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Virginia Military Institute Board of Visitors directs the Superintendent to develop and implement a regulation governing cadet conduct whereby a VMI cadet who chooses to marry, or to undertake the duties of a parent (including causing a pregnancy or becoming pregnant by voluntary act), by that choice, chooses to forego his or her commitment to the Corps of Cadets and his or her VMI education. Such a cadet will be expected to resign from VMI. It is the intent of the Board that, absent voluntary resignation, such cadet will not be allowed to continue as a cadet past the end of the semester in which the matter is brought to the attention of the Institute. Provided, however, that this resolution and any regulation developed pursuant hereto shall not be construed to impose new obligations on any cadet retroactively.

Date of Adoption: 14-January-2002.