

VIRGINIA:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF ALBEMARLE COUNTY

IN RE:)
Santolla v. Katz, No. CL26001139 (Washington Cnty.))
Crump v. Katz, No. CL26000201 (Lancaster Cnty.))
Curtis v. Katz, No. CL26002454 (Spotsylvania Cnty.))
Black v. Hook, No. CL26000241 (Fauquier Cnty.))

ORDER DENYING APPLICATION TO TRANSFER
PURSUANT TO VA. CODE § 8.01-267.4

THIS MATTER came before this three-judge panel, appointed by the Supreme Court of Virginia on June 12, 2026, on the Application to Transfer Pursuant to Va. Code § 8.01-267.4 filed by the Commonwealth of Virginia, Superintendent of the Virginia State Police Jeffrey S. Katz, and Commonwealth’s Attorneys Ross P. Spicer, Erin Barr, Matthew Hamel, and Krysten Reid (the “Application”). The Court having considered the pleadings filed and the arguments of counsel made at the July 6, 2026, hearing; it is hereby

ORDERED that the Application is DENIED for the reasons stated in open court and on the record at the July 6, 2026, hearing. The Panel’s findings of fact are attached hereto. SO ORDERED, this 6th day of July, 2026. judge

Cheryl W. Higgins
Hon. Cheryl W. Higgins
Chief Judge
Sixteenth Judicial Circuit

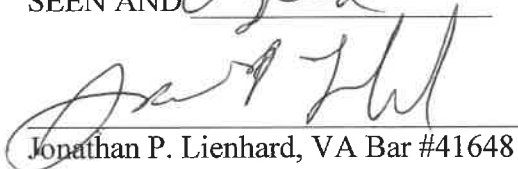
J. William Watson, Jr.
Hon. J. William Watson, Jr.
Judge
Tenth Judicial Circuit



Hon. Helivi L. Holland
Judge
Fifth Judicial Circuit

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Support of same, and on the record in oral argument including but not limited to the Panel's finding that the common questions of law and fact do not predominate, that the Commonwealth's employees will not be inconvenienced and that the inconvenience to parties, witnesses and counsel does not support transfer; that the remaining factors do not support transfer, including the disadvantages of duplicative and inconsistent rulings, orders or judgments.

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FINDINGS AND RULING OF THE PANEL

Factors to be considered by the court include, but are not limited to

- (i) the nature of the common questions of law or fact;

We find the common questions of law or fact do not predominate the actions.

There are different questions of law and there are multiple causes of action. We do not find Separate civil actions brought by six or more plaintiffs involve common questions of law or fact and arise out of the same transaction, occurrence or series of transactions or occurrences;

While there is some logical connection, there is not the same statutory framework, and the fundamental questions are not the same.

- (ii) the convenience of the parties, witnesses and counsel;

Some of the plaintiffs will incur significant inconvenience to travel to another forum during hours that people usually work and potentially then bear the expenses of travel and accommodations. The Commonwealth is not claiming inconvenience to its employees.

- (iv) the efficient utilization of judicial facilities and personnel;

- (iii) the calendar of the courts;

There was no evidence about problems with any specific judicial facilities and personnel or the calendar of the courts. What the panel is aware of is that court hearings have been proceeding in a timely manner.

- (iv) the likelihood and disadvantages of duplicative and inconsistent rulings, orders or judgments;

Separate cases have already presented arguments and declarations on the issue of whether a preliminary injunction should be granted in the various jurisdictions where

the cases are filed. Further the courts have ruled on those preliminary injunctions in three of the four cases.

It is too late to properly prevent inconsistent rulings.

The Commonwealth has not met the burden of showing the necessary factors to grant the application to transfer and it is denied.

