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The American Institute of Architects

Virgin Islands Chapter

Honorable Myron D. Jackson  
Senator 31<sup>st</sup> Legislature  
Chairman, Committee on Culture, Historic Preservation, Youth and Recreation  
Capitol Building, PO Box 1690,  
St. Thomas, VI 00804

February 20, 2016  
RE: Virgin Islands School of Architecture

Dear Senator Jackson,

On behalf of the American Institute of Architects, Virgin Islands Chapter, I am writing this letter in support of the creation of an architecture school in the US Virgin Islands in conjunction with the "In Search of Identity" anniversary gift. The use of renovated Danish buildings to create the framework for future training of architects and craftsmen, fortifies the relationship of the Danish – Virgin Islands heritage.

We support an accredited program.

"The National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) accredits professional degrees in architecture offered by institutions accredited by a U.S. regional accrediting agency. Obtaining a NAAB-accredited degree is an essential aspect of preparing for the professional practice of architecture, which is intended to verify that each accredited program substantially meets those standards that, as a whole, comprise an appropriate education for an architect.

The curriculum of a NAAB-accredited program includes general studies, professional studies, and electives, which together comprise a liberal education in architecture. The curriculum ensures that graduates will be technically competent, critical thinkers who are capable of defining multiple career paths within a changing societal context.

More specifically, the NAAB requires an accredited program to produce graduates who: are competent in a range of intellectual, spatial, technical, and interpersonal skills; understand the historical, socio-cultural, and environmental context of architecture; are able to solve architectural design problems, including the integration of technical systems and health and safety requirements; and comprehend architects' roles and responsibilities in society.

The NAAB is supportive of the development of new programs in architecture and continually evaluates its standards to ensure they are reflective of contemporary practice in architecture."

AIA Virgin Islands currently supports high school and graduate students, who have been accepted into an accredited architectural program, with an annual scholarship of \$2,500. It would be an honor to support a local accredited institution in architecture.

We look forward to being a resource for this initiative.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stacy A. Bourne, FAIA  
AIA Virgin Islands President