

COMMITTEE ON CULTURE, HISTORIC PRESERVATION, YOUTH & RECREATION
May 23, 2016

Good afternoon Senator Myron D. Jackson, Chairperson of the Committee on Culture, Historic Preservation, Youth & Recreation; Members of the Committee, Senators, ladies and gentlemen in the listening and viewing audience.

I am Beverly Nicholson Doty, Commissioner of the Department of Tourism.

Sports Tourism remains an integral part of the Department of Tourism's strategic marketing plan. Our objective is to generate awareness of our facilities as potential host sites for sporting events, support local events and aspiring athletes.

One of the most recent sponsorship agreement we have entered into is with Paradise Racing, led by Virgin Islands racing professional. The partnership includes, among other things, a USVI branded race car and trailer which races in markets like Maryland, Florida, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Michigan. At least 3 of the events have racing spectators in excess of 15,000. The trailer will be made available for use by the DOT for certain in-market events.

We continue to support locally produced sporting events as well as those that provide the USVI with national exposure. The DOT is in constant communication with the organizers of Basketball Travellers, the organization that has brought us the highly successful, nationally televised Paradise Jam, for the past 15 years. The return on investment has increased significantly year over year. Discussions have

recently begun with President Nels Hawkins on bringing a new sporting event to the Territory.

In advance of the Centennial events, the DOT is committed to sponsoring sports events in Denmark with reciprocal sporting event in the VI in 2017.

Some other events which the DOT supports yearly include:

- *St. Thomas Regatta (formerly the Rolex Regatta)
- *Sportsfishing Tournaments
- *8 Tuff Miles
- *Beach to Beach Swim
- *St. John Paddleboard Race
- * Coral Reef Swim
- * International Triathlon

This is but just a small representation of our involvement with this important segment of our industry.

The DOT allots approximately \$1M in direct sponsorships to sporting events and individual athletic quests which provides exposure for the industry, In FY2016 we began partnering with Sports Parks and Recreation providing funding to the agency who in turn vets, provides sponsorship ad tracks expenses for many local tournament and youth travel programs.

The annual investment in overall sports marketing & adverting is about \$1M and includes advertising and promotion in our print, digital and broadcast media campaigns.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on sports tourism. I am available questions.