

COMMITTEE ON CULTURE, HISTORIC PRESERVATION, YOUTH & RECREATION
May 5, 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.

On behalf of the Department of Tourism I submit this written testimony to be read into the record. I appreciate the invitation to testify at this Committee meeting. Unfortunately neither I nor anyone from my executive team are available for this hearing.

The Department of Tourism participated in a recent discussion about travel by a USVI delegation to Fiesta del Caribe in Cuba this July, which was hosted by Senator Jackson. This annual event provides an incredible opportunity for cultural exchange in the region and offer a snapshot into what we will present as the featured destination when the USVI hosts in 2018. It also will be an exciting time to experience unique culture of the Cuban people and share what make us all worldly destinations.

We are in support of Senator Jackson's mission to this Festival. To this end, we have committed \$25,000 to cover travel for students and chaperones included in the delegation. Additionally, we will provide up to 200 exchange gifts, to include those for VIP dignitaries, which will be sourced locally. Two representatives from the Department of Tourism will join the delegation to assist with coordination and to garner a better understanding of what will be required as a host country.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on plans for an official Virgin Islands delegation to travel to Cuba. I am available at my office to provide additional information and/or clarification.

Beverly Nicholson Doty
Commissioner
Department of Tourism