



Department of Property & Procurement

Government of the United States Virgin Islands

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT SERVICES, CONSUMER AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

TESTIMONY ON BILL NO. 31-0178

NOVEMBER 18, 2015

TESTIFIER: LAVERNE P. BAILEY, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

Good afternoon Honorable Senator Justin Harrigan, Sr. and all other distinguished Senators present today, legislative staff and the listening and viewing audience of the Virgin Islands.

My name is Laverne P. Bailey, Deputy Commissioner of Property for the district of St. Croix, Department of Property and Procurement.

I am pleased to be here to discuss the Act amending Title 23 of the Virgin Islands Code, Chapter 9, Section 605 to determine the occupant load factor for public buildings and the posting of signage indicating their occupant load factor.

Occupancy load refers to the number of people permitted in a building at one time based on the building's floor space and function. The occupancy load must be posted on signs, which are sometimes called maximum occupancy signs, so that this

information is publicly available. To exceed occupancy load or fail to post occupancy load signs in the required places can result in fines and is a serious hazards.

Emergencies can require the immediate evacuation of a building, particularly in the event of a fire. Any delay in evacuation can be tragic. A building over maximum occupancy can cause a delay in evacuation procedures.

The Department of Property & Procurement, being the custodian of all government-owned buildings in the territory, is in full support of the amendment proposed for Title 23 of the Virgin Islands Code, Chapter 9, Section 605 to determine the occupant load factor for public buildings and the posting of signage indicating their occupant load factor.

The Department is ready to assist the Virgin Islands Fire Service in any way possible to ensure the posting of maximum occupancy signage to our properties.