BILL NO. 35-0210

Thirty-Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

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An Act appropriating \$2,500,000 for the purchase of Plot Nos. 53A, 53B, 54A & 54B Kronprindsens Gade, Crown Prince Quarter, Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, by and between the Government of the Virgin Islands, acting through the Department of Property and Procurement, and Conroy H. Watt and Kenneth I. Sweeney

PROPOSED BY:

Senator Angel L. Bolques, Jr.

- 1 WHEREAS, since 1984, the Government of the Virgin Islands, acting through its
- 2 Department of Property and Procurement, on behalf of the Department of Labor, has leased the
- 3 property located at 53A, 53B, 54A & 54B Kronprindsens Gade, Crown Prince Quarter,
- 4 Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, 00802 (the "Property"), for more than \$20,000
- 5 per month, resulting in rental payments for the last 39 years exceeding \$9.3 million, which is a
- 6 substantial financial burden to the Government; and
- WHEREAS, there are numerous government agencies that are renting properties in the
- 8 Territory, incurring significant rental expenses. This persistent high-rate rental practice strains
- 9 the financial resources of these agencies and the Government as a whole, and highlights the
- 10 cost-inefficiency of the current rental arrangements; and

- 1 **WHEREAS**, Conroy H. Watt and Kenneth I. Sweeney own fee simple title to No. 53A,
- 2 53B, 54A & 54B Kronprindsens Gade, Crown Prince Quarter, Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas,
- 3 Virgin Islands, 00802, and have placed the Property up for sale for \$2,800,000; and
- 4 **WHEREAS**, the Department of Labor requires a suitable and permanent location for its
- 5 operations, and the sale of the Property in question is an immediate chance to purchase and
- 6 reduce rental costs significantly, presenting an opportunity to provide a stable and long-term
- 7 facility to meet the Department's needs; and
- 8 **WHEREAS**, the Property currently houses the following divisions of the Virgin Islands
- 9 Department of Labor, to include, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Hearing and Appeals, Labor
- 10 Relations, OSHA, Unemployment Insurance, Workers Compensation Administration,
- Workforce Development, Youth and Apprenticeship, and EQUUS (Virgin Islands Department
- of Labor partner); and
- WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the Government of the Virgin Islands to secure
- the Property that has been established as a significant benefit and will become a valuable part
- of the Government's asset portfolio; and
- WHEREAS, pursuant to 31 V.I.C. § 231a (a), the Government commissioned three
- 17 Appraisal Reports to appraise the Property; and based on the appraisals, the Government intends
- to offer to purchase the Property for \$2,500,000 within 90 days; and
- 19 WHEREAS, Conroy H. Watt and Kenneth I. Sweeney have agreed to accept the
- 20 Government's offer to purchase the property for the final contract price of \$2,500,000, and
- 21 therefore, the Government will purchase the property for the sum \$2,500,000; and
- WHEREAS, in accordance with title 31, Virgin Islands Code, chapter 23, § 231a, the
- 23 Government of the Virgin Islands is authorized to acquire real property by purchase or exchange
- 24 for any public use; and 31 V.I.C. § 231a (f) requires legislative approval of the Government's
- 25 purchase of real property before title to the property is conveyed; and

3 1 WHEREAS, the purpose of this act is to grant legislative approval of the sale of the 2 Property to the Government of the Virgin Islands and to appropriate 2,500,000 for the purchase 3 of the Property; Now, Therefore, 4 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands: 5 **SECTION 1**. Pursuant to 31 V.I.C. § 231a, the Legislature of the Virgin Islands approves 6 the purchase of the property described as Parcel No. 53A Kronprindsens Gade, Long No.: 1-05-7 304-02-08-00, Parcel Nos. 53B, 54A & 54B Kronprindsens Gade, Long No.: 1-05-304-02-09-8 00, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands between the Government of the Virgin Islands, acting through 9 the Department of Property and Procurement, on behalf of the Department of Labor, and sellers, 10 Conroy H. Watt and Kenneth I, Sweeney, for a total cost not to exceed \$2,500,000. 11 **SECTION 2**. The sum of \$2,500,000 is appropriated in the fiscal year ending September 12 30, 2023, from the St. Thomas Capital Improvement Fund to the Department of Property and 13 Procurement to purchase Plot Nos. 53A, 53B, 54A & 54B Kronprindsens Gade, Crown Prince 14 Quarter, Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, as authorized in Section 1. 15 **BILL SUMMARY** 16 This bill appropriates the sum of \$2,500,000 for the purchase of Plot Nos. 53A, 53B, 54A

17 & 54B Kronprindsens Gade, Crown Prince Quarter, Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin 18 Islands, by and between the Government of the Virgin Islands, acting through its Department 19 of Property and Procurement, and Conroy H. Watt and Kenneth I. Sweeney on behalf of the 20 Department of Labor.

21 BR23-0872/November 13, 2023/HLF