

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,
VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

05/10/2023-REPORTED OUT TO THE FLOOR

04/25/2023-AMENDED AND REPORTED OUT TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND JUDICIARY

BILL NO. 35-0016

Thirty-Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

February 15, 2023

A Resolution honoring and commending the Board of Elections; the Supervisor of Elections, Caroline Fawkes; and the entire Virgin Islands Elections System team for their tireless service and contributions to the Virgin Islands community on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the establishment of the Virgin Islands Elections System

PROPOSED BY: Senators Angel L. Bolques, Jr., Carla J. Joseph,
and Marvin A. Blyden
Co-sponsors: Ray Fonseca, Novelle E. Francis, Jr.,
Marise C. James and Samuel Carrión

1 **WHEREAS**, 2023 is the 60th Anniversary of the Virgin Islands Elections System
2 (“Elections System”) established in title 18 of the Virgin Islands Code by Act No. 936 on
3 February 20, 1963; and

4 **WHEREAS**, prior to the extensive revisions embodied in title 18 of the Virgin Islands
5 Code, the Elections System came under the auspices of the Colonial Council and, thereafter,
6 the Municipal Court of the Virgin Islands; and

7 **WHEREAS**, throughout its history, title 18 was subsequently amended multiple acts,
8 which ultimately established the Elections System as an autonomous agency of the Virgin
9 Islands Government, managed by the Office of the Supervisor of Elections and governed by an

1 elected Board of Elections thereby ensuring greater autonomy, administrative structure, and
2 integrity; and

3 **WHEREAS**, this structure provided the framework upon which the integrity and
4 confidence in the Elections System has continued to grow; and

5 **WHEREAS**, 60 years later, the Elections System remains a time honored and vital part
6 of the local government and serves as the foundation and the guardian of our democracy; and

7 **WHEREAS**, the Office of the Supervisor of Elections and the Board of Elections work
8 collaboratively to conduct free, fair, accessible, secure and transparent elections; and

9 **WHEREAS**, an essential component of their joint mission is the education of the
10 electorate through community outreach education and workshops; and

11 **WHEREAS**, the steadfast adherence to this mission has enhanced understanding and
12 appreciation of the voting process and has dramatically increased voter registration and turnout;
13 and

14 **WHEREAS**, as the Elections System evolves, the Board of Elections and the Supervisor
15 of Elections, and the administrative staff continues to strive to improve the voting process
16 through community outreach, education, and the employment of new and more efficient
17 technology; and

18 **WHEREAS**, the public perception of the voting process depends largely on the voters'
19 experience at the polls, and the loyal team of poll workers who play a vital role in assisting
20 voters to seamlessly navigate new innovative voting technology should be lauded; and

21 **WHEREAS**, the success of these combined efforts has been demonstrated by increased
22 public confidence; and

23 **WHEREAS**, the advent of early voting in concert with the initiation of new and more
24 efficient voting technology has doubled voter participation since their implementation; and

