

*Testimony of
Vincent Richards*

*Assistant Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement
On behalf of*

*Lisa M. Alejandro
Commissioner of the Department of Property & Procurement*

On

*Lease Agreement between the Department of Property and Procurement on behalf of the
Government of the Virgin Islands and **St. John Taxi Services Corporation***

Before

Committee on Budget, Appropriations, and Finance

Wednesday, June 18, 2025

***Cleone H. Creque Legislative Conference Room
ST. JOHN, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS***

Good Evening, Committee Chair Novelle E. Francis, Jr., Vice-Chair Marvin E. Blyden, Committee members – Honorable Senators, Kurt A. Vialet, Dwayne M. DeGraff, Ray Fonseca, Hubert L. Frederick, and Marise C. James, Non-Committee members, Central and Legislative Staff, fellow testifiers, visitors present in the chambers, and members of the viewing and listening audience.

I am Vincent Richards, Assistant Commissioner of the Virgin Islands Department of Property and Procurement (“DPP”). I am testifying today on behalf of Commissioner, Lisa M. Alejandro, to offer testimony on the proposed Lease Agreement for the St. John District which is before this Committee for consideration. Today, DPP requests this Committee’s, and ultimately the full Senate’s approval of the Lease Agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands (“GVI”) and St. John Taxi Services Corporation (*hereafter* “*St. John Taxi*”) (*Bill No. 36-0092*).

This Lease Agreement requires legislative approval in accordance with 31 V.I.C. § 205(c). The term will commence on the first (1st) day of the month following the approval of the Governor and Legislature of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

As the premises owner, DPP will be required to execute all permits and licenses required for the premises. This Lessee has provided the required documentation to support the processing of their respective Lease Agreement with the Government including but not limited to their respective Non-Profit Letter – 501(c)(3) and Certificate of Good Standing.

I. Bill No. 36-0092 (St. John Taxi)

The Lease Agreement between the GVI and St. John Taxi Services Corporation is for Parcel No. D-2 Estate Cruz Bay Town, Cruz Bay Quarter, St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands, consisting of 2,700 U.S. sq. ft. or 0.062 U.S. acre(s) of land more-or-less. The property will be used to operate a taxi stand for other related purposes.

The term of this Lease Agreement is for twenty (20) years, and the agreement provides for an option to renewal for two (2) additional terms of five (5) years each. The annual rent for the above-referenced parcel will be **Nine Thousand Six Hundred Dollars and Zero Cents (\$9,600.00)**, payable at **Eight Hundred Dollars and Zero Cents (\$800.00)** during the first two (2) years of the term of this Lease. Lessee shall be required to pay Lessor, the adjusted annual rent amount of \$12,000.00 for the third (3rd) and fourth (4th) year of this Lease, \$14,400.00 for the fifth (5th) year and sixth (6th) year of this Lease. The rent payable under this Lease shall be adjusted after the sixth (6th) year of the Initial Term and every year thereafter, including any renewal term, in accordance with the increase of the CPI in accordance with the Consumer Price Index (“CPI”) increase established by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. This Lease Agreement requires a minimum of One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00) for all limits of general liability coverage.

This proposed Lease Agreement will allow the current tenant to repurpose and significantly rehabilitate this property in the St. John District of the United States Virgin Islands. The property will be returned to the GVI at the end of the lease terms in improved condition.

DPP and Commissioner Lisa M. Alejandro seek tenants committed to establishing long-term tenancy and remaining current in all governmental obligations. DPP respectfully requests that the Committee on Budget, Appropriations, and Finance vote in favor of this proposed Lease Agreement.

If approved, this Lease Agreement will assist the tenant to execute a plan for its expansion and improved operations. It will also contribute to the ongoing growth of the United States Virgin Islands and the long-term stability and expansion of our economy.

This concludes my Testimony, and I am prepared to answer any questions the Committee may have on the referenced Lease Agreement. Thank You.