

May 19, 2025

Honorable Novelle E. Francis, Jr.
Chairman
Committee on Budget, Appropriations and Finance
36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands
Earle B. Ottley Legislative Hall
Capitol Building
Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00804

Good morning, Honorable Chairman Novelle E. Francis, Jr., members of the 36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands Finance Committee, and the listening audience. Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony in support of the proposed 20-year lease agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands and the St. John Taxi Services Corporation (hereinafter referred to as "*the Association*"). This lease would authorize the continued operation and management of the St. John Taxi Stand, located on Parcel No. D-2, Estate Cruz Bay Town Quarter, U.S. Virgin Islands.

My name is Sean L. Claxton, and I am submitting this statement on behalf of the St. John Taxi Services Corporation in my capacity as President. Accompanying me to the chambers are Mr. Kenneth Louis, Treasurer, and Mrs. Jermaine Dore-Halliday, Acting Secretary.

We are a longstanding organization dedicated to providing safe, professional, and efficient transportation services across the island. The Association is comprised of 30 licensed, experienced drivers who live and work in this community and are deeply committed to its continued growth and well-being.

The St. John Taxi Services Corporation was officially re-established in 2021 to unify and advocate for the taxi operators of St. John under a formal organizational structure. Prior to this, taxi operations on the island were coordinated through a mutual understanding

among licensed drivers, who upheld the long-standing standards and regulations of the previous association.

This spirit of cooperation kept essential transportation services running despite the absence of formal governance. Since re-establishment, the Association has taken active steps to stabilize and improve its operations. In September 2024, we successfully secured a one-year lease for the taxi stand, which marked a critical milestone in our efforts to formalize our presence and more effectively advocate for both drivers and the wider community.

Today, we continue to serve as the island's primary organized transportation network, supporting both the daily needs of residents and the demands of our vital tourism industry. Our members take pride in delivering courteous and dependable service, and the Association has maintained a strong reputation among the traveling public. The Association is not only a transportation provider; it is a cornerstone of the local economy and a key player in the visitor experience on St. John.

A 20-year lease would enable the Association to invest in upgrades to the taxi stand infrastructure, including enhancements to passenger waiting areas, signage, safety systems, and dispatch operations. With security of tenure, we are in a strong position to pursue modernization initiatives and make long-term capital improvements that enhance both the efficiency of service and the experience of the traveling public.

The taxi stand directly supports the livelihoods of dozens of licensed drivers and their families. A long-term lease would ensure job stability, support small business continuity, and create opportunities for growth. As a cooperative body, the Association also provides a structure for self-regulation, dispute resolution, and peer accountability, ensuring high operational standards across the board.

The St. John Taxi Services Corporation plays a vital role in the Virgin Islands' tourism industry. Our drivers are often the first point of contact for visitors arriving on the island, and we proudly embrace our responsibility as ambassadors of the Virgin Islands. In addition to daily transportation services, we actively partner with the Virgin Islands National Park to support major community and recreational events. We also provide transportation for other significant local activities, including the "8 Tuff Miles" road race and the annual Power Swim." These partnerships demonstrate our ongoing commitment to supporting the cultural, recreational, and community life of the island.

The Association has a strong history of giving back to the St. John community. We have made donations to local schools and churches, recognizing their essential role in education and community support. We offer discounted transportation services for students and provide free transportation for senior citizens participating in social and wellness activities.

In addition, the St. John Taxi Services Corporation allows community use of the taxi stand and the adjacent band stand for public events, cultural gatherings, and community activities. These spaces serve as central and accessible locations for the island's residents to come together, host events, and celebrate local traditions. Our willingness to share this space reflects our commitment to being a true partner in community development.

The St. John Taxi Services Corporation is a registered nonprofit organization. Our mission is to serve the people and visitors of St. John; not to generate profit, but to provide reliable and accessible transportation through collective effort. All income is allocated to the management and maintenance of the taxi stand, in addition to administrative support, equipment upkeep, and member services.

Our operational expenses and revenues currently cover an 8-month period from September 2024 to April 2025. These figures reflect our financial activity during this period, and we anticipate that on an annual basis, expenses and revenues will scale proportionally as the Association continues to stabilize and grow.

Appendices A and B provide a detailed breakdown of our operational expenses and revenue for the past eight months, demonstrating our nonprofit status and financial responsibility.

A 20-year lease will give the Association the stability it needs to plan and grow effectively. Long-term planning requires a stable foundation, particularly in areas such as investment, partnerships, and regulatory compliance. This lease is not only an investment in the Association but an investment in dependable, community rooted transportation for St. John.

We respectfully urge the Senate to approve this 20-year lease for the St. John Taxi Stand. The St. John Taxi Services Corporation has a proven history of responsible service, civic engagement, and economic contribution. A long-term lease will allow us to continue serving the island with pride, stability, and the forward-looking vision our community deserves.

Thank you, Senators, for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Sean Claxton
President of St. John
Taxi Association, Inc.

Appendix A: Monthly Operational Expenses (September 2024 – April 2025)

Month	Total Expenses
September 2024	\$12,464.10
October 2024	\$3,930.17
November 2024	\$3,030.80
December 2024	\$6,750.16
January 2025	\$6,311.88
February 2025	\$4,993.82
March 2025	\$4,214.25
April 2025	\$3,763.26
Total	\$45,458.44

Appendix B: Monthly Revenue Collected (September 2024 – April 2025)

Month	Total Revenue
September 2024	\$2,835.00
October 2024	\$4,110.00
November 2024	\$4,400.00
December 2024	\$5,370.00
January 2025	\$5,990.00
February 2025	\$5,180.00
March 2025	\$5,900.00
April 2025	\$5,310.00
Total	\$39,095.00