

November 3, 2025

Mr. Angel Bolques Jr.
Senator at Large
36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands

Dear Senator Bolques:

(Please see testimony below)

Greetings to the Honorable Senator Novelle E. Francis Jr., Chairman of the Committee on Budget, Appropriations and Finance and to the rest of the committee Senators as well as the viewing and listening public.

I am Mervin Smith, President of the East End Taxi Association. It is an honor to be able to testify on bill #36-0092, an act to appropriate the sum of four hundred thousand dollars (\$400,000) from the Tourism advertising revolving fund, to the Virgin Islands Taxicab Commission, for the implementation of technological upgrades.

I stand in full support of this bill, not because I am a Taxi Operator, but because it is necessary. Currently, we are living in a technological world and the Taxi industry is the front line of the United States Virgin Islands Tourism Industry. Previously, the committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, Consumer Protection, all voted unanimously on Bill #36-0148, an act that states; all taxi operators must have two (2) forms of electronic payments. Therefore, why not have the very same institution that governs the Taxi industry, become technically strong? This is a necessary upgrade for the Taxi Cab Commission, by providing better service, making the office operations run more efficient and effective, and by minimizing the use of paperwork.

A special thanks to bill sponsor Senator Angel Bolques Jr.

I ask for all Committee Senators, to support this bill.

In closing, I would ask this 36th Legislature body to further help the Taxi Cab Commission by bringing forth attachments/amendments to Title 20 of the Virgin Islands Code 401 Subchapter 1, Chapter 37 items (F) and (H).

Increasing the fine from \$50 to \$500 first offense. \$500 for second offense, and \$1000 thereafter. Also, the removal of item (H) and place Jeep Tours along with Limousine operators back under the preview of the Taxicab Commission. Having these measures in place, I can guarantee, the Taxicab Commission will have no need to visit this institution to request any additional funding.

I thank you for affording me this opportunity to testify on this bill.

Sincerely,

Mervin Smith
President
East End Taxi Association

