

November 4, 2025

Good morning Honorable Senator Novelle Francis, members of the Budget, Appropriations and Finance Committee, other Senators of the 36th Legislature present, all others present and to those of you viewing and listening.

I am Carmen Wesselhoft-Hedrington an independent Taxi driver on St. John.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on bill number 36-0092, A Lease Agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands, acting through the Department of Property Procurement and St. John Taxi Services Corporation. To Lease Parcel No. D-2 Estate Cruz Bay Town Quarter, U.S. Virgin Islands, consisting of approximately 2700 U.S. sq. ft. or 0.062 U.S. acres of land zoned W- The property will be used to operate a taxi stand and other related services.

I stand behind my original testimony, which was read in my absence at your committee meeting held on St. John June 18, 2025.

I am the voice of the fifty plus people whose signature is on the signed petition, which was submitted to you. This signed petition represents the signatures of all who vehemently opposed this body giving a lease, let alone a lease for twenty years, to any entity for this public Taxi stand.

The Cruz Bay taxi stand is a public taxi stand, which was a law created by former Senator Cleone Creque Maynard back in 1980. Senator Maynard created this bill so that no St. John taxi operator would be disenfranchised but we are all given an equal opportunity to operate fairly and equally without fear of bullying, personal vendettas, or personality conflicts.

This public Taxi Stand should not be leased period.

The Cruz Bay Ferry Terminal is the Gateway to St. John. Unlike St. Thomas, this is the only port of entrance for Taxi operators to work from. St. Thomas you can work

at the airport, Crown Bay Terminal, Blyden Terminal, Urman Fredericks Terminal (Red Hook), West Indies Company /Haven sight, Magens Bay, Coki Point, at a hotel and the list goes on.

Nevertheless, the Cruz Bay Taxi stand, or the Virgin Islands National Park are the only two areas of operation for taxi drivers. We are unique and limited.

St. John is too small and limited in choices to operate from to give one group a lease and a lease for twenty-years.

Respectfully Submitted

Independent Taxi Ambassadors of St. John

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