



**Government of the Virgin Islands  
of the United States of America  
Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs**

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**Richard T. Evangelista, Esq.**  
Commissioner

**Testimony  
Before the  
35<sup>th</sup> Legislature of the Virgin Islands**

**Javan E. James, Chair  
Committee on Economic Development & Agriculture**

**To provide an update on the Implementation of Act 8680, etc.**

**March 8, 2023**

*"Serving Businesses & Assisting, Educating and Protecting Consumers"*

Good Day Honorable Senator Javan James, Committee Chair, Committee on Economic Development & Agriculture, 35<sup>th</sup> Legislature of the Virgin Islands, committee senators present, non-committee senators present, and the listening and viewing audience.

My name is Richard Tomas Evangelista, Commissioner for the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs (hereinafter referred to as “DLCA”). Today, I am before this body to testify with the following persons: Dr. Catherine Kean, M.D., Chair Cannabis Advisory Board via a prior submitted written testimony and Mrs. Hannah Carty, Executive Director of the Office of Cannabis Regulation.

Thank you for providing DLCA with the opportunity to testify before the 35th Legislature on the following items:

1. Implementation of Act 8680
2. Status update on the necessary personnel to carry out the duties of the Office of Cannabis Regulations
3. Path moving forward for the implementation of the medicinal and adult recreational cannabis industry
4. Discussion on the licensing procedures for the cannabis industry.

### **Implementation of Act 8680**

On January 18, 2023, pursuant to Act No. 8680, Title 19 of the Virgin Islands Code, Section 777 (a), the Office of Cannabis Regulation (“OCR”) became an official part of the DLCA. Prior to Act No. 8680, the OCR commenced operation on January 03, 2022, pursuant to Act No. 8167.

Currently, the DLCA business office provides the OCR with administrative support. Specifically, DLCA assists with everything from office space to finance to human resources and everything in between. Executive Director Carty shall provide greater detail in her testimony.

Director Carty and I have a standing weekly meeting to address any issues and/or concerns that arise and to keep each other abreast of ongoing developments with the OCR. The DLCA is and shall continuously assist the OCR to ensure the success of the cannabis industry in the United States Virgin Islands. Executive Director Carty will provide you a full update on what the OCR has been doing thus far and where it plans to go.

This concludes my testimony today and I remain available for questioning at the appropriate time.