

BILL NO. 35-0257

Thirty-Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

April 10, 2024

An Act to develop and produce an annual U.S. Virgin Islands Beer, Wine, and Spirits Festival

PROPOSED BY: Senator Diane T. Capehart

1 **WHEREAS**, beer, wine, and spirits festivals represent the largest gathering of alcoholic
2 beverages to promote collections of beverages;

3 **WHEREAS**, through public tasting events coupled with private competition activities,
4 these events draw large crowds to regions all over the world;

5 **WHEREAS**, festivals, in general, bring communities together, foster local and national
6 pride, and celebrate diversity;

7 **WHEREAS**, beer, wine, and spirits festivals generate significant economic growth for
8 small and large businesses alike, tourism and other sectors, including hotels, restaurants,
9 transportation services, and clothing stores, increasing the gross domestic product of the
10 destination;

11 **WHEREAS**, in 2019, festivals attracted an audience of over 896,000;

12 **WHEREAS**, the average festival enthusiast attends 2.7 festivals per year;

13 **WHEREAS**, in 2014, 32 million people attended at least one United States music
14 festival;

1 **WHEREAS**, beer, wine, and spirits festivals contribute to the growth and development
2 of the destination's local music industry;

3 **WHEREAS**, beer, wine, and spirits festivals have proven to be an effective and impactful
4 tool for promoting tourism and attracting visitors to travel to destinations worldwide;

5 **WHEREAS**, beer, wine, and spirits festivals provide a platform for local artists to
6 showcase their talents and gain exposure, providing them with significant marketing and
7 promotional opportunities;

8 **WHEREAS**, beer, wine, and spirits festivals have the potential to place the Virgin Islands
9 on the global stage;

10 **WHEREAS**, the success of previous festivals in the Virgin Islands such as the St. Croix
11 Jazz Festival and Sinbad's Soul Beer, Wine, and Spirits Festival demonstrated the potential for
12 a larger-scale, official beer, wine, and spirits festival;

13 **WHEREAS**, the Virgin Islands has a rich culture expressed through our vibrant local
14 music scene, worthy of being showcased and celebrated through festivals that promote large
15 gatherings;

16 **WHEREAS**, the Virgin Islands can benefit from the economic impact of a beer, wine,
17 and spirits festival, which can generate significant revenue for local businesses, including
18 hotels, restaurants, transportation services, and retail establishments;

19 **WHEREAS**, several Caribbean destinations that compete with the Virgin Islands for
20 visitor arrivals have developed large-scale gathering opportunities such as beer, wine, and
21 spirits festivals, food festivals, and major entertainment concerts, and the territory is without
22 such a powerful economic driver;

23 **WHEREAS**, the absence of a major beer, wine, and spirits festival in the Virgin Islands
24 puts the destination at a disadvantage compared to other jurisdictions and Caribbean
25 destinations;

