

**BILL NO. 35-0016**

**Thirty-Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands**

**February 15, 2023**

A Resolution honoring and commending the Board of Elections; the Supervisor of Elections, Caroline Fawkes, and the entire Virgin Islands Election System team for their tireless service and contributions to the Virgin Islands community and on the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the establishment of the Election System of the Virgin Islands

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**PROPOSED BY:** Senators Angel L. Bolques, Jr. and Carla J. Joseph  
Co-sponsors: Ray Fonseca, Novelle E. Francis, Jr.,  
and Marise C. James

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1       **WHEREAS**, 2023 is the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Virgin Islands Election System  
2       (“Election System”) established in title 18 of the Virgin Islands Code by Act No. 936 on  
3       February 20, 1963; and

4       **WHEREAS**, prior to the extensive revisions embodied in title 18 of the Virgin Islands  
5       Code, the Election System came under the auspices of the Colonial Council and, thereafter, the  
6       Municipal Court of the Virgin Islands; and

7       **WHEREAS**, throughout its history, title 18 was subsequently amended multiple acts,  
8       which ultimately established the Election System as an autonomous agency of the Virgin  
9       Islands Government, managed by the Office of the Supervisor of Elections and governed by an  
10      elected Board of Elections thereby ensuring greater autonomy, administrative structure, and  
11      integrity; and

1           **WHEREAS**, this structure provided the framework upon which the integrity and  
2 confidence in the Election System has continued to grow; and

3           **WHEREAS**, sixty years later, the Election System remains a time honored and vital part  
4 of the local government and serves as the foundation and the guardian of our democracy; and

5           **WHEREAS**, the Office of the Supervisor of Elections and the Board of Elections work  
6 collaboratively to conduct free, fair, accessible, secure and transparent elections; and

7           **WHEREAS**, an essential component of their joint mission is the education of the  
8 electorate through community outreach education and workshops; and

9           **WHEREAS**, the steadfast adherence to this mission has enhanced understanding and  
10 appreciation of the voting process and has dramatically increased voter registration and turnout;  
11 and

12           **WHEREAS**, as the Election System evolves, the Board of Elections and the Supervisor  
13 of Elections, and the administrative staff continues to strive to improve the voting process  
14 through community outreach, education, and the employment of new and more efficient  
15 technology; and

16           **WHEREAS**, the public perception of the voting process depends largely on the voters'  
17 experience at the polls, and the loyal team of poll workers who play a vital role in assisting  
18 voters to seamlessly navigate new innovative voting technology should be lauded; and

19           **WHEREAS**, the success of these combined efforts has been demonstrated by increased  
20 public confidence; and

21           **WHEREAS**, the advent of early voting in concert with the initiation of new and more  
22 efficient voting technology has doubled voter participation since their implementation; and

23           **WHEREAS**, it is fitting and proper to bestow official recognition upon the Board of  
24 Elections, the Supervisor of Elections, Caroline Fawkes, and the staff of the Election System  
25 who has continued the growth of the election system; and

1       **WHEREAS**, the Election System of the Virgin Islands is wholeheartedly committed to  
2   the ideology expressed simply but profoundly by former President Barack Obama: “There is  
3   no such thing as a vote that doesn’t matter. It all matters.”; Now, Therefore,

4   ***Be it resolved by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:***

5       **SECTION 1.** The Legislature of the Virgin Islands, on behalf of the people of the Virgin  
6   Islands, honors and commends the Board of Elections, the Supervisor of Elections, Caroline  
7   Fawkes, and the entire Virgin Islands Election System team, past and present, for their tireless  
8   service as the Election System commemorates the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Diamond Jubilee  
9   Celebration of the establishment of the Election System: “Thriving with Integrity, Elections  
10   System Celebrates Sixty”.

11       **SECTION 2.** The President of the Legislature, or the President’s designee, shall have a  
12   perma plaque copy of this Resolution prepared and presented to Caroline Fawkes, the  
13   Supervisor of Elections, at an appropriate ceremony.

14                                       **BILL SUMMARY**

15       This resolution honors and commends the Board of Elections; the Supervisor of  
16   Elections, Caroline Fawkes, and the entire Virgin Islands Election System team, past and  
17   present, for their tireless service and contributions to the Virgin Islands community on the  
18   occasion of the celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Diamond Jubilee.

19   **BR23-0248/January 30, 2023/GC**