

## **Testimony of Claudette Georges on Bill Number 35-0016**

Good morning Honorable Chairwoman Carla Joseph and members of the Committee on Government Operations, Veteran Affairs and Consumer Protection, and the listening and viewing audiences. My name is Claudette Georges and I was elected to serve on the Virgin Islands Board of Elections, St. Thomas/St. John District. I served the people of the Virgin Islands for two terms (from 2007 to 2014). In general, it was truly a pleasure to serve the people of the Virgin Islands in my capacity as a board member. This morning, I come before you to share some of my experiences as a board member and state why I would encourage this honorable body to vote in favor of Bill Number 35-0016.

During the 2006 Election, I ran for the Board of Elections – St. Thomas/St. John District. I participated in the election process as a Democratic Candidate. I had to first win the primary election and, then, win the general election. I decided to actually campaign for the position by putting up signs and posters, advertising in the media, distributing pamphlets, attending social events and speaking at public forums and schools. Upon my success in this endeavor, I was introduced to my fellow board members of the St. Thomas/St. John District and I was “baptized by the Robert’s Rules of Order by Rapid Fire” at the 1st meeting. Bear in mind, I have served in several community organizations of which they follow the Robert’s Rules of Order.

However, I never dreamed to experience Robert's Rule moving faster than a "flash of lightening." Everything was correct and in order. Thank God I was not lost but I decided to always be prepared at the "rapid fire level" concerning my knowledge on Robert's Rules of Order.

As a board member I have held several positions at the District and Joint Board levels. Just to name a few, I served as the Joint Board Vice Chair and Joint Board Secretary. On May 21, 2011, as Acting Chair of the Joint Board (Joint Board Chair Rupert Ross was out of the Territory on official business), I testified on the bill to restore the right of any felon to vote after they served out their sentence, completed their parole, probation or restitution payments. This was an invitation from the Committee on Public Safety, Homeland Security and Justice. All the Joint Board Members were in favor of seeing this bill become law.

At the District level, I served as District Secretary. Also, there were many tasks and duties I performed while serving on the board or used my experience to assist Non-Election Board and Non-Election System activities. I will generalize and summarize some of them. They are as follows:

- a. Provided Absentee Request Forms and ballots to registered detainees who were incarcerated but not sentenced at the St. Thomas/St. John District Bureau of Corrections

- b. Participated in Outreach Voter's Registration Drives
- c. Spoke on Television Shows such as Dr. Ottley's "*Face to Face*" Program and on Radio Programs
- d. Provided Outreach Services to the Shut-ins and Persons in the Hospital  
(The services were voter's registration, provided the Absentee Ballot Request Form and provided their ballot(s)).
- e. Vented, Prepared and Certified Poll Watcher's Certificates for Candidates.
- f. Visited Polling Sites on Election Day
- g. Assisted the Staff in the Prep Process for Election Day in the St. Thomas/St. John District
- h. Vented Voters to ensure they were eligible to vote. (This included reviewing the Provisional Ballots).
- i. Visited schools and organization's functions and spoke on the importance of voting and gave a short Civic 101 Class.
- j. My board experiences offered me an opportunity to provide election setup and election process execution for the Democratic Party –

Presidential Primary in 2016 for both the Districts of St. Thomas/St. John and St. Croix. Please note, this activity had no connection to the Board of Elections and my term on the Board of Elections had ended in 2014. These were a few things I did or experienced.

I am in favor of Bill Number 35-0016. This bill truly honors and commends the past and present Board of Elections Members and the Election System Staff for their gallant, tireless contributions and service as public servants to this community.

Thank you for this opportunity. I am available to answer any questions you may have. Thank, gracias and merci.