

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,
VETERANS AFFAIRS AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

BILL NO. 35-0116

Thirty-Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

August 22, 2023

A Resolution honoring and commending Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Gerard Galiber for his leadership in the Virgin Islands National Guard and his dedication to his country and to the people of the Virgin Islands

PROPOSED BY: Senator Novelle E. Francis, Jr.

1 **WHEREAS**, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Gerard Galiber was born on September 16th
2 1932, on the island of St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, the youngest of eight children born to Henry
3 Galiber—a master cricket player, First Class Petty Officer with the US Navy, and a Supervisor
4 of Sanitation for the Virgin Islands Public Works Department—and Adele Louise Lanclos
5 Galiber—beloved pianist, music teacher, and Supervisor of Music for Virgin Islands Public
6 Schools; and

7 **WHEREAS**, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber attended Saints Peter and Paul Catholic
8 School from the first through the twelfth grades and graduated in June of 1951. In high school,
9 he was a member of the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) which laid the foundation for
10 his interest in serving in the military. He grew up in Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin
11 Islands with his five older siblings: Flavius, Rudolph, Doris, Norma, and Andre and many

1 childhood friends including his cousin Victor Lanclos, and friends Gilbert Henry, Richard
2 Callwood, and Larry Richardo; and

3 **WHEREAS**, as a child, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber loved animals and spent a lot
4 of time taking care of and playing with his dog, *Zurich* and cat, *Swasty*. He spent his free time
5 building model airplanes and toy sail boats and during elementary school, he worked a
6 newspaper route with the Daily News. While on his paper route, he spent time collecting the
7 seeds of flamboyant trees, that were later aerial flown by a private citizen to populate the island
8 more densely with beautiful trees; and

9 **WHEREAS**, to support the efforts of World War II, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber
10 collected lead linings from cigarette boxes and was a telegrapher at the local cable office for
11 his last two years of high school; and

12 **WHEREAS**, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber attended St. John's University,
13 Teachers College, in Brooklyn New York, and then Howard University School of Engineering
14 and Architecture, in Washington D.C. where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in civil
15 engineering in July of 1958; and

16 **WHEREAS**, in July of 1958, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber was commissioned as
17 a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army with a specialty in air defense artillery. In February of
18 1959, he entered into active-duty service and served as the Integrated Fire Control (IFC)
19 Platoon Leader of two Nike (surface-to-air missile) sites in the Chicago, Illinois and Gary,
20 Indiana areas, and one at Thule Air Force Base in Greenland; and

21 **WHEREAS**, during his service as Platoon Leader, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber
22 trained Illinois National Guard personnel to operate the IFC section of the Nike Ajax Missile
23 site, led the re-training of active-duty personnel for the Nike missile site, and was the Battery

1 Control Officer of "A" Battery at Thule AFB at the time President John F. Kennedy was
2 announcing the quarantine of Cuba in October of 1962; and

3 **WHEREAS**, beginning in November of 1962, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber served
4 as the intelligence and security officer of a Nike battalion in Gary, Indiana and then a battalion
5 at Fort Clayton in the Panama Canal Zone. In July of 1966, while in the Panama Canal Zone,
6 he was detailed to the Corps of Engineers and re-stationed to Fort Stewart, Georgia to assist
7 with the formation and training of the 34th Engineer Construction Battalion. There he was
8 assigned as the Construction Officer of that battalion and deployed as its troop commander to
9 Bien Hoa, Vietnam in April of 1967; and

10 **WHEREAS**, during his first tour in Vietnam, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber was
11 sent from U.S. Army Vietnam (USARV) Headquarters at Long Binh to the I Corps Tactical
12 Zone, composed of the five northernmost provinces, during the Tet Offensive, to assist the
13 Navy with restoration and maintenance of utility systems at Da Nang Air Force Base and
14 Evacuation Hospital at My Khe Beach. During that tour he received the Bronze Star Medal for
15 meritorious achievement or service in a combat zone; and

16 **WHEREAS**, having been promoted to the rank of Major during the period of movement
17 to Vietnam, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber was reassigned to the US Army Engineer
18 Command in Vietnam, as the project officer for the construction of the headquarters building
19 in Long Binh. Upon completion of that project he was assigned as the utility officer in the
20 Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics at Headquarters, U.S. Army Vietnam. During
21 that tour, he requested and received a permanent branch transfer from Air Defense Artillery to
22 the Corps of Engineers; and

23 **WHEREAS**, upon his return to the continental United States in April of 1968, Lieutenant
24 Colonel Leayle Galiber was assigned as one of two Assistant Army Engineers at Headquarters,
25 First U.S. Army, Fort Meade, Maryland where he was detailed to be the engineer evaluator of

1 a West Virginia Army National Guard construction battalion, became a member of a Sentinel-
2 Sprint (anti-ballistic missile) Site selection team, and was detailed to serve as the Military Aid
3 to the ninth civilian Governor of the Virgin Islands, Ralph M. Paiewonsky, during the week of
4 Richard M. Nixon's first Presidential inauguration; and

5 **WHEREAS**, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber returned to Vietnam in June of 1971
6 where he was assigned as the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) Engineer
7 Advisor to the Vietnamese Military Property Construction Officer (MPCO) in Da Nang and,
8 concurrently, the MPCO in Hue; and

9 **WHEREAS**, during his second tour in Vietnam, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber
10 received the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Honor Medal, 1st Class, for his support of the
11 Vietnamese recovery from the effects of a typhoon that struck three of the five provinces in
12 September of 1971. He was detailed to assist and advise the 10th Army of the Republic of
13 Vietnam (ARVN) Combat Engineer Group in the counter-offensive to the "Easter Offensive of
14 1972" in Quang Tri Province, and he received a second Bronze Star Medal for support of the
15 MPCOs throughout the year and the ARVN combat engineer battalion. In this capacity he
16 conducted several top-secret missions behind the North Vietnam enemy lines to facilitate U.S.
17 troop movement into enemy territory; and

18 **WHEREAS**, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber returned to the continental United States
19 in July of 1972 and was assigned as Chief of the Combat Engineering Instructor Section of the
20 Engineering School at Fort Belvoir, Virginia; and

21 **WHEREAS**, in January of 1973, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber was detailed to
22 serve as the Military Aide to the first elected governor of the Virgin Islands, Melvin H. Evans,
23 during the week of President Nixon's Second Inauguration; and

24 **WHEREAS**, in April of 1973, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber was reassigned as the
25 Assistant to the Commander at Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico, for National Guard Affairs with

1 the specific mission of assisting the Virgin Islands territory to achieve federal recognition of
2 the Army National Guard units; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber was instrumental in guiding the
4 organization of the Virgin Islands National Guard in 1973. He was mission-oriented and looked
5 at the big picture knowing that establishment of the National Guard in the Virgin Islands would
6 benefit the territory because it would empower the Governor to activate the Virgin Islands
7 National Guard during a territorial emergency or a natural disaster; and

8 **WHEREAS**, by an Act of Congress, sponsored by U.S. House Representative Ronald de
9 Lugo, the territory's first delegate to the U.S. Congress, the Virgin Islands National Guard was
10 federally recognized on October 19, 1973. In a ceremony officiated by Major General La Vern
11 E. Weber, Director of the United States Army National Guard, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle
12 Galiber was appointed acting Adjutant General and took command of the first two units to be
13 activated, a Headquarters Detachment and the 661st Military Police Company, both on St.
14 Croix. He was permanently assigned as the U. S. Property and Fiscal Officer (USPFO) for the
15 Virgin Islands National Guard, and temporarily as Acting Adjutant General, pending the
16 confirmation of Adjutant General Gerard Luz James; and

17 **WHEREAS**, in February of 1974 the Virgin Islands National Guard saw the formation
18 of the 662nd Military Police Company on St. Thomas. In October of 1974, the 666th Army
19 Band was established on St. Croix. In November of 1974, the Virgin Islands National Guard
20 received its first call to territorial active duty by the first elected governor of the Virgin Islands,
21 Melvin H. Evans, when torrential rains resulted in widespread flooding throughout the islands;
22 and

23 **WHEREAS**, by September of 1976, the Virgin Islands National Guard doubled in
24 strength and the first reorganization occurred. The Guard expanded its force with the 666th
25 Army Band and the 666th Military Police Battalion on St. Thomas. The newly structured

1 Combat Service Support organization was subordinate to the Headquarters and Headquarters
2 Detachment; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber was reassigned to Headquarters, US
4 Army Garrison, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland in September 1975, where he served as Chief
5 of the Housing Division, Directorate of Industrial Operations; and

6 **WHEREAS**, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber met Kirsten Anderson, fell in love, and
7 married her on December 7, 1975, in Christiansted, St. Croix. They had two children, Leayle
8 Jr., born on September 13, 1976, and John, born on November 13, 1978; and

9 **WHEREAS**, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber retired from active duty in March of
10 1979, at Fort Meade having progressed in rank from Second Lieutenant in 1958, to First
11 Lieutenant in 1960, to Captain in 1963, to Major in 1967, and finally to Lieutenant Colonel on
12 January 1, 1974. Upon retiring from active duty, he was selected to be the Installation Master
13 Planner in the Directorate of Engineering and Housing at Fort Meade, until he retired from
14 Civil Service in January of 2003; and

15 **WHEREAS**, during his expansive military career, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Galiber
16 received invaluable assistance and could not have achieved all of his success without the
17 USPFPO of the Georgia National Guard, Major Poulson, Chief Warrant Officer Four Jackson,
18 Army Military Police enlisted advisor Staff Sergeant Watkins and several members of the
19 former U.S. Army Reserve unit on St. Croix; and

20 **WHEREAS**, Lieutenant Colonel Leayle Gerard Galiber, the youngest of 8 children, is
21 proud to boast that several of his siblings and nieces and nephews have also served their country
22 and their territory, giving their time and expertise to the military, the V.I. Government, and the
23 people of the Virgin Islands; and

