



December 15, 2023

VIA E-MAIL

Honorable Carla J. Joseph
Senator, 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands
Chair, Committee on Government Operations,
Veteran Affairs, and Consumer Protection
Capital Building
P.O. 1690
St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands 00804
senatorcarlajoseph@legvi.org

Dear Senator Joseph:

I am in receipt of your invitation to provide testimony regarding Bill No. 35-0058-An Act amending title 29 Virgin Islands Code, by adding a chapter 25 to enact "The Public-Private Partnership Agreement Act". Unfortunately, I am unavailable to testify and must respectfully decline this invitation.

I, along with the President of J. Benton Construction, LLC, James Benton, generally support the use of public-private partnerships to facilitate the construction and upgrade of public facilities throughout the Territory. We are uniquely aware of the limited and insufficient public resources available to meet the myriad infrastructure needs of our islands and therefore applaud any effort to identify alternative financing mechanisms. Legislation encouraging the use of public-private partnerships while also providing safeguards to protect the integrity of such collaborations is a step in the right direction to identifying resources to support capital projects and other infrastructure needs.

While I have not had the opportunity to fully digest the various aspects of the legislation in detail and am unable to appear to testify on December 18, I lend support to the forward thinking of the sponsor and proponents of the legislation. Thank you for the invitation to testify and for your efforts to improve the quality of life of the residents of the Territory.

Respectfully,

Eric Cusin
Vice-President
J. Benton Construction, LLC