



Legislature Of The Virgin Islands

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THE HONORABLE
Carla J. Joseph
LEGISLATIVE SECRETARY
35TH LEGISLATURE OF
THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

CHAIR

Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs,
and Consumer Protection

*Liaison to the United States Department of Interior and
Office of Insular Affairs*

MEMBER

Committee of the Whole

Committee on Rules and Judiciary


Committee on Education and Workforce Development

Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning

Committee on Housing, Transportation, and Telecommunications

Memorandum: 23-024

TO: Mrs. Kurell A. Sheridan, JD
Executive Director
35th Legislature of the V.I.

FROM: Carla Joseph 
Chair
Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs,
and Consumer Protection

DATE: July 13, 2023

SUBJECT: Committee Report for Wednesday, July 12, 2023 Meeting

Please find attached the report for the Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, and Consumer Protection (GOVACP) meeting held on Wednesday, July 12, 2023 in the Frits E. Lawaetz Conference Room, St. Croix.

Cc: All Senators
Chief Legal Counsel
Archive Division
Journal Division

**GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND CONSUMER PROTECTION
JULY 12, 2023 COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT**

The Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, and Consumer Protection held its meeting on Wednesday, July 12, 2023, at the Frits E. Lawaetz Conference Room on St. Croix. The Committee received testimony and considered the following bills:

- Bill No. 35-0029 - An Act honoring and commending Donna Marie Christian-Christiansen M.D., for her tireless contributions to the people of the Virgin Islands in the medical field and representation in the United States Congress. This bill is sponsored by Senators Novelle E. Francis, Jr., Angel L. Bolques, Jr, Franklin D. Johnson, and Donna Frett-Gregory and co-sponsored by Senator Carla J. Joseph,
- Bill No. 35-0041 - An Act awarding the Virgin Islands Medal of Honor posthumously to former Senator Edgar Milton Iles for his commendable public service and contributions to the people of the Virgin Islands. This bill is sponsored by Senators Kenneth L. Gittens, Franklin Johnson, and Donna Frett-Gregory and co-sponsored by Senator Carla J. Joseph,
- Bill No. 35-0100 - A Resolution honoring and commending Music in Motion School of Higher Dance Education and its founder, Charlita Schuster, on the occasion of the 40th Anniversary of the establishment of the Music in Motion Dance Academy. This bill is sponsored by Senators Samuel Carrion, Angel L. Bolques, Jr. and Donna Frett-Gregory, and
- Bill No. 35-0101 - A Resolution honoring and commending Dr. Olaf “Bronco” Hendricks for his tireless years of remarkable and invaluable contributions to the people of the Virgin Islands in the field of psychiatry, his advocacy for social justice for individuals with behavioral health and substance use issues, and for his music. This bill is sponsored by Senators Franklin Johnson and Donna Frett-Gregory and co-sponsored by Senator Carla J. Joseph.

The meeting was called to order by the Committee Chair, Sen. Carla J. Joseph at 10:02 a.m.

Committee Members Present

Sen. Carla J. Joseph, Chair
Sen. Samuel Carrion
Sen. Ray Fonseca
Sen. Alma Francis Heyliger
Sen. Milton E. Potter
Sen. Kenneth L. Gittens

Committee Members Excused

Sen. Javan E. James, Sr., Vice-Chair

Public Affairs/Media

Mr. Eustace Browne
Mr. Dequan Milliner
Ms. Chaunte Herbert
Mr. Jamal Potter
Mr. Barry Leerdam
Mr. Omari Hicks
Mr. Kashief Hamilton
Mr. Eustace Browne
Mr. Bernard Matthew
Mr. Alwyn Baptiste, Jr.

Non-Committee Members Present

Sen. Novelle E. Francis, Jr.
Sen. Diane T. Capehart
Sen. Franklin D. Johnson

Legislative Reporters

Ms. Joanne Samuel
Ms. Nadine Williams

Sergeant-At-Arms

Ms. Shani Smith
Mr. Annias Jawahir
Mr. David Johnson

Clerk/Timekeeper

Ms. Delekah Callwood

Protocol Officer

Ms. Myrna De-Altier-Pickard

Public Affairs/Media Cont'd.

Mr. Alvin Burke, Jr.
Ms. Melissa Gustave

Legal Counsel

Attorney LaVerne Williams

In block one of the meeting, Bill No. 35-0029 was introduced by Sen. Novelle E. Francis, Jr. The Honorable Justa Encarnacion, Commissioner of the Virgin Islands Department of Health, The Honorable James O'Bryan, Jr., Former Senator, Mrs. Monique Clendinen Watson, Mr. Basil Ottley, Director of Policy of the U.S. Department of Interior, Mrs. Renee McAlpin-Petersen, STX District Chair for the Democratic Party and Dr. Mavis Matthew testified in support of the bill. The Honorable Shawn Michael Malone, Former Senator, and Shelly Thomas testimonies were read into the record. Senators proceeded with one (1) round of four (4) minutes each of questioning. Senator Gittens made a motion for Bill No. 35-0029 to be approved and forwarded to the Rules and Judiciary Committee for further consideration. The motion was seconded by Senators Carrion and Potter. Voting in favor were Senators Carrion, Fonseca, Gittens, Joseph, and Potter. The motion was carried.

In block two of the meeting, Bill No. 35-0041 was introduced by Sen. Kenneth L. Gittens. The Honorable Iver Stridiron, Former Senator, Mrs. Juanita Iles Richards, Ms. Kisha Iles, and Mr. Ray Iles testified in support of the bill. Senators proceeded with one (1) round of four (4) minutes each of questioning. Senator Gittens made a motion for Bill No. 35-0041 to be approved and forwarded to the Rules and Judiciary Committee for further consideration. The motion was seconded by Senators Carrion and Fonseca. Voting in favor were Senators Carrion, Fonseca, Francis Heyliger, Gittens, and Joseph.

In block three of the meeting, Bill No. 35-0100 was introduced by Sen. Samuel Carrion. Ms. Emmanuella Perez Cassius, Afrilasia Joseph-Phipps, and Dr. ChenziRa Davis Kahina testified in support of the bill. Senators proceeded with one (1) round of three (3) minutes each of questioning. Senator Carrion made a motion for Bill No. 35-0100 to be approved and forwarded to the Rules and Judiciary Committee for further consideration. The motion was seconded by Senators Gittens and Fonseca. Voting in favor were Senators Carrion, Fonseca, Francis Heyliger, Gittens, Joseph, and Potter. The motion was carried.

In the final block of the meeting, Bill No. 35-0101 was introduced by Sen Franklin D. Johnson. The Honorable Dr. Donna M. Christian-Christensen, MD, Former Delegate to Congress, Bodil Mason Simmonds, and Kai Hendricks testified in person in support of the measure. Dr. Stanley Jacobs's testimony in support of the bill was read into the record. Senators proceeded with one (1) round of four (4) minutes each of questioning. Senator Carrion made a motion for Bill No. 35-0101 to be approved and forwarded to the Rules and Judiciary Committee for further consideration. The motion was seconded by Senators Fonseca and Francis Heyliger. Voting in favor were Senators Carrion, Fonseca, Francis Heyliger, Gittens, and Potter. The motion was carried.

During the meeting, a request for additional information was made through the chair. The information is as follows:

- Senator Gittens asked Ms. Charlita Schuster to set up a dance challenge against his colleague on St. Thomas.

In the absence of Sen. Carla J. Joseph, Sen. Kenneth L. Gittens adjourned the Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, and Consumer Protection meeting at 5:30 p.m.