

HONORABLE JAMES A. O'BRYAN, JR.

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Chairperson Joseph and other members of the 35th Legislatures' Committee I appear here today in support of Bill 35-0029, the Act honoring Former Virgin Islands Delegate to the United States House of Representatives Donna M. Christian Christiansen as well as a Health practitioner within the Department of Health and the Virgin Islands community, I applaud the sponsors of this measure and in encourage its adoption by this body. It is well deserved and long overdue for a person who represented the Virgin Islands for 18 years to the United States Congress.

Madam Chair I was the political director of the organization that elected Donna Green to Congress in 1996. I was District and Communications Director during her first term in Congress. I resigned and became Assistant for Policy Initiatives to Governor Charles W. Turnbull in 1999. I served three terms as State Chair of the Virgin Islands Democratic Party.

I need not restate the obvious. You will honor today one of the great political and generational leaders in the Virgin Islands' history. I have witnessed and communicated her dedication to laying the foundation for many of the territory's significant political and infrastructure achievements during the last three decades. She brought competence, dedication, commitment, and passion to improve the quality of life for her constituents. She played a major role in the passage of the Affordable Health Care Act during the Obama Administration. Today, that bill has helped millions of Americans.

I need not elaborate further, for those who have worked with her recognize who and what achievements she has delivered to this territory. This unassuming, devoted mother and grandmother has taken her place alongside her grandmother, educator Elena Christian, and her father, District Court Judge Almeric L. Christian as legends of our great history. Her contributors might I add are truly deserving of the highest honor this territory can bestow.

Madam Chair, as a former Senator, Democratic Party State Chair, St. Thomas Water Island Administrator, staff member, and Virgin Islander I endorse this measure and congratulate this body for considering it.

James A. O'Bryan, Jr