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March 14, 2023

Honorable Carla J. Joseph

Senator

34th Legislature of the Virgin Islands

senatorcarljoseph@legvi.org

Re: Committee on Government Operations and Consumer Protection- Testimony in honor of Aloy “Wenty” Nielsen

I am John Paul David P.E, professional engineer who has been engaged as a consultant engineer for Federal-aid Projects funded by Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on St. Croix for over 27 years.

Today, I offer testimony in support of Bill No. 34-0296- An Act honoring and commending Mr. Aloy “Wenty” Nielsen for his years of service to the Virgin Islands community and naming the Christiansted Bypass in his honor: making a \$10,000.00 appropriation from the General Fund for signage for Aloy Nielsen Bypass and other related purposes.

This bill is sponsored by Senators Novelle E. Francis and Kenneth L. Gittens.

Aloy “Wenty” Nielsen was employed at the Department of Public Works during the years 1977-2007 first in the capacity of the Territorial Director of Highway Engineering and later as the Territorial Director of Federal Highway Program. During those years, the perseverance and leadership of Aloy Nielsen was an integral part of moving this project from its conceptual stage to the completion of the construction process.

The need for the construction of the Christiansted Bypass arose from the Manesco McQuinn Highway needs and classification study which was done in 1972. Arising from this study a Design contract was awarded to Barrett and Hale Engineering Consultants in 1975.

Throughout the years, and through successive administrations, the priority of this project ebbed and flowed. This undoubtedly had its impact on the completion of the design and the ability to move the project to the construction phase.

The lack of local funding, the unavailability of certified general appraisers and their willingness to work for the Government also contributed to the delays in the completion of surveys, appraisals of properties to be acquired and acquisitions of properties for the establishment of the Right of Way of the new roadway alignment.

Funding for the construction for the Bypass was sourced from the yearly allocations of funds to the territory under the various transportation acts approved by the congress as well as the Public Finance Authority (PFA).

The design of the project was completed by the Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division (EFLHD) a branch of the FHWA. This agency assumed the roles of contracting agency and provided project management services for the construction of the project.

At the first bid solicitation, no bids were received. This was due to the size, scope and cost of the project and the inability of the local contractors to secure the necessary performance and payment bonds for the construction of the project. As a result, the project was broken into four separate contracts to facilitate the reduction of the bonding requirements and the commencement of construction in separate phases.

Contract 1 was from Contentment Road to King Cross Street and involved the cutting of the hillsides and grading, installation of culvert pipes and underground utilities. Contract 2 was from King Cross Street to Canegata Ball Park and was for a similar scope but was much more involved as blasting of the hillsides was involved due to the depths of cuts into the rocky hillsides. Contract 3 was for the installation of curbs, gutters, sidewalks, guard walls, the Lookout Area, The Cemetery Wall and Improvements and Parking at Contentment Roadway end of the Bypass.

Contract 4 for the construction of final paving, striping, completion of streetlight installation, Traffic Signals, signs and landscaping. The completion of contract 4 represented the end of the construction phase of this project.

The project was opened for public use on January 12, 2013 by Governor John P. de Jongh.

Wenty was involved in this project as well as numerous other FHWA projects Territory wide. The construction of Melvin Evans Highway, Route 66 from West Airport to Hannahs Rest, the improvements to Sunday Market Square in Downtown Christiansted, Long Bay Road, and the construction of the Millennium Monument at Pt Udall for the December 31, 1999 deadline to welcome the millennium. In the latter case, despite the challenges of meeting the project's deadline, he headed the design competition among locally registered architects in the Virgin Islands for the design of the Millennium Monument. For all of these efforts, he was recognized by the Federal Highway Administration's Administrator Mr. Richard Capka with the Administrator's Public Service Award in appreciation of his efforts to improve transportation in the USVI.

As stated earlier in my testimony, Aloy "Wenty" Nielsen, has been an integral part of the development of the Bypass project and has throughout its many years provided leadership and guidance through the various phases. It gives me great pleasure to express my unreserved support for the renaming the Christiansted Bypass in his honor.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John P. David". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

John Paul David P.E