

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, VETERANS AFFAIRS
AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

BILL NO. 35-0033

Thirty-Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

February 27, 2023

An Act honoring and commending Mr. Benburin “Benny” Stephens posthumously for his heroism in saving the lives of a mother and her children and to rename the Bovoni Road (Route No. 30), specifically from the entrance of the Abattoir to the entrance of the Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School, “The Benburin “Benny” Stephens Drive”

PROPOSED BY: Senators Ray Fonseca and Marvin A. Blyden

1 **WHEREAS**, Benburin Stephens and his wife Valeria lived in Estate Nadir, St. Thomas,
2 USVI; and

3 **WHEREAS**, on December 15, 1986, a large fire erupted in the kitchen at the Estate
4 Nadir home of Janice Daniel and her six children; and

5 **WHEREAS**, the fire quickly spread throughout the home to the living room, blocking
6 both exits, leaving Ms. Daniel and her children confined in a bedroom with no way to exit the
7 home; and

8 **WHEREAS**, on that evening, Mr. Stephens was at home watching television when he
9 smelled smoke and became alarmed. He investigated his neighborhood, and found Janice
10 Daniel and five of her six children, trapped inside their burning home; and

11 **WHEREAS**, Benburin Stephens, without any fear for himself, acted quickly and tore
12 out a set of window louvers in the bedroom, pulling the family to safety; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Janice Daniel was admitted to the St. Thomas Hospital with a fractured
2 leg and second degree burns on the lower parts of her body; and

3 **WHEREAS**, the entire Daniel’s home was destroyed except for the cistern; and

4 **WHEREAS**, without any doubt, on that night, Benburin Stephens fearlessly and single-
5 handedly saved the lives of Janice Daniel and her children; and

6 **WHEREAS**, at a special ceremony held at the Fire Station, Mr. Stephens was awarded
7 the rank of Honorary Fire Chief and was presented with a plaque by Governor Alexander A.
8 Farrelly; and

9 **WHEREAS**, Benburin Stephens passed away on July 30, 2010; and

10 **WHEREAS**, it is the sense of the Legislature that Benburin Stephens has earned the
11 sincere respect and admiration of the people of the Virgin Islands; Now Therefore;

12 ***Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:***

13 **SECTION 1.** The Legislature of the Virgin Islands, on behalf of the people of the Virgin
14 Islands, hereby honors, commends, and thanks Mr. Benburin Stephens posthumously for his
15 heroic action in saving the lives of Janice Daniel and her children.

16 **SECTION 2.** Bovoni Road (Route # 30), from the Abattoir entrance to the entrance of
17 Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School, is named the “The Benburin “Benny” Stephens Drive”.

18 **SECTION 3.** The Commissioner of the Department of Public Works shall provide for the
19 erection of appropriate signage in an appropriate location on Bovoni Road bearing the
20 inscription “The Benburin “Benny” Stephens Drive”.

21 **SECTION 4.** (a) The sum of \$8,000 is appropriated for the fiscal year ending September
22 30, 2023, from the General Fund of the Virgin Islands to the Department of Public Works for
23 the erection of signage for the purpose set forth in section 3.

24 (b) The sum appropriated in subsection (a) remains available until expended.

