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The Honorable Carla J. Joseph
Legislative Secretary
Chair, Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs
And Consumer Protection
Legislature of the Virgin Islands
P.O. Box 1690
St. Thomas, U.S.V.I. 00804

**RE: BILL NO. 35-0075, An Act to designate the third Monday in February as
Virgin Islands Governors Day**

Dear Honorable Senator Joseph:

First let me thank you for the invitation to testify on behalf of the above referenced Bill. Unfortunately, a conflict of timing will preclude me from testifying in person. Nonetheless, I ask that you read my letter into the record as I lend my full support to BILL NO. 35-0075, An Act to designate the third Monday in February as Virgin Islands Governors Day, as proposed by Senator Angel L. Bolques Jr., and Marvin A. Blyden.

As we seek to build more comprehensive data and archival systems in the Virgin Islands, it is indeed fitting that every element of government is captured for perpetuity. It not only becomes a repository for vital information and the preservation of our history of leadership at the highest level from the inception of the Territory, but it allows students, scholars, researchers, practitioners and other individuals who are students of history, politics, leadership and public policy to find a dedicated source of information and artifacts in the official form of an “archive” to retrieve, study and gain knowledge of those precise facts.

The Virgin Islands has a rich and unique history of leadership at the governor’s level. As society evolves, the ability to have information for whatever purpose at our disposal is evidence of growth. We must preserve our government records, especially at the office of the governor. In so doing, we must also place attention to the management of the governor’s archive system, pay particular attention to its care and maintenance, and sustainability through state-of-the-art documents and artifacts preservation technologies.

The Bill outlines a brief public history of each governor since history the appointment of Rear Admiral Harrison Oliver to our present governor. However, I would recommend that the information curated and mined for the proposed “archive” be detailed in its scope and breath to

include a discussion and documentation of all laws, regulations and other public documents associated with each governor's tenure.

Senators, I applaud your efforts to institutionalize the Office of the Governor through the dedication of an archival system. I encourage you to ensure that it is of the highest quality, designed and built by knowledgeable experts who will build each governor's repository with rigor and integrity and high ethical standards. It is my earnest desire to also see our entire government system follow suite.

Thank you for allowing me to speak on behalf of this Bill.

Sincerely,

Vargrave A. Richards

Vargrave A. Richards
Former Senate President, 23rd Legislature
Former Lt. Governor, Turnbull/Richards