



Our Town Frederiksted, Inc.
P.O. Box 653
Frederiksted, VI 00841
Office: (340) 772-3550
Email: ourtownfrederikstedinc@outlook.com

June 27th, 2024

Senator Carla J. Joseph
35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands
Chairperson, Government Operations, Veteran Affairs and Consumer Protection
3022 Est. Golden Rock
Christiansted, VI 00820

Good Morning, Honorable Senator Joseph, Honorable Members of the Committee, and other Honorable Senators present as well as the listening and viewing audience. My name is Aimee Griles-Carino, and I serve as the Executive Director of Our Town Frederiksted, Inc. (“OTF”). On behalf of our organization, which has been passionately serving the Historic District of Frederiksted since 1988, I am here to express our unwavering support for Bill 35-0239, **"An Act honoring and commending Mrs. Claire Lorraine Brown Roker for her dedicated service to the Virgin Islands community by naming the visitors center at the Ann E. Abramson Marine Facility, St. Croix, Virgin Islands, the 'Claire L. Roker Visitors Center.'"**

Mrs. Claire Lorraine Brown Roker has been an instrumental figure in our community, and her contributions have had a lasting impact on the fabric of Frederiksted and the broader Virgin Islands. As a former board member of Our Town Frederiksted, Claire played a pivotal role in numerous initiatives, including the revival of OTF in the aftermath of Hurricanes Irma & Maria as well as spearheading the Midre Cummings Playground project. Her vision and dedication have left an indelible mark on our town’s revitalization efforts.

Claire’s extensive career in the tourism industry, where she served as Assistant Director and Assistant Commissioner of Tourism, and her work with esteemed public figures such as Delegate to Congress Donna Christensen and former Senate President Ronald Russell, are testament to her professionalism and commitment to public service. Her efforts have significantly boosted the visibility and appeal of our islands as prime tourist destinations. Notably, Claire brought the Smithsonian’s Festival of American Folklife to St. Croix in 1990, highlighting Virgin Islands history and culture alongside the heritage of Senegal, West Africa. This festival was a monumental event that showcased our rich cultural tapestry to the world.

In addition to her professional achievements, Claire’s dedication to mentoring and empowering young women through pageantry has been unmatched. Her leadership in Hal Jackson’s Virgin Islands and International Talented Teens, the Haynes Smith Caribbean Talented Teens, and the

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The lead advocate for community development and transformation of the town of Frederiksted and outlying areas.



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Virgin Islands Outstanding Teens has provided countless opportunities for our youth to shine on national and international stages.

Claire's involvement in community organizations, including the Chamber of Commerce, the Women's Coalition, and the Virgin Islands Council on the Arts, further demonstrates her unwavering commitment to the betterment of our society. Her tireless efforts and numerous accolades, such as the Casper Holstein Award and the Business and Professional Women's Woman of Achievement Award, highlight her outstanding contributions.

Moreover, Claire's passion for the town of Frederiksted has been a driving force behind many of her community efforts. She has always had a deep love for our town's history and culture, working tirelessly to preserve its unique charm and character. Claire's efforts with OTF, particularly her involvement in the Midre Cummings Playground project, exemplify her dedication to creating spaces that enhance the quality of life for Frederiksted residents and visitors alike. Her commitment to Frederiksted's revitalization is evident in every project she has undertaken, always striving to make our town a better place for future generations. Claire also coordinated the Frederiksted Economic Development Association's Sunset Jazz series of outdoor concerts, which brought vibrant music and community togetherness to our town, enriching the cultural life of Frederiksted.

When I think of Claire Roker, I automatically think of Frederiksted. The two are synonymous with charm, strength, and creativity. Together, they have helped to define our community, and it is both an honor and a privilege to speak in support of this measure. Naming the visitors center at the Ann E. Abramson Marine Facility after Claire L. Roker is a fitting tribute to a woman who has given so much to our community. This recognition will serve as a lasting reminder of her legacy and inspire future generations of young women to follow in her footsteps of service and excellence.

Our Town Frederiksted, Inc. wholeheartedly supports Bill 35-0239 and urges its passage. Thank you for considering this testimony, and we look forward to seeing the "Claire L. Roker Visitors Center" become a reality, honoring a daughter of the soil and a true pillar of our community.

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