

Vargrave A. Richards
Former Senate President of the 23rd Legislature and
Former Lt. Governor of the U.S. Virgin Islands
P.O. Box 1597
Kingshill, St. Croix 00851

May 28, 2024

RE: MR. WILLARD JOHN

The Honorable Carla Joseph, Chairman
Committee on Government Operations,
Veterans Affairs and Consumer Protection
35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands
Legislature of the U.S. Virgin Islands
Capitol Building
P.O. Box 1690
St. Thomas, U.S.V.I. 00804

Dear Honorable Senator Joseph:

I am pleased to lend my voice to Bill No. 35-0195 which you have offered for consideration before the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands to honor Mr. Williard John for his many contributions to the youth and culture of our Territory.

I believe it is fitting to honor those who have made contributions to the betterment of our collective community. I have known Mr. John for decades and know all too well of his commitment and enthusiasm in working with our youth and in uplifting Virgin Islands culture. As the Bill 35-0195 underscores, his dedication to Virgin Islands is reflected in all of his progressive accomplishments, from his initial days as a Mocko Jumbie promoting our carnival culture from 1976 on St. Thomas to his multiple tenures across the field of education. He has touched the lives of thousands of youth and community members first on St. Thomas and then on St. Croix.

To say that he has an impact on the Virgin Islands only would be diminishing the breadth of his reach and influence in promoting the Virgin Islands. His presence at highly visible venues and amongst diverse audiences of prestigious organizations is a testament to his character, his commitment and his love of the Virgin Islands. His role as Dean of Mocko Jumbie promotion and development on St. Croix benefited not only St. Croix but Territory-wide as well. Without restating the historical events and contributions, he should be acknowledged for his hard work and dedication to what was a dying Mocko Jumbie culture and has been revived in recent years.

I believe, like many, this honor and Perma Plaque is but a small way to show gratitude and to honor Willard John for his significant contributions to our Territory and for the profound impact he has had throughout the past 3 decades.

Senator Joseph, please accept this letter as evidence of my full support of Bill No. 35-0195. Please also accept my regrets for not being present during your presentation.

Sincerely,



Vargrave A. Richards