

BILL NO. 35-0285

Thirty-Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

June 20, 2024

An Act honoring and commending Bryan “Benny-Demus” Boulai for his outstanding achievements in the music and entertainment industries and for his contributions to the Virgin Islands community, awarding him The Official Key to the Virgin Islands, and appropriating \$10,000 annually to The DEMUS Foundation

PROPOSED BY: Senator Ray Fonseca

1 **WHEREAS**, Bryan Boulai, colloquially known as “Benny-Demus”, was born in 1977
2 on St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, to Claudina Boulai; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Benny-Demus attended E. Benjamin Oliver Elementary School, Bertha C.
4 Boschulte Middle School, and Ivanna Eudora Kean High School; and

5 **WHEREAS**, from his early childhood years, he was captivated by the melodies of music
6 and started playing the saxophone; and

7 **WHEREAS**, Benny-Demus displayed a profound affection for the art form of disc
8 jockeying (“DJ’ing”) and started DJ’ing when he was in the fourth grade, allowing him to
9 nurture his innate talent and passion for musical expression; and

10 **WHEREAS**, in 1997, he attended Minot State University-Bottineau in North Dakota,
11 where he made the decision in his freshman year to transition from playing the saxophone to
12 dedicating himself full time to the craft of DJ’ing; and

1 **WHEREAS**, in 1998, Benny-Demus continued his academic journey at Western
2 Wyoming Community College in Wyoming; and

3 **WHEREAS**, in 2003, the artist Akon enlisted Benny-Demus as his personal DJ,
4 propelling him into a whirlwind of opportunities where he entertained audiences not only for
5 Akon, but also for a roster of renowned artists including Rock City, TLC, Melanie Fiona,
6 Shontelle, Kardinal Offishall, and Eve; and

7 **WHEREAS**, in 2004, Benny-Demus contributed to the signing of R. City to Akon's
8 record label, Konvict Muzik, and he also played a pivotal role to the signing of Canadian
9 superstar Kardinal Offishall to Konvict Muzik; and

10 **WHEREAS**, in 2005, Benny-Demus assisted R. City in securing their first writing
11 placement on Akon's eight-time platinum album, Konvicted; and

12 **WHEREAS**, Benny-Demus earned global recognition as an Entertainer Extraordinaire,
13 showcasing his talents as a DJ, producer, screenwriter, film director, and artist manager; and

14 **WHEREAS**, he built a loyal global following through performances in over 180
15 countries; including Germany, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Japan, Nigeria, Egypt, and the
16 Virgin Islands; and

17 **WHEREAS**, in 2011, Benny-Demus was honored as a Global Ambassador of Liberia,
18 West Africa by former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf; and

19 **WHEREAS**, in 2019, Benny-Demus opened the MTV European Awards held in Spain
20 by introducing Akon and the awards show host, Becky G; and

21 **WHEREAS**, Benny-Demus facilitated hip-hop legend Doug E. Fresh's performance on
22 American Idol; and

23 **WHEREAS**, Benny-Demus has quietly contributed to the success of numerous popular
24 musicians, including Kendrick Lamar, Lloyd, Jada Kingdom, Wiz Kid, TLC, Eve, and DJ
25 Apeman in Uganda; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Benny-Demus launched his own management company, Purple Beacon
2 Management & Touring, where he manages talents such as R. City and Jamaican superstar Jada
3 Kingdom; and

4 **WHEREAS**, beyond his musical prowess, Benny-Demus is dedicated to raising
5 awareness about the challenges faced in his homeland of St. Thomas, and is committed to
6 enhancing cultural morale and creating opportunities for the youth; and

7 **WHEREAS**, Benny-Demus has demonstrated a philanthropic spirit in so many ways
8 including, collaborating with a team of Virgin Islanders in Atlanta to transport twenty 40-foot
9 shipping containers filled with supplies to the Virgin Islands after Hurricanes Irma and Maria;
10 sponsoring the Virgin Islands Men’s All-Star Basketball Game; bringing Akon and Rock City
11 to St. Thomas and St. Croix to visit children in local schools and to spread inspiration to youth
12 in the juvenile detention center; and

13 **WHEREAS**, through his foundation, The DEMUS Foundation, Benny-Demus has
14 provided family-oriented activities on St. Thomas such as the LOOMINATE Bike Ride and the
15 Benny-Demus Carnival Kickball Tournament, drawing over 2000 spectators of all ages in
16 person and online through live streaming; and

17 **WHEREAS**, these activities have allowed him to donate school supplies for teachers on
18 St. Thomas and St. Croix and provide donations to other local non-profit organizations such as
19 the Family Resource Center; My Brother’s Workshop; City of Refuge Church; the Mamba
20 Mentality Basketball Tournament; St. Thomas Rescue; St. Thomas Baseball Explorers; Young
21 Women’s Christian Association; KC Art Creations; APC Classic Tournament; and Big Man
22 Tings 40+ Basketball Tournament; and

23 **WHEREAS**, his philanthropic spirit was recognized by the 28th Legislature of the Virgin
24 Islands at the Legislature’s Oath of Office ceremony in 2009; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Benny-Demus continues to steadfastly support the emergence of future
2 artists and leaders, carrying forward his legacy of selflessness and commitment to enriching the
3 community; and

4 **WHEREAS**, Benny-Demus is a dedicated husband to Ebony Hill-Boulai and the proud
5 father of three children: Kaniya Robinson-Boulai; Jahlani Thomas-Boulai; and Brionna Boulai;
6 Now, Therefore,

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

8 **SECTION 1.** The Legislature of the Virgin Islands, on behalf of the people of the Virgin
9 Islands, honors and commends Bryan “Benny-Demus” Boulai for his outstanding achievements
10 in the music and entertainment industries and for his contributions to the Virgin Islands
11 community.

12 **SECTION 2.** In recognition and appreciation of his outstanding achievements in the
13 music and entertainment industries and for his contributions to the Virgin Islands community,
14 the President of the Legislature, or the President’s designee, pursuant to 1 V.I.C § 103a (b),
15 shall present Bryan “Benny-Demus” Boulai with The Official Key to the Virgin Islands and
16 shall prepare and present a perma plaque copy of this Act to Bryan “Benny-Demus” Boulai at
17 an appropriate ceremony.

18 **SECTION 3.** (a) The sum of \$10,000 is appropriated from the General Fund of the
19 Treasury of the Government of the Virgin Islands to The DEMUS Foundation in fiscal year
20 ending September 30, 2024, and every fiscal year thereafter.

21 (b) The DEMUS Foundation shall comply with the financial reporting requirements in
22 2 V.I.C. § 29.

23 **SECTION 4.** Section 3 takes effect when the documentation establishing The DEMUS
24 Foundation as a non-profit organization is received by the Virgin Islands Department of
25 Finance.

BILL SUMMARY

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This bill honors and commends Bryan “Benny-Demus” Boulai for his outstanding achievements in the music and entertainment industries and for his contributions to the Virgin Islands community. The bill also awards him The Official Key to the Virgin Islands and appropriates \$10,000 annually to The DEMUS Foundation.

BR23-0918/June 12, 2024/GC