



**Government of the Virgin Islands  
of the United States of America  
Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs**

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**H. Nathalie Hodge  
Commissioner  
Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs**

**Testimony Before the  
35<sup>th</sup> Legislature of the Virgin Islands**

**Kenneth L. Gittens, Chair  
Committee on Homeland Security, Justice & Public Safety**

**To update the Committee on the Department's Carnival Activities**

**June 11, 2024**

*"Serving Businesses & Assisting, Educating and Protecting Consumers"*

Good Day Honorable Senator Kenneth L. Gittens, Committee Chair, 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands, Committee on Homeland Security, Justice and Public Safety; Committee Senators present, non-Committee Senators present, and the listening and viewing audience.

My name is H. Nathalie Hodge, Commissioner for the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs, (DLCA). Today, I have the privilege of being joined by Horace Graham, our Assistant Commissioner, and Wilbur Francis, our Director of Enforcement.

We are deeply grateful for the opportunity extended to us by this august body to present an update on our department's comprehensive preparations for the anticipated 2024 St. John's Celebrations. We aim today to illuminate the efforts and readiness of the DLCA in terms of vendor education and regulation, operational strategies, and our collaborative endeavors to ensure vibrant and seamless Celebrations.

In the realm of public celebrations such as carnivals, festivals, celebrations and other significant events, the DLCA traditionally collaborates closely with the Virgin Islands Police Department (VIPD), which possesses the authority under Title \_\_\_\_ VIC to issue special permits for activities at these gatherings. It is our standard

practice to facilitate cultural expressions, allowing food and beverage vendors and other cultural participants to engage fully, given they have received the necessary permissions from the Carnival Committee and/or the VIPD.

In concert with the VIPD, the DLCA is dedicating resources to bolster the police presence, acting as force multipliers to counteract potential shortages of law enforcement personnel. Our enforcement officers, operating under the VIPD's guidance, will diligently perform compliance checks daily throughout the Celebration.

The DLCA is also engaged with the Carnival Committee and is dedicated to ensuring the vendors receive relevant information relative to St. John celebrations. Our mission is to ensure all vendors are properly licensed or permitted and adhere strictly to the terms of their agreements. Additionally, our enforcement officers will tackle the prevention of unauthorized or illicit commercial activities. To mitigate these risks and uphold public safety, the DLCA is intensifying efforts to ensure all entities involved in the production and sale of alcoholic beverages comply with rigorous licensing and labeling standards. We're issuing graphic signs to vendors, launching Public Service Announcement (PSA) geared towards the sale or service of alcohol to minors, and emphasizing the necessity of registering with the DLCA and the requirement of ensuring proper labeling, which must include a government

warning, alcohol percentage, volume, and manufacturer details, for all alcoholic products sold publicly.

As the 2024 St. John celebrations approaches, rest assured that our Enforcement Division and Alcohol Unit will be vigilant. We will work with our partner agencies to ensure compliance with the laws of the Virgin Islands and will assist with prioritizing the safety a well-being of all of the Celebration participants.