



GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN
ISLANDS
DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM



June 11, 2024

VIA EMAIL TO: Senator. Kenneth L. Gittens: senatorkgittens@legvi.org

The Honorable Kenneth L. Gittens
35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands
Chair, Homeland Security, Justice, and Public Safety
Capitol Building
P.O. Box 1690
St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands 00804

Dear Senator Kenneth L. Gittens:

Please find the Division of Festival's testimony on behalf of the Department of Tourism herein for the meeting of the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands' Committee on Homeland Security, Justice, and Public Safety, at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 11, 2024, at the Cleone H. Creque Legislative Conference Room on the island of St. John.

Sincerely,

Joseph Boschulte
Commissioner
USVI Department of Tourism

TESTIMONY SENATE HEARING 6//11

Good morning, Homeland Security, Justice, and Public Safety Committee Chairman, Honorable Senator Kenneth L. Gittens, Committee Members and Senators of the 35th Legislature of the United States Virgin Islands, legislative staff, members of the media, and the listening and viewing audience.

I am Ian Turnbull, Director of Festivals. Today, I will be testifying on behalf of Commissioner Joseph Boschulte, who is unable to attend today's hearing. Pursuant to your invitation, Assistant Director Leona Smith and I are here to provide clarity regarding the Department of Tourism and Division of Festivals planning of the safety, security, environmental clean-ups, permitting requirements, operational planning and collaborative efforts for the 2024 St. John Celebration.

Since May 8, 2024, The Department of Tourism Executive Team, including - Festivals Assistant Directors Leona Smith, Shamari Haynes, Halvor Hart II, and I have hosted several interdepartmental planning meetings with representatives from the Virgin Islands Police Department, the Virgin Islands Department of Sports, Parks & Recreation, the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency, the Virgin Islands Fire and

Emergency Medical Services, the Virgin Islands Department of Public Works, the Virgin Islands Waste Management Authority, Virgin Islands Port Authority and TSA, and the Virgin Islands Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs. Priority topics during these meetings focused on event logistics, community health and safety, and location preservation for all Division of Festivals-led events, including the Prince and Princess Pageant, Queen Show, Boat Race, PanoRama, Food Fair, J'ouvert, the 4th of July Parade, and Fireworks display.

Separately, the Department of Tourism team met with the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority to plan and outline the installation of utilities for the village booths and staging. Following our meeting, we have a confirmed timeline for the power connection that aligns with all other required inspections in anticipation of the village opening date.

The Department has secured two local vendors to source, supply, and service portable restrooms. Seven stalls will be placed near the Celebration Village, seven stalls at the Food Fair venue, and seven stalls along the parade route designated for public use. These portable restroom facilities will supplement existing public restrooms managed by the Department of Public Works.

As we finalize the intricate details for this year's event, our department will continue to engage in cross-departmental partisanship to execute and finalize the necessary procedures and tactics to foster a seamless Celebration.

From restroom accessibility in the village to J'ouvert, crowd control, and boat race access, the Department of Tourism and our counterparts are dedicated to facilitating a world-class 70th Celebration that is not only fun and memorable but safe, organized, and within all cited regulations.

In closing, we want to thank Governor Bryan, Lieutenant Governor Roach, Commissioner Boschulte, all adjacent departmental associates, members of the Senate, our committed volunteers, and my phenomenal colleagues at the Department of Tourism for their unwavering commitment to elevating the U.S. Virgin Islands, our culture, and our traditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and we stand ready to answer any questions you may have.

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