



Legislature of the Virgin Islands

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The Honorable
Marvin A. Blyden
Vice President

CHAIRMAN
Housing, Transportation &
Telecommunications

VICE CHAIR
Culture, Sports, Parks & Youth

MEMBER
Budget, Appropriations & Finance

Economic Development &
Agriculture

Health, Hospitals & Human
Services

Committee Report—Committee on Housing, Transportation, & Telecommunications

The Committee on Housing, Transportation & Telecommunications convened on Tuesday, October 24, 2023, at 10:01 a.m. in the Earle B. Ottley Legislative Chambers on St. Thomas to receive a testimony from the Virgin Islands Economic Development Authority and the Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority to update and discuss the VI Slice Program as we continue the examination of affordable housing and homeownership issues considering recently announced eligibility requirements.

Lending institutions were to provide an update, as well as their viewpoint, to the Committee on Housing, Transportation, and Telecommunications on all issues related to rules, regulations and operations of the V.I. Slice program and homeownership financing. The Lending institution did not attend but three provided testimonies that were read into the record for Kimme Bryce, Area Director, USDA, Valdamier Collens, President, Merchants Commercial Bank, and Dina Perry-Malone, Vice President & USVI Manager, First Bank Virgin Islands.

In the second block testimonies were received from the Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority, Love City Strong and General Contractors currently working in the VI. We received update and discussion on the status of all affordable housing initiatives, including implementation of the 2023-2024 Affordable Housing Plan as well as the status of the First-Time Homebuyer Program & the EnVision Tomorrow program.

Legislative Attendance

Committee Members Present	Non-Committee Members Present
Senator Marvin A. Blyden, Chair	Senator Novelle E. Francis
Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff	Senator Franklin D. Johnson
Senator Samuel Carrion	Senator Diane T. Capehart
Senator Ray Fonseca	Senator Donna Frett-Gregory
Senator Angel L. Bolques, Jr.	Senator Milton A. Potter
Senator Carla Joseph	Senator Alma Francis-Heyliger


Invited Testifiers

Mr. Wayne L. Biggs, Chief Executive Officer, Virgin Islands Economic Development Authority	Ms. Kimme Bryce, Area Director, USDA Rural Development
Mr. Valdamier Collens, President, Merchants Commercial Bank	Mr. Michael Armendariz, Representative, Capital Mortgage Services
Ms. Dina Perry-Malone, Vice-President & USVI Marketing Manager, First Bank Virgin Islands	Mr. Lee Smith, Senior Executive Vice President & President of Mortgage, New York Community Bank
Mr. Melvin Mulero, Regional Mortgage Manager, Oriental Bank	Ms. Dayna Clendinen, Interim Executive Director, Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority
Ms. Adrienne L. Williams-Octalien, Director, Office of Disaster Recovery	Ms. Meaghan Enright, Executive Director, Love City Strong
Mr. Mark Newson, General Contractor	Mr. Steven Thibou, General Contractor

The following individuals presented testimony:

- Mr. Wayne L. Biggs, Chief Executive Officer, Virgin Islands Economic Development Authority
- Dr. Stephanie Berry, Chief Operating Officer, Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority
- Ms. Dayna Clendinen, Interim Executive Director, Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority
- Ms. Meaghan Enright, Executive Director, Love City Strong
- Mr. Mark Newson, General Contractor
- Mr. Steven Thibou, General Contractor

The Committee on Housing, Transportation & Telecommunications adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

Prepared by: 
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Legislative Researcher