

March 10, 2023

The Legislature of the Virgin Islands
Office of Senator Kenneth L. Gittens

Dionisio Lorenzo Testimony:

Good afternoon, Honorable Senator Kenneth L. Gittens, Chairman of the 35th Legislature's Committee on Homeland Security, Justice, and Public Safety, committee members, all members of this distinguished body.

I am Dionis Lorenzo, the owner of Dion Construction, who has been conducting business in the Virgin Islands since 1997. I have also been a radio talk show host for over 17 years and the current president of the Dominican Action Committee, a nonprofit organization on the island of St. Croix.

Today is a great day for me but, more importantly, for the Virgin Islands and the people who will benefit from the passing of Bill No. 35-0013, of course, with the help of each of you. I am here today to support Senator Carrion's Driver's Safety Bill. This proposed legislation will allow all residents of the Virgin Islands to obtain a driver's license once they can provide proof of identity and proof of residency while simultaneously promoting roadway safety and boosting our economy.

I have been invested in this measure for many years. I was granted the opportunity to advocate for a similar piece of legislation that was passed in Puerto Rico. Officials from the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and I joined efforts to advocate for the bill at a time when Puerto Rico was in a dire economic situation. Being at the forefront of such an important measure and seeing the positive impact it made on the island of Puerto Rico and the lives of its people, I am confident Bill No.35-0013 will be a force of positive change within the Virgin Islands.

The Driver's Safety Bill passage is crucial because it will allow undocumented residents from different countries a smoother chance of integrating into society by having a local government ID which will benefit them and the local authorities. Bill No. 35-0013 will expand the driver's database, ultimately providing the Bureau of Motor Vehicles with a more accounted list of drivers, making identifying vehicle owners easier. While at the same time providing residents without federal documents a legal way to get around the island.

Chairman Gittens, Committee on Homeland Security, Justice, and Public Safety members, I would like to thank you for the invitation to testify on this measure. I must also express my appreciation to Senator Carrion for addressing the issue of public safety and security on our roadways. I ask this honorable committee to support Bill No. 35-0013 as it prioritizes safety in our territory. I am prepared to respond to any questions you may have regarding my support for this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dionisio", written in a cursive style. The signature is contained within a light gray rectangular box.

Dionisio B. Lorenzo – Dominican Rep. Consul