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Honorable Senator Diane T. Capehart
35th Legislature of the United States Virgin Islands
3022 Estate Golden Rock
Christiansted, St. Croix Virgin Islands 00820
Delivered via Email: apetersen@legvi.org and garrindell@legvi.org

Reference: Testimony in Support of Governor Bryan's Nomination of Mrs. Anna Wallace Francis

Greetings Honorable Senator Diane T. Capehart:

This correspondence is to serve as an affirmative testimony in full support of the Honorable Governor Albert Bryan, Jr.'s nomination of Mrs. Anna Wallace Francis to the Virgin Islands Territorial Park Board of Trustees for the District of St. Thomas. May this correspondence be included in the official record of testimonies, legislative committee sessions, and related policy action protocols on behalf of this nomination of Mrs. Anna Wallace Francis.

"Today we are faced with a challenge that calls for a shift in our thinking, so that humanity stops threatening its life-support system. We are called to assist the Earth to heal her wounds and, in the process, heal our own- indeed to embrace the whole of creation in all its diversity, beauty and wonder. Recognizing that sustainable development, democracy and peace are indivisible is an idea whose time has come."

Dr. Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate 2004

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/2004/maathai/biographical/>

This quotation from the honorable Nobel Peace Prize laureate Dr. Wangari Maathai are reflective of the skills, talents, expertise and compassionate stewardship exemplified by our very own Outstanding Virgin Islander and Living "Keeper of the Flame" Mrs. Anna Wallace Francis. It is with great pleasure, honor and respect that I share this testimony as a positive recommendation for Mrs. Anna Wallace Francis- an exceptional and outstanding Virgin Islander who has provided life-long services as an educator, scientist, heritage preservationist, agroforestry farmer and community leader in her native homeland of St. Thomas and by natural extension to St. John, Water Island, St. Croix, our surrounding sister isles of the Caribbean Americas, and globally. I have had the honor and privilege to collaboratively and cooperatively work with Mrs. Anna Wallace Francis on multiple and diverse interdisciplinary science and arts education programs for more than 25 years in STEM/STEAM/STREAM educational platforms, agriculture and agritourism initiatives, cultural heritage education curricula development (*VIDE Cultural Education Standards Committee*), VI Heritage Education Arts Legacy (VIHEAL) executive and legislative resolutions, commemorations and policies, community organizational management for not-for-profit capacity building education, certifications, and beyond.

Mrs. Wallace Francis, respectfully known throughout the VI Caribbean community as "Nana or Mama Djabana", has contributed to a community legacy of environmental science education, cultural heritage traditions, proactive youth and community educational services, and historic preservation for decades. Her ancestral lineage as a multi-generational Virgin Islander with an extensive family legacy of contributors and leaders engaged in respecting the preservation of historical oral narratives, cultural tradition stewardship, environmental spaces, social justice activism, VI Free Beach Movement© leadership, comprehensive youth development, youth

athleticism, recreational heritage institutions, professional and youth sports league industries, entrepreneurship, creative natural arts, land ownership and stewardship, and more contribute to her strengths and positive abilities to serve on the VI Territorial Park Board of Trustees.

Mrs. Anna Wallace Francis' love for teaching and protecting environmental nature spaces we have inherited and are responsible for maintaining as Virgin Islanders, whether resident, native and/or new journeyers, are transmitted with the most harmonious, compassionate and respectful care as experienced by anyone working, visiting and spending time with Mrs. Wallace Francis. Her innovative work and executive management within the youth and community education centered not-for-profit organizations and programs, Environmental Rangers and Djabana's Kuumba Educational Campground "Camp Umoja" in St. Thomas blended with her 30 years of professional secondary teaching services with the VI Department of Education and other communitarian institutions are exemplary and well-respected throughout the VI, US, Caribbean regional and international community. Beyond the multiple university credentials and diversified service awards she has earned for her services as a science educator, environmentalist, community activist, historic preservationist, entrepreneur, and cultural heritage tradition keeper, the professional development and community programs she has created, facilitated, partnered with, managed and contribute to exemplify her remarkable abilities to contribute to the creation and management of comprehensive policies, programs, cultural heritage protections, accurate historic narratives, and generational sustainability of the VI Territorial Park System.

Mrs. Anna Wallace Francis is a worthy candidate who I respectfully recommend that the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands of the United States fully approve to serve and continue to provide her stellar experiential guidance and wealth of intergenerational and interdisciplinary resources as a representative for the Virgin Islands Territorial Park Board of Trustees in the St. Thomas District. I am assured and know that Mrs. Wallace Francis will compliantly and meticulously share and impart her beacon of logical and precise skills, talents, innovative passion, and creative expertise in the arts and sciences with respectful harmony for the best possible outcomes and sustainable deliverables that protect and honor the ancestral legacy of Virgin Islands' lands and public spaces entrusted within the vision, mission, goals and objectives of the Virgin Islands Territorial Park Board of Trustees for the people, legacy and sacred spirit of these beloved Virgin Islands of the United States for generations.

I close with the words of Mrs. Anna Djabana Wallace Francis:

"It is a pleasure to see that we are now embracing the philosophy that 'we have inherited our environment from our ancestors, and it is now our responsibility to preserve it for future generations.'" (Wallace Francis: 2023)

I look forward to this august body of the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands of the United States supporting this nomination from the Honorable Governor Albert Bryan, Jr. with the confirmation of the appointment of Mrs. Anna "Djabana" Wallace Francis to the VI Territorial Park Board of Trustees.

Respectfully shared,
Remain inspired!



Dr. Chenzira Davis Kahina

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VIHEAL® Partner, Cooperative Educator and Colleague of the Honorable Anna Djabana Wallace Francis

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