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Diane T. Capehart
Senator, 35 Legislature of the US Virgin Islands
3022 Estate Golden Rock
Christiansted, VI 00820

Via email: garrindell@legvi.org, apetersen@legvi.org

Dear Senator Capehart,

I am writing to testify on behalf of Anna Wallace Francis, who has been nominated to the Virgin Islands Territorial Park Board of Trustees for the District of St. Thomas. It is my honor to highly recommend Anna Wallace Francis to serve on the Board of Trustees.

How do you know Mrs. Wallace Francis, what do you know of her work character?

Anna and I have worked together to educate our community, especially the youth about our history, culture, and environment. I am a member of her board for the Environmental Rangers, where she and I help instill the sciences and the impact trained scientist in the fields of marine biology and environmental science, can be used to maintain the pristine nature of our communities, our beautiful waters and verdant hillsides.

We made, with the Rangers, an extensive presentation before the Department of Planning and Natural Resources on our Watersheds (Guts) and the need to test the waters that traverse from them to the sea after we explored several of them and saw the great life within.

We later worked together with the friends of Mandahl working to save the pristine Mandahl Bay Beach, Pond, and productive Mangrove Nursery community. This would have destroyed one of the last natural environments in the VI., as well as deprive the local fishermen from a location to catch bait, and moor their boats during the hurricane seasons.

What has she done for the community?

Along with being an educator at several public and private schools in the VI. Mrs. Francis has volunteered in many community organizations, and the Hull Bay Community advocating for better environmental protection of our natural resources. After retirement she volunteered at several school, and continues to give field trips, kayaking tours, and farming lessons to many youth. In fact, I ran several Massey Soccer Academy Summer Camps with the Sports, Parks and Recreation, where our campers were able to travel to and enjoy her facilities and tour the campgrounds where she has many educational demonstrative sites including an area that explores solar energy. The campground is in constant construction, constantly being enhanced to teach our youth and the community self-sufficiency within a natural environment and emphasizing training of our youth in carpentry, painting, stone wall building, landscaping and recycling.

What skills, abilities does she have to be a good fit for the board?

Anna has been a camp counselor, environmentalist, cultural history instructor at the VI Montessori School and Peter Gruber International Academy for their Cultural Enrichment Classes (which I suggested her for as the facilitator), founder of Camp Umoja, an environmental educational campground; founder of the Environmental Rangers Educational Youth Group, member of the Pan African Association, and an Environmental & Cultural History Instructor for Ascension Livity, Inc. These groups as well as her being a member of the Eta Phi Beta Sorority, are organizations which are educating our next generations to be proud Virgin Islanders while protecting and preserve the best of our islands. She has also participated and brought a wealth of knowledge to the various Kwanzaa programs on island that has a basic tenet: Kuumba, Creativity...to make our environment more beautiful (cleaner) than when we met it.

She is a fierce protector of the environment and cares deeply about the health, preservation, history, and safety of the beauty of the Virgin Islands—and its residents. Based on her history, work experiences and love for these islands, she would be well qualified to serve on the Virgin Islands Territorial Park Board of Trustees for the District of St. Thomas. Mrs. Francis would continue to have a positive impact on our Islands in this capacity.

Thank you for considering her for this position.

Respectfully,

Marcella Jennings-Collier