

HAROLD W.L. WILLOCKS
TESTIMONY FOR THE MAY 10, 2023
SENATE HEARING

Good Day Honorable Chairperson Capehart, Honorable Senators and listeners:

My name is Harold Woodson Lorin Willocks. I am a product of the public schools of St. Croix and earned my Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Morgan State. I attended Howard University Graduate School where I majored in Political Science and Philosophy. The following year, I attended Howard University of Law. My studies were interrupted, and I returned home for two years. I resumed my educational pursuits and completed my Juris Doctorate in 1987 from Antioch School of Law.

My experience and service stretch over thirty years. For periods of time between 1978 and 1985, I enjoyed the rewarding profession of teaching at Elena Christian and Arthur Richards Junior High Schools and at my alma mater, St. Croix Central High School. In 1987, I worked as an assistant attorney general under Attorney General Godfrey de Castro. While there I handled criminal cases with jurisdiction up to five years, family court, juvenile, traffic, and various other types of cases.

In 1988, I became territorial public defender. In this capacity, I handled hundreds or perhaps thousands of cases involving the indigent population of the Virgin Islands. After four years, I became Chief Public Defender of the Virgin Islands. For many years during my tenure as the Chief Public Defender, the office of the Territorial Public Defender

had one of the highest jury trial win ratios for a Public Defender's office in the nation; and the Public Defenders Office was recognized for this and its innovative way of handling indigent clients, and for its community involvement.

In August 2009, I was nominated by the Honorable John P. de Jongh, Governor of the Virgin Islands of the United States, to serve a six-year term as a Judge of the Superior Court of the Virgin Islands. I was later unanimously approved by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands. I was reappointed by the Honorable Kenneth Mapp, Governor of the Virgin Islands of the United States, for a second term. I have served as Administrative Judge, Presiding Judge, and am currently a Senior Sitting Judge of the Superior Court.

I have assisted various community organizations, especially those dealing with the youth and the mentally ill. I spearheaded the Virgin Islands History, Geography, Civics and Character Enhancement Bowl and the Prevention through Education Summer Camp.

Some of the honors bestowed upon me include the Virgin Islands Humanities Scholar and a Virgin Islands Cultural Bearer. I have been one of the leading advocates for educational programs and activities for the youth of the Virgin Islands. I played a vital role in the establishment of an expungement statute for the Virgin Islands, and the Virgin Islands Behavioral Health Bill.

I would like to thank you Honorable Chairperson Capehart, and Honorable Senators for your time and anticipated support.