



**Government of the Virgin Islands  
of the United States of America  
Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs**

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**H. Nathalie Hodge  
Commissioner**

**Testimony  
Before the  
35<sup>th</sup> Legislature of the Virgin Islands**

**Diane T. Capehart, Chair  
Committee on Rules & Judiciary**

**Legislative Symposium 2024**

**August 19, 2024**

*"Serving Businesses & Assisting, Educating and Protecting Consumers"*

Good Day Honorable Senator Diane T. Capehart, Chair of the Committee on Government Rules & Judiciary, esteemed members of the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands, committee members, non-committee members present, and the listening and viewing audience.

My name is H. Nathalie Hodge, Commissioner for the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs (DLCA). I am joined today by General Counsel Geraldine Vaval; Director of Enforcement, Wilbur Francis; and Director of Consumer Protection, Matthew Padgett.

Thank you for the opportunity to present to this legislative body the proposed amendments to sections of the Virgin Islands Code that DLCA believes are in urgent need of revision. Many of these provisions have become outdated, leading to operational inefficiencies within our department. By updating these sections, we aim to bring our practices in line with current standards and best practices, similar to what has been achieved in other states, where such updates have resulted in greater legal clarity and improved efficiency. These changes will empower DLCA to better fulfill its mandate as a revenue-generating agency and enhance our ability to regulate effectively.

To briefly highlight some of the proposed statutory amendments:

**Fines and Fees:** We are proposing amendments to allow the DLCA to adjust licensing fees annually and impose stricter administrative fines for violations, including the authority to issue both civil and criminal citations for the same offense. These changes will ensure more robust enforcement and compliance.

**Administrative Authority:** The proposed changes include expanding the Commissioner's authority to issue civil citations and enforce penalties, aligning our enforcement powers with those of other jurisdictions.

**Updates to Terminology and Definitions:** The amendments will also update references to the Consumer Services Administration and Alcohol Control Board, integrating these into DLCA's current structure for better clarity and operational alignment.

In conclusion, DLCA appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of these amendments and respectfully requests your support in moving them forward. These updates are critical to modernizing our regulatory framework and ensuring that DLCA can effectively serve the public and our business community.

Thank you once again for your attention. We are ready to answer any questions you may have.