

March 12, 2024

Honorable Senator Diane T. Capehart
Committee on Rules and Judiciary of the
35th Legislature of the U.S. Virgin Islands



— EST. 2012 V.I. —

Dear Senator Capehart and Members of the Committee on Rules and Judiciary,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for Dr. Nathaniel Olive's appointment to the Virgin Islands Conservation District. Since 2012, as the Founder and Executive Director of the Virgin Islands Good Food Coalition, I have been privileged to witness the extensive and impactful contributions Dr. Olive has made to both our community and the environment.

Dr. Olive's profound expertise in participatory planning, watershed management, and strategic planning positions him as a vital asset in addressing the modern challenges of environmental conservation. Over the last twelve years, Dr. Olive has applied his considerable professional and academic knowledge towards advocating for the Virgin Islands' natural landscapes and their invaluable cultural heritage.

While his nomination to the Virgin Islands Conservation District is for a non-agricultural interest member, Dr. Olive's stewardship of Ridge to Reef Farm deserves notable mention. His farm is a testament to his dedication to organic agriculture and sustainable living, achievements that have earned national recognition, including features in National Geographic. Dr. Olive has seamlessly integrated organic farming practices with eco-friendly infrastructure, alongside developing educational programs in permaculture, agroforestry, and sustainable living. These initiatives have significantly elevated the standards for sustainable tourism and education within the Virgin Islands.

Moreover, in his capacity as President of the Virgin Islands Farmer Alliance, Dr. Olive has tirelessly worked as an advocate for the farming community. He has championed education, research, and policy development aimed at improving the livelihoods of farmers and securing the economic sustainability of our region's agriculture.

Confident in Dr. Olive's abilities, I fully support his nomination to the Virgin Islands Conservation District. Should you require further details or wish to discuss Dr. Olive's qualifications further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Sommer Sibilly-Brown
Founder & Executive Director
Virgin Islands Good Food