

Dr. Reginald D. Freeman, CFO, FIFireE
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To Honorable Senator Diane T. Capehart, Chairperson, Committee on Rules and Judiciary

My name is Dr. Reginald D. Freeman. I am writing this recommendation letter on behalf of Assistant Director Antonio Stevens as he is to be appointed as the next Director to lead the esteemed Virgin Islands Fire & Emergency Medical Service. I've known Mr. Stevens in a professional capacity for the past 16 years. I can attest to his social contributions and embracement of his social responsibility. I am a recently retired fire chief who has served as Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director for the City of Hartford, CT, Oakland, CA, Lockheed Martin, and Iraq for 4 years. I currently serve in the C-Suite for a private insurance company in Connecticut. Furthermore, I have been an Adjunct Professor for the University of Florida for over 11 years and serve as the Program Chair for Capitol Technology University (CTU) in Laurel, MD. Additionally, I serve as a dissertation chair for CTU. Lastly, I currently serve on the Board of Directors for the National Fire Protection Association as the Asst. Treasurer and Vice-President of the Board of Directors for the Center for Public Safety Excellence, Inc.

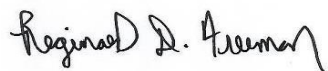
I am a Harvard Fellow via the Kennedy School of Government's Senior Executives for State & Local Government program and a graduate of the Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative. I shared all of that with you to make it abundantly clear that I have incredibly high standards and expectations as it pertains to people and the extraordinary responsibility that comes with being in a position of authority and the expectation to lead with honor, integrity, consistency, and empathy. I have served as the Director of Training for the Caribbean Association of Fire Chiefs since 2008, which is when I first met Antonio. I have always been impressed with his calm demeanor, competency, intelligence, and natural leadership skills. His natural skills are complimented by his quench for additional knowledge through training and education. Assistant Director Stevens is an early graduate of our Junior Officer Leadership Academy that was created and designed for Caribbean fire officers. The emphasis in this program includes topics that include but are not limited to emotional intelligence, conflict resolution, active listening, appreciative inquiry, servant leadership, transformational leadership, diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. Stevens excelled in the program and was the class valedictorian. Fellow students leaned on him for advice and assistance in digesting the curriculum.

As a lifelong learner, Stevens has attended and completed some of the most revered emergency response programs in the United States, specifically, Texas A&M University. He has the work ethic, intellectual capacity, drive and determination to successfully execute the ever so important sworn duties as the next department head for the Virgin Islands Fire & Emergency Medical Service. He has high quotients both intellectually and emotionally. You will find Stevens to be intellectually curious, malleable, morally sound, and goal driven. Persons in positions of authority are not necessarily "leaders." They have an opportunity to lead, and they have an

opportunity to manage. It takes action to exercise leadership and to know when the time is appropriate to manage and when it is necessary to lead. The position that Assistant Director Stevens is being considered for requires someone who is adept at knowing the difference between the two. The dynamic nature of managing and leading a fire and emergency medical services organization lends itself to having to make critical decisions in an expeditious manner and in other situations, thoughtful consideration of all the facts and circumstances. I am confident that Stevens will serve your citizens, residents, visitors and members of the V.I. fire & emergency medical services organization with the utmost honor and distinction.

Without reservation or apprehension, I highly recommend Assistant Director Stevens for this critical role. His prior military service has reinforced his self-discipline and mission-oriented mentality. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Reginald D. Freeman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'R' and 'F'.

Reginald D. Freeman, PhD