

Virgin Islands Fire and Emergency Medical Services

Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure and Planning

36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands



January 29, 2026

Presented By: Antonio Stevens, Director

Good morning, Honorable Senator Marise C. James, Chair of the Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure and Planning, other distinguished Committee members, and the listening and viewing audience.

I am Antonio Stevens, Director of the Virgin Islands Fire and Emergency Medical Services (VIFEMS).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Bill 35-0206, an Act requiring the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority to expand the potable water distribution system, perform necessary upgrades to the existing potable water distribution system, and install fire hydrants in Estate Smith Bay, St. Thomas.

VIFEMS is in full support of the bill as written and looks forward to its successful passage and implementation.

Hydrants are a critical part of a community's infrastructure and are invaluable to firefighting operations. They provide firefighters with a steady, reliable source of water, allowing for quicker and more effective fire responses. With functional hydrants in an area, fire crews can spend less time establishing a water supply and can initiate fire attacks faster.

The addition of two hydrants in Estate Smith Bay would expand the existing water supply in the area and ensure firefighters have additional sources of water in the event of a fire. Given that the Smith Bay community has high-occupancy structures such as hotels and areas where structures are in close proximity to each other, the expanded water supply would be particularly beneficial.

VIFEMS is excited at the prospect of having additional resources in the Smith Bay area and hopes this body will take favorable action on Bill No. 36-0206.

This concludes my testimony today. My team and I are available to answer any questions you may have.