



VIRGIN ISLANDS PORT AUTHORITY

Gateways to the United States Virgin Islands and its Economy

ST. THOMAS/ST. JOHN DISTRICT

8074 Lindbergh Bay, St. Thomas, VI 00802
P.O. Box 301707, St. Thomas, VI 00803
Telephone: (340) 774-1629

ST. CROIX DISTRICT

Henry E. Rohlsen Airport Terminal, St. Croix, VI 00820
P.O. Box 1134, St. Croix VI 00820
Telephone: (340) 778-1012

Website: www.viport.com Email: info@viport.com

October 15, 2025

Honorable Senator Marise C. James
Chairperson
Committee on Disaster, Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning
36th Legislature of the U.S. Virgin Islands
3022 Estate Golden Rock
Christiansted St. Croix, VI 00820

Re: Bill No. 36-0135 - Expedited Building Permits for Developers

Dear Senator James:

Thank you for your invitation to the Virgin Islands Port Authority (VIPA) to present testimony regarding Bill No. 36-0135 before the 36th Legislature's Committee on Disaster, Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning. Unfortunately, due to scheduling conflicts, I am unable to attend today's hearing in person. Presenting this testimony on my behalf is VIPA's Assistant Executive Director Bill Rawlins, accompanied by VIPA Engineering Project Manager Tafari Nelson.

VIPA strongly endorses Bill No. 36-0135, which proposes an amendment to Title 29 of the Virgin Islands Code, specifically Chapter 5, Section 294. This amendment aims to introduce expedited building permitting procedures for developers engaged in infrastructure projects.

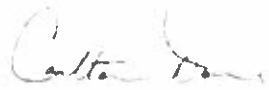
Currently, the permitting process for VIPA's infrastructure capital or redevelopment initiatives can be protracted, resulting in significant delays and increased costs. These prolonged timelines can hinder project momentum, affect budget allocations, and create uncertainties that may deter potential contractors or investors.

By implementing expedited permitting, this legislation will streamline the approval process, enable more efficient project management, and facilitate quicker access to

construction timelines. Such improvements not only help meet completion deadlines but also position the U.S. Virgin Islands as a more desirable location for development projects. Contractors can conduct business elsewhere, where the process is more straightforward and less time-consuming to initiate. Time constraints can hinder projects.

Moreover, expedited permitting can serve as a substantial revenue-generating mechanism for the Virgin Islands Government, enhancing the local economy while ensuring that critical infrastructure is developed on time. Overall, VIPA wholeheartedly supports the intent of this measure, recognizing its potential to foster growth and efficiency within the territory's development landscape. We do not recommend bypassing any regulatory processes. Existing rules and regulations must still be followed. Instead, we support streamlining processes to initiate projects more efficiently in the territory's interest.

Respectfully,



Carlton Dowe
Executive Director
Virgin Islands Port Authority