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## COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & AGRICULTURE

### AGENDA

The Committee on Economic Development and Agriculture has scheduled a meeting for Wednesday, April 16, 2025, at 10:00 AM in the Frits E. Lawaetz Legislative Conference Room on St. Croix, Virgin Islands to provide updates on the following:

#### BLOCK I - 10:00 AM

##### State of Agriculture in the Virgin Islands

The Department of Agriculture and key stakeholders will provide a comprehensive update on the state of agriculture in the Virgin Islands, including challenges faced by local farmers, ongoing initiatives to support agricultural production, food security efforts, and the availability of land, water, and financial resources. The discussion will also address workforce development within the agricultural sector, initiatives designed to strengthen local food production, the expansion of farm-to-table programs, sustainability initiatives, and opportunities for collaboration between government agencies and private stakeholders.

#### Invited Testifiers:

**Honorable Dr. Louis E. Petersen, Jr.**, Commissioner, Virgin Islands  
Department of Agriculture

**Dr. Nate Olive**, President, Virgin Islands Farmers Alliance

**Mr. Dale Brown**, Co-Owner, Sejah Farms

**Mrs. Yvette Brown**, Co-Owner, Sejah Farms

**Mrs. Sommer Sibilly-Brown**, Executive Director, VI Good Food Coalition

**Mr. Elridge Thomas**, Member, We Grow Food, Inc.

#### LUNCH BREAK

#### BLOCK II

##### Discussion on Bill No. 36-0063 – Clarification of Gross Receipts Tax Obligations for Contractors

The Committee will receive testimony on Bill No. 36-0063, An Act amending Title 33, Virgin Islands Code, Subtitle 1, Chapter 3, Sections 41, 42(a), and 43(a) and (c), to clarify that gross receipts taxes must be paid by all contractors doing business in the Virgin Islands regardless of physical location. This discussion aims to examine the implications of this legislation on tax compliance, enforcement mechanisms, and the potential economic-



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-impact on both local and external contractors. Testifiers will provide insights into the legal framework, administrative considerations, and anticipated outcomes.

### Invited Testifiers:

**Honorable Kevin G. McCurdy**, Commissioner, Department of Finance  
**Mr. Julio Rhymer, Sr.**, Director, Office of Management and Budget  
**Mr. Joel Lee**, Director, V.I. Bureau of Internal Revenue

### BLOCK III

#### **Discussion on Bill No. 36-0019 – Prohibiting Credit and Debit Card Surcharges**

The Committee will receive testimony on Bill No. 36-0019, An Act amending Title 12A, Virgin Islands Code, Chapter 2, Subchapter I, Section 101 to prohibit the imposition of a surcharge for the use of a credit card or debit card. The discussion will examine the potential impact of this legislation on businesses, consumers, and financial institutions. Testifiers will provide perspectives on legal considerations, consumer protection, and economic implications.

### Invited Testifiers:

**Ms. Glendina P. Matthew, Esq.**, Director, Division of Banking, Insurance, and Financial Regulation, Office of the Lieutenant Governor  
**Honorable Ian Clement**, Deputy Attorney General, Virgin Islands Department of Justice  
**Honorable Horace Graham**, Assistant Commissioner, Department of Licensing & Consumer Affairs  
**Mr. John P. Woods**, President, St. Thomas-St. John Chamber of Commerce  
**Mr. Akeel St. Jean, Esq.**, Chairman of the Board, St. Croix Chamber of Commerce