



COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & AGRICULTURE

AGENDA

REVISED I

MEMORANDUM

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TO: Members, Committee on Economic Development and Agriculture

Honorable Senator Angel L. Bolques, Vice-Chair
Honorable Senator Marvin A. Blyden
Honorable Senator Alma Francis-Heyliger
Honorable Senator Marise C. James, Esq.
Honorable Senator Franklin D. Johnson
Honorable Senator Clifford A. Joseph, Sr.

FROM: The Honorable Senator Hubert L. Frederick
Chairman, Committee on Economic Development and Agriculture

DATE: July 31, 2026

RE: **August 10, 2026 - Committee on Economic Development and Agriculture Meeting**

The Committee on Economic Development and Agriculture has scheduled a meeting for Monday, August 10, 2026, at 10:00 AM in the Frits E. Lawaetz Conference Room on St. Croix, Virgin Islands to provide testimony on the following:

BLOCK I – 10:00 AM TO 11:30 AM

The Committee will hear testimony from the Virgin Islands Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs regarding fuel pricing trends throughout the Territory, the Department's oversight and enforcement responsibilities, consumer protection efforts, and market conditions affecting gasoline and diesel prices.

Invited Testifiers:

- Honorable H. Nathalie Hodge, Commissioner
Virgin Islands Department of Licensing & Consumers Affairs

BLOCK II - 11:30 AM TO 1:00 PM

The Committee will receive testimony from the Virgin Islands Department of Tourism and the Virgin Islands Port Authority regarding the impact of the loss of Spirit Airlines service to the U.S. Virgin Islands, including the effect on airlift capacity, tourism, residents, business travel, and the Territory's economy. Testimony will address efforts to maintain and expand air service to the Territory, attract new or expanded service from other airlines, and ensure reliable and affordable transportation options for residents and visitors. The Committee will also examine discussions with domestic and international carriers to replace lost airlift capacity, increase route availability, and strengthen long-term air transportation access to and from the Territory. Additionally, the

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Department of Tourism will provide a post-event report on the 2026 St. John Celebration, including visitor attendance, economic impact, marketing and promotional efforts, transportation and logistical operations, and lessons learned for future events.

Invited Testifiers:

- Honorable Jeniffer Matarangas-King, Commissioner
Virgin Islands Department of Tourism
- Ms. Ava Penn, Interim Executive Director
Virgin Islands Port Authority

LUNCH BREAK - 1:00 PM TO 1:30 PM

BLOCK III - 1:30PM TO 3:00PM

The Committee will receive testimony related to *Bill No. 36-0087, an Act amending Title 7, Virgin Islands Code, by adding Chapter 16 to require the Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture to establish and manage a 30-acre orchard on St. Croix. Sponsored by Senator Marise C. James*

Invited Testifiers:

- Honorable Dr. Louis E. Petersen, Jr., Commissioner
Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture
- Dr. Usman Adamu, Dean and Director
University of the Virgin Islands, School of Agriculture
- Dale Brown, Owner
Sejah Farm, VI
- Sommer Sibily-Brown, Founder and Executive Director
Virgin Islands Good Food Coalition

Cc: All Senators
All Chiefs of Staff
All Divisions
Public Affairs