

THE HONORABLE SENATOR AVERY L. LEWIS

Legislative Secretary

36TH LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS



Chair: Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, Consumer Protection

Vice Chair: Committee on Education and Workforce Development

Member: Committee on Rules and Judiciary

Committee on Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks

Committee on Homeland Security, Justice and Public Safety

Committee of the Whole

AGENDA

TO: All Members, Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, and Consumer Protection

MEMBERS: Senator Ray Fonseca
Senator Alma Francis Heyliger
Senator Novelle E. Francis, Jr.
Senator Kenneth L. Gittens
Senator Franklin D. Johnson
Senator Carla J. Joseph

FROM: The Honorable Senator Avery L. Lewis 116
36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands

DATE: February 4, 2026

The Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, and Consumer Protection has scheduled a meeting for **Tuesday, February 10, 2026, at 9:00 AM** in the Frits E. Lawaetz Legislative Conference Room on St. Croix., U.S. Virgin Islands to provide updates on the following agencies and consideration of the following bills:

BLOCK I: 9:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

The Committee will receive testimony on the operations of the Department of Tourism including but not limited to enabling laws, current department challenges, a plan of action to resolve challenges and the following:

- Plans for the upcoming carnival season
- What to expect from the Division of Festivals
- Update on the outcome of the 2025-2026 Crucian Festival

INVITED TESTIFIER(S):

- Mrs. Jennifer Matarangas-King, Commissioner, Department of Tourism

BLOCK II: 11:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

The Committee will receive a comprehensive overview from charters being impacted by the BVI's newly implemented charter vessel licensing fees and all other information pertinent to the discussion, including but not limited to, the following:

- How these new charter fees are impacting their operations
- What challenges they are currently facing or anticipate in the near future
- What practical solutions, policy adjustments, or forms of support the Legislature can pursue to help stabilize and strengthen the marine economy across the Territory

INVITED TESTIFIER(S):

- Mr. Kennon Jones, Executive Director, Virgin Islands Professional Charter Association
- Mr. Steve Schlosser, Paradise Yacht Management
- Mr. Kelvin Bailey Jr., Virgin Islands Gamefish
- Jay Pennington, Waypoints Yacht Charters

BLOCK III: 1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

Bill No. 36-0150: An act honoring and commending Thelma Leona Petersen-Springer, posthumously, for her outstanding community service to the children and the people of the Virgin Islands ***Proposed by Senator Kenneth L. Gittens***

INVITED TESTIFIER(S):

- Mr. Charles Nibbs, Community Activist
- Ms. Sheniqua Robinson, Frederiksted Majorette Former Twirler

Bill No. 36-0225: A resolution honoring and commending Sharon Maria Williams for her outstanding achievements and significant contributions to the fields of education and culinary arts ***Proposed by Senator Kenneth L. Gittens***

INVITED TESTIFIER(S):

- Ms. Edna Thomas, Retired Educator
- Mr. John Abramson, Retired Civil Servant

BLOCK IV: 3:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

Bill No. 36-0226: A resolution honoring and commending Mrs. Janet Brow Phillips for her outstanding achievements and significant contributions to the fields of education and culinary arts to the Virgin Islands community ***Proposed by Senator Kenneth L. Gittens***

INVITED TESTIFIER(S):

- Ms. Mona Barnes, Apostle
- Mr. Dennis Brow, Brother
- Mr. Victor Somme, III, Assistant Commissioner of Virgin Islands Department of Education

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Bill No. 36-0227: A resolution honoring and commending the Armstrong Family, long-time owners of Armstrong Ice Cream for their exceptional contributions to the economic growth, cultural heritage, and development of the Virgin Islands *Proposed by Senator Kenneth L. Gittens*

INVITED TESTIFIER(S):

- Ms. Claire Roker, Retired Civil Servant
- Reverend Florence Petersen, Pastor

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