

December 19, 2025

To the Honorable Albert Bryan, Jr., Governor of the Virgin Islands of the United States, and the Honorable Senators of the 36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands of the United States:

The U.S. Virgin Islands' marine industry and broader blue economy stand at a pivotal crossroads: invest and thrive, or wither away. The recently concluded 2025 USVI Charter Yacht Show saw the lowest vessel attendance in its history outside of the pandemic years. Of the vessels that did attend, roughly two-thirds will operate out of the British Virgin Islands (BVI). By contrast, the British Virgin Islands celebrated their largest show ever—undeniably driven by companies shifting operations from the USVI to the BVI—taking with them more than \$90 million in lost economic activity that otherwise would have remained in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The BVI continues to accelerate its advantage. A \$30–\$40 million expansion of Nanny Cay Marina is underway to accommodate mega yachts and large catamarans that currently rely on Yacht Haven Grande in St. Thomas. Moreover, approvals for the long-awaited Terrance B. Lettsome (EIS) airport expansion continue to progress. Once completed, this will inevitably pull airlift capacity from Cyril E. King Airport (CEK), reducing incoming flights for residents and visitors and decreasing outbound travel choices for Virgin Islanders if airlines reposition routes to the BVI.

According to the Virgin Islands Bureau of Economic Research, the marine industry in 2024 generated approximately \$93 million in spending, \$43 million in wages, and a territorial economic output between \$69 million and \$133 million. Without corrective action, these numbers will decline.

Where do we go from here?

The Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands must seek fair treatment and reasonable fees from the BVI Government for USVI-based charter operators. Concurrently, the U.S. Virgin Islands must position itself as a destination of its own, rather than a gateway to the British Virgin Islands. We must grow local marine tourism by investing in infrastructure, workforce development, and business-friendly regulatory reform. The organizations represented in this letter reflect every corner of the blue economy: sport fishing, ferry services, dive operators, day charters, bareboat charters, and term charter operators. Collectively, we propose the following actions to revitalize the marine industry and secure the future of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

1. Invest and Build Locally

Current DPNR and CZM permitting processes are prohibitive to growth. LimeOut St. Thomas required three full years to secure approvals and navigate red tape to expand to a second location. How can we hope to compete with the BVI's diverse tourism offerings when even our most iconic marine attractions face such avoidable delays?

Beyond new attractions, the USVI urgently needs basic dinghy and small-craft access docks so that guests aboard charter vessels can easily reach shoreside businesses. When visitors step off their vessels and access restaurants, shops, and services, they spend money locally. That local spend and economic activity stays in the Territory rather than flowing to the BVI.

Areas of particular importance include:

- Downtown Charlotte Amalie
- Red Hook
- Cruz Bay and Coral Bay, St. John
- St. Croix's Boardwalk and the Frederiksted Cruise Pier Area

One of the most impactful improvements with minimal environmental impact would be establishing managed access and moorings at Magens Bay. A simple dinghy tie-off line on floats near shore, similar to the successful system used in the St. John National Park, paired with properly installed moorings would create a world-class stop for charter guests. The shoreside amenities already exist: a restaurant, bar, restrooms, and supporting infrastructure. A management agreement allowing for reasonable user fees and mooring fees could fully fund installation, maintenance, and ongoing operations.

Under Title 12, Section 910 of the Virgin Islands Code, the Legislature may act in place of the CZM Committee to expedite permit approvals in the public interest. We strongly encourage using this authority to rapidly develop this essential marine infrastructure.

2. Invest in Infrastructure and Skills Training

Over the past eight years, VIPCA has delivered marine apprenticeship training to nearly 100 Virgin Islanders seeking long-term careers in the marine trades. A strong marine industry produces strong local jobs.

The single most transformative investment the USVI can make is the development of a world-class shipyard in St. Thomas, ideally at the former Adelita Cancryn School property or another suitable location in St. Thomas. Such a facility could host the Caribbean's largest vessel-lifting and repair capacity and serve as a training hub for technical trades, apprenticeships, and long-term, high-wage careers.

Without a functioning shipyard, we cannot expect to expand the marine trades or even maintain them. With the impending closure and relocation of Subbase Dry Dock, the USVI will lose the ability to service and inspect its own ferry fleet.

3. Implement Business-Friendly Regulations

The dollar thresholds for Major CZM Permits have not been updated since 1979. As a result, any project exceeding \$55,000—even a modest beach bar or public dock—triggers the same

permitting requirements as constructing a cruise pier. This stifles small and medium-scale development. Additionally, operating a charter business in the USVI is more expensive than in the BVI. The USVI can narrow this gap by:

- Reducing the Gross Receipts Tax for charter operators
- Eliminating duplicative DLCA licensing requirements

A vessel's commercial registration with DPNR, along with mandatory safety inspections, should serve as sufficient licensing to operate legally.

A one-stop shop for commercial vessel registration should be established. Bureaucracy is poison to innovation and growth. A simple DLCA-managed portal that enables vessels to be registered for commercial work in a single streamlined process would eliminate the current multi-department overlap, which slows business, increases costs, and discourages investment.

4. Revive the Sport Fishing Industry and the Boy Scout Open

From 1972 to 2017, St. Thomas hosted the world-renowned Virgin Islands Open/Atlantic Blue Marlin Tournament, known as the “Boy Scout”—once called “The Super Bowl of Big-Game Fishing.” New licensing restrictions imposed by the BVI ultimately ended the tournament, along with the millions of dollars in economic activity it generated.

We urge the Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands to work with the Government of the British Virgin Islands to establish reciprocal licensing, customs, and fishing agreements that would relaunch the tournament to the benefit of both territories. With fleets based at American Yacht Harbor and Scrub Island Marina, proceeds could again support Scouting organizations in both the USVI and BVI.

5. Prioritize Environmental Stewardship and Derelict Vessel Removal

The Territory must fully utilize federal and local resources to remove the many abandoned and derelict vessels that continue to pollute our waters and pose navigational hazards. These vessels can be reprocessed locally, with crushed fiberglass repurposed as aggregate material for concrete and asphalt—reducing the long-term costs of road and infrastructure repairs.

Importantly, federal grants for environmental cleanup, resiliency, and coastal restoration projects typically require matching funds. To ensure the USVI can fully capitalize on these opportunities, the Government should establish a dedicated matching fund specifically reserved for environmental and marine infrastructure grants.

A portion of each vessel's DPNR registration fee should be directed into this dedicated matching fund, ensuring a reliable and sustainable revenue stream that unlocks federal dollars and enables

timely removal of abandoned and derelict vessels. This approach guarantees that the Territory is never forced to forgo federal support simply due to a lack of matching dollars.

The opportunity is here, and the time is now, to make bold investments and forward-thinking decisions that will secure the future of the U.S. Virgin Islands' blue economy. We stand ready to support and assist in implementing these recommendations and respectfully request your feedback and engagement.

Sincerely submitted,



Kennon Jones, Executive Director
Virgin Islands Professional Charter Association

Along with:

Guy Collins
&Beyond Yacht Charters
Owner

Leslie Lipert
&Beyond Yacht Charters
Yacht Chef / Owner Operator

Zachary Zook
81C
Business Owner

Lela Joannidis
A Sailboat Vacation Ltd. d.b.a
Boatsatsea.com
Head of Operations

Jake Lockwood
Above Deck Ltd
Broker

Alexandra Fields
&Beyond Yacht Charters
Believen Crew

Belinda Richardson
&Beyond Yacht Charters
Crew

Szilvia Gango
A Sailboat Vacation Ltd. d.b.a
Boatsatsea.com
Assistant Broker

Sherry Moore
A Sailboat Vacation Ltd. d.b.a
Boatsatsea.com
Caribbean Charter Specialist

Daphne Nelson
Above-Board Accounting
Owner

Josef Buxton
ACY Yachts Fountaine Pajot
Partner & Florida Manager

Kyle Osmun
Adventure Scuba
Owner

Aleksandra Holowienko
All Inclusive Charters LLC
Charter Yacht Broker

Matthias Bitterwolf
Antillean yacht charter
Owner

Randy Tucker
Avanta Yacht Charters
Owner

Mark Eddy
BamaBreeze Charters
Owner

Dianne McNeal
Benham & Hodge PC
Office Manager

Trudi King
Best of BVI
Owner

Mariesa Barbara
Blue Canyon Charters

Mary Jane
Boat captain
Captain

Patrick Lee
Boatbookings
Charter Consultant

Steve Clay
ACY/ Waypoints
Yacht Consultant

Bradley Flowers
Adventures of Saltwater Taffy
Owner/operator

Chanda Ke
An hour late and Dive bar
Bartender

Arletta Robbins
Arlee AI
CEO

Shelly Tucker
Avanta Yacht Charters
Owner

Natalie Rucker
Barefoot Cowboy
Owner/chef

Kyle Murphy
Bernies
Bartender

Taylor Smith
Between Lands LLC

Diane Gelaude
Blue Horizon Yacht Charters LTD
President

Capucine de Vallee
Boatbookings
CEO

Jacqueline Morrison
Boatbookings
Charter Broker

Ben Sutton
Boatbookings

Lampros Tsolakis
Boatbookings
Charter Director

Tara Sheen
Boating Citizen

Pamela Coffee
Boats at Sea
Broker

Sara Hajdu
Boats at Sea

Jim Shrove
Boats at Sea
Caribbean Charter Specialist

Captain Daniel Conashevick
BoatTingVI
President

Laura Bloem
Bonus Time Boat Charters
Assistant

Andrew Bloem
Bonus Time Charters
Owner & Operator

Bryan Leary
Bonus Time Charters
Captain

Riley Boyd
Box Bar
Bartender

Cory Busichio
C and E on Water LLC

Emily Busichio
C and E on Water LLC

Arthur Scarr
Calo Waves
Captain

Jacob Calo
Calo Waves LLC
Owner

Shawna Scarr
Calo Waves LLC
Captain/Chef

Robert Alport
Captain School USVI
President

Lynne Campbell
Carefree Yacht Charters
Owner

Jared Buckstein
Caribbean Alibi & Freelance Captain
Captain

Melissa Nelson
Caribbean Life Properties, LLC
Owner

Eric Chaney
Chaney Industries
Owner

Tyler Dunn
Charter Caribe
Broker

Casey Strickland
Charter Caribe
Chef

Kristi Marquart
Charter Smarter
Yacht Charter Specialist

Sylvie Reis
CHEF REIS
Chef

William Bailey
Christie's International Real Estate
Broker

Chris Patrick
CKIM Group Inc
CEO

Dennis Pemberton
Cool Breeze Marine Svcs
Manager

Kristin E Tuohy
Corcoran Millwork and design

Kosei Ohno
Crown Bay Marina
President

JCoi Lawrence
Cruz Bay Watersports

Tom Molnar
Charter
Owner

Joseph Stone
Charter Caribe
Manager

Keith Allen
Charter Caribe - Aeolus
Captain

Amanda Brillante
Charterworld
Senior Charter Broker

ROBYN MCCARTY
Chillaxin Charters, LLC
Charter Yacht Broker

Kelsey Thomas
Christie's International Real Estate US Virgin
Islands

Elizabeth White
Concierge Yachting
CEO/Founder

Sandra Anderson
Cool Cat Charters, LLC
Owner

Kevin McCartney
CrewZen VI Charters
Owner

Mark Turner
Cruises Yachts and Villas
Owner

Brian Saupe
CSalt Charters
Captain

Lauren Hodgins
CYI Charters
Owner

Rusty Day
DayDream
Owner/Captain

RJ Portmann
Delana Mae
Captain

Jason Mackay
Dock Holiday
Captain

Brooke Robertson
Drift Charters
Owner/Operator

Trevon Baker
Dulce Vita Sailing Excursions, LLC
Member

Trevon Baker
Dulce Vita Sails, LLC
Owner/Operator

Gerald Remick
Elite Excursions USVI
Crew

Sean Livie
Empire Boat Charters
Owner

Cheilinett Espinosa
Espinosa
CEO

Ignacio Francisco Peluffo
Dawe Yachts
Director

Neely Powell
DayDream
Chef/Retail store owner

Lisa Bertrand
Dinghy's Beach Bar and Grill
Owner

Jerry Cowan
Donkey Dive Llc
President

Forrest Robertson
Drift Charters
Owner/Operator

Stephanie Baker
Dulce Vita Sails LLC
Owner

Scott Koster
Elite Excursions

Norma Livie
Empire Boat Charters
Owner

Chelsea Telford
Enkai Sushi Bar, Yacht Haven Grande

Kristin Wall
Fish Face, Inc.
Owner

Kathryn Prestera
Freelance
Chef

Matthew Stopher
Fuego del Mar, Corp.
Owner

Isaac Robinson
Fun Water Tours
Captain

Michael Sauvan
Fun Water Tours / Adventure Scuba
Captain

Susan Gearan
Global Yacht Concierge
Owner

Audrey Harper
Harper Yachting
Owner

Marianne Rasmussen
Honeywave LLC

Shachar Ben-David
INDULGE II LLC
Captain

Scott Woelfel
Irie Feelin
Owner

Joel Alferness
Island Hopper Boat Charters, llc
CEO

Andrea King
Island Yacht Charters Inc.
President

Crystal Stopher
Fuego del Mar, Corp
Owner

Anders Hansen
Fun Water Tours
Crew

Serena Young
Fun Water Tours
Captain

Chalaine Barry
Gemini Productionz
Owner

April Idlett
GoMojo Tender Rentals
Owner

Sasha King
High Point Yachting
Director

Orris Scribner
Inconceivable Marine Services
Captain/Owner

Charlotte Smith
Interior Cleaner
Owner

Andrea Woelfel
Irie Feelin
Owner

Christine Duamond
Island Hopper Boat Charters, llc
CFO

Jim Jackson
Jamann Sailing Adventures/Captain School
Jamann Owner/Captain School Instructor

Jota Escaran
JotaLabs
Owner

Dirk DeLo
Le Rêve
Owner/Operator

Dane Tarr
Lime Out
Owner

Anthony Pearsall
Local Mocean Charters, LLC
Owner/Operator

Alexandria Holder
Luxe VI Services
Owner

mike simpson
Lyric Sails
Captain

Donald Harper
M/Y Serendipity
Captain

Ted Norris
Maho Apparel, LLC
President

Kevin Jonas
Mainsail Yacht Charters
Owner

Jervan Jackson
Midnight Sun Charters

Covey Charles
Laundromat
President

George Silver
Lews Charter

Christopher K Klein
Local Legend Charters
Owner/Captain

Katie Zachary
Love City Excursions
Owner

Jennifer Simpson
Lyric Sails
Crew

Emily Weston
Lyric Sails LLC
Owner

Lisa Duncan
Mad Max Signs
Member

Ameda Smith
Maids of Amalie
Owner

Jean Lynn
Marine Draft Diesel
Partner

Istvan Jakab
Midnight Sun Charters
Owner

John Schafer
Ministry of Sailing
CEO

Jonathan Chivilo
Myst Yacht Charters
Yacht Broker

Stephanie Reynolds
Myst Yacht Charters
Broker

Nicci Roos
Nicci's Boutique
Owner

Mason Randall
Northside Charter
Director of Operations

Nicole Smith
Ocean Posse
Ambassador

Jeremy Prudhomme
Ocean Runner Powerboat Rentals and Low
Key Watersports
General Manager

Jeni Osborn
Oceans by Moving Mountains
Broker

Christopher Cilliers
Offshore Marine
General Manager

Abrie Cilliers
Offshore Marine
President

Theodore Danet
Offshore Marine
Parts Manager

Shannon Danet
Offshore Marine
Service Manager

Steve Richards
Offshore Marine
Controller

Harald Tapp
Offshore Marine
Sales Manager.

Daniel Flynn
Okeana / Yacht Collective
Captain

Ryan Matthews
On the Sea Charters
Owner

Brian Bennett
OTL Charters
Captain

Scott Sawyer
Out of the Blue Yacht Charters LLC
Broker

Daniel Whalen
Over The Line
Captain

Garth Hudson
Over The Line Charters
Owner

Christopher Metting
Palm Tree Charters
Captain

Dan Cole
Paradise Yacht Management
CFO

Rachael Denning
Paradise Yacht Management
Captain / chef

Bradley Marquart
Paradise Yacht Management

Melissa Riely
Paradise Yacht Management
Marketing Manager

Jamie Still
Paradise Yacht Management
Captain

Brandon Johnson
Paradise Yacht Management
Owner/Captain

Jade Dalton
Picnics Under Palms
Owner

Benjamin Schwartz
Playland Marine LLC
Owner

Rico van Rooyen
Private
Captain

Nicholas Cann
PYC
Captain

Steven Carroll
Paradigm Shift LLC
Owner

Emily Cuevas
Paradise Yacht Management
Chef

Brenda Hampton
Paradise Yacht Management

Bryan Mason
Paradise Yacht Management
Captain

Deborah Schlosser
Paradise Yacht Management

Adriana Vega
Paradise Yacht Management
Captain

Cory Crowner
Phoenix Island Charters
Owner

Katelynn Hackl
Pizza Pi
Owner

Randy Shaw
Private

Hope Collins
Pura Vida charter catamaran
Owner

Arun Keshap
Quantum Sails
Prop.

Jim Garrett
Red Hook Dive Center
Owner

Byron Bell
Red Hospitality
Director of Shoreside Operations

Ian Popple
Reef Smart Inc.
Founder and CEO

Anthony Nairns
Renaissance Marine
Owner

Eric Bagnall
Risk Strategies
Business Development

Joel Sigdestad
S/V Knot 5280
Owner / Operator

Bonnie Carroll
S/V Paradigm Shift
Owner

Hodson White
S/V Paradigm Shift
Captain

Stephen Wentworth
Sabrage

Blaine Kubesh
Sail Abundance
Owner/Operator

Rebecca Nall
Red Hook Dive Center
Manager

Jeremy Schachner
Red Sky Marine Services, LLC
Owner

Anthony Nairns
Renaissance marine
owner

Mark Russell
Ripcat LLC
owner/master

Nicole Caulfield
RJC Yacht Sales & Charter
Charter Manager

Holly Sigdestad
S/V Knot 5280
Owner / Operator

Kari White
S/V Paradigm Shift
Chef

Tyler Boruff
S/Y Ohana
Captain

Aaron Wentworth
Sabrage Charters
President

Molly Winkelman
Sail to Sea ILC
Business Owner

Theodore Jennings
Sailing Asante
Owner/Captain

Robert Corey
Sailing the Cosmos Charters
Owner

christian rosenberg
Saint Thomas Yacht Club
Commodore

Micheale Zazo
Sand and Sea Yacht Charters
Owner

Deshawn Creque
Scrubbies Boat Wash 340 LLC
Operator, Manager

Kenneth Anderson
SeaHorse Water Taxi
Owner

Carol Bareuther
Self

Laura Martin
Self

Jennifer Sutton
Self employed
Charter Chef/Mate

Hugh O'Brien
Serena Yacht Charters LLC
Yacht Captain

Hillary Harrelson
Shades of Blue Charters, LLC
Captain

Roy Rucker
Sailing Barefoot Cowboy
Owner/Captain

Jacqueline Colvin
Saint John Boat Charters
Owner

Rachele Beckwith
Salty Soul Yacht Charters
Owner

Jim Hughes
SAVE
President

Scott Schroeder
Sea Green Charters, LLC
Owner

Jonathan Bushnell
See and Ski
Captain

Kevin Gregory
Self

Alesha Bowman
Self employed
Captain

Niyah Potter
Self Employed Captain
Captain

Vivianne Swietelsky
Serena Yacht Charters LLC
Owner/Operator

Debra Burzycki
Shades of Blue Charters, LLC
Owner

Michael Burzycki
Shades of Blue Charters, LLC
Owner/Operator

Kelly Quinn
Singingdogsailing
Owner

Mac McClafferty
Social Hospitality Group Inc
President & Partner

Nate Fifer
Sonic Charters
Captain

Peter Holmberg
Southgate Racing Inc.
President

Nicholas Shrouder
Splash Time
Captain

Mindy Michtner
St John Dinghy Rentals
Owner

Cecile Castruccio-DeReu
St. Croix Yacht Club Inc
Treasurer

Matthew Quetel
St. Rose Fishing Company

Christian Reilly
St. Thomas Leisure Boat Charters, LLC
Co-Owner

Capt. David Elenbaum
Stella Blue Ventures, LLC
Captain

Spencer Consolvo
Shell Seekers
President

Michael McCarty
Sky Garden STX
Managing Partner

Eric Edie
Sonic Charters
Captain

Becky Otis
Sonic Charters
Crew

Rafael Echemendia
Spear It Animal LLC
Owner

Theda Sandiford
St Croix Yacht Club

Carey Guilbeau
St. Croix Yacht Club

Luke Quetel
St. Rose Fishing Company

Elizabeth Reilly
St. Thomas Leisure Boat Charters, LLC
Co-owner

Thomas McCoy
St. Thomas Sail & Power Boat Squadron
Captain

Jonathan Alba
STX By Sea

Christopher Sublett
Sublett Appliance Service LLC
Owner

Kevin Simmons
Sun Goddess Adventures LLC
Captain

Roger Lipert
SV BelieveN
Owner / Captain

Hope Swift
Swift Yacht Charters & Villas LLC
Owner and President

Kristina Shiao
The Box Bar

Stephanie Carballo
The Pink Palm Hotel
GM

Chaliese Summers
The Summers End Group, LLC
Member Manager

Erika Boruff
The Yachting Professionals
Former VIPCA BOD Member

Javan Douglas
Transportation Services of St. John
Crew/Union Shop Steward

Nicholas Hoyt
TROPLESS Healthy Cocktail Mixers
Founder

Stephanie Johnson
Sublime sailing
President

Cheryl Simmons
Sun Goddess Adventures LLC
Owner/Operator, Captain & Chef

James Fitch
Swift Yacht Charters
Charter Broker

Iyad Abhary
Taxi and Limousine

Chip Engelhard
The Fred
GM

Rick Barksdale
The Summers End Group, LLC
Member

Chris Watson
The Tropical Adventure Group
CEO

Michael Morales
Three Sheets Regatta
Founding Member

Michael Sullivan
Tropical Pearl Charters
President

Caitie Rosko
Uncharted Collection, LLC
Founder

Robert Low
Under the Sun VI
Owner

William Van Rensselaer
VI Ferments

Justin Tyrrell
VI Power Boat Rentals LLC
Owner

Bernie Lacy
Villa Blue Rock
Owner

Kennon Jones
VIPCA
Executive Director

Steve Schlosser
VIPCA
Board Member, Founder

Siboney Trevino
VIPCA
President

Chris Shoupe
Voodoo Charters
CEO

Robin Block-Taylor
Wave Consulting
VP, Business Development

David Whidden
Waypoints Yacht Charters
Consultant/Affiliate

Jay Pennington
Waypoints Yacht Charters
Director of US Operations

Colin Wadsworth
VI Boat Charters LLC
Owner

Jeffrey Chase
VI Orthopaedics and Medical Specialists
Owner

Stephen Thornton
VI Powerboat Rentals/Sonic Charters
Captain

Jonica Aubain
VIPCA
Member

Melissa Popple
VIPCA
Director of Events

Kelly Storch
VIPCA
Member

Melody Delgado
Virgin Island Sailing®
Owner

Jacquie Exton
Water Island resident
Captain

Christian Bent
Waypoints Yacht Charters
Managing Partner

Els Kraakman
Waypoints Yacht Charters
Crewed Charter Specialist

Susan Restauri
Waypoints Yacht Charters
Owner Care Liaison

JP Dunaway
Whereabouts Unknown Charters LLC
Owner

Casey Grimes
Yacht Collective LLC
Owner

Timothy Clark
Yacht Indulgence
Captain

Laura B Duncan
Yacht Serena

Capt. Mike Johnson
Yachts Worldwide
Charter Broker, VIPCA Board Member

Shauna Hochreiter
Zen Waves

Elizabeth DiDomenico
American Yacht Harbor
General Manager

Bret Van Roden
Yacht Collective
Owner

Charles Irons
Yacht Haven Grande
General Manager - Real Estate & Marina

Michael D'Amico
Yacht INDULGENCE

Matthew Weidert
Yacht Warriors
Founder

Sherry Yates
Yates Yachts
Owner

Chad Blake
Nautical Trips and Consulting
Owner