

Testimony on Bill No. 36-0220
Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, Consumer Protection
36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands
Presented by: Crystal L Bryan

Good day Honorable Senator Avery L. Lewis, chairman of the Committee on Government Operations, Veteran's Affairs, and Consumer Protection, distinguished members of the Committee, other members of the 36th Legislature present, fellow testifiers, ladies and gentlemen in the chambers, and the listening and viewing audience. My name is Crystal Bryan, niece of the late Senator Lorraine L. Berry. On behalf of Senator Berry's entire family circle, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today and am privileged to provide testimony in support of Bill No. 36-0220, which seeks to honor and commend former Senator Lorraine L. Berry posthumously for her decades of outstanding public service by renaming Hull Bay Road in North Side, St. Thomas, as "Lorraine L Berry Drive."

Senator Berry was a distinguished public servant whose courageous leadership and unwavering dedication profoundly shaped the political, social, and economic landscape of our territory. Throughout her career in government and elected office, Senator Berry exemplified integrity, purpose, and an extraordinary commitment to the people she served. She was elected to the Legislature for 12 consecutive terms, demonstrating ongoing public trust. Over her 24 years of service, Senator Berry held significant leadership positions, including majority leader, vice president, and twice as Senate president—a distinction achieved by only two women in the history of the Virgin Islands.

I will not go into details, or we will be here through next week, but as a legislator, Senator Berry championed landmark initiatives that strengthened families, advanced economic development, broadened business and employment opportunities, enhanced public safety, and promoted access to quality healthcare across the Virgin Islands. Her efforts extended beyond legislative chambers; she organized impactful symposiums and forums, advocated passionately for women's and health issues, and elevated the need to focus on education and the children of our territory. She was our "Voice of Reason," always ready to talk politics, offer a listening ear, or respectfully debate a topic all while being impeccably put together – she was always sharp!

Her eloquence, intelligence, fairness, and mastery of legislative matters earned her deep respect from colleagues, organizations, and the broader community. Her high standards, political acumen, and tireless service set a distinguished example of public leadership. Senator Berry was a public servant for all and gave her life to the people of the Virgin Islands.

As a descendent of the French community, I acknowledge with appreciation the important actions Senator Berry undertook to secure the formal recognition of the French descendants

and their contribution to the Virgin Islands through the creation of French Heritage Week. She collaborated effectively with local civic groups, including the Northside Sport Fishing Club and the Frenchtown Civic Organization, to observe Bastille Day and honor French Virgin Islander heritage. The initiative included official Government House ceremonies, a scholarship essay contest, the French Cultural Fair at Sib's Parking Lot, and the Ms. French Heritage pageant. Many of these efforts persist today, and there is hope to revitalize those that have diminished over time.

Senator Berry's legacy is distinguished by her integrity, courage, and steadfast commitment to the people of the Virgin Islands. Her contributions have left a lasting impact on the territory, influencing its development for future generations. The dedication of Hull Bay Road in her name aims to further honor her work and serve as a continual reminder of what can be achieved through passion, determination, and love for the people of the Virgin Islands. As a lifelong resident of the Northside community, it is fitting to recognize Senator Berry's service by renaming Hull Bay Road as "Lorraine L. Berry Drive" in acknowledgment of her significant contributions.

On behalf of my entire family, thank you for allowing me to offer this testimony in full support of Bill 36-0220.