



GOVERNMENT OF
the VIRGIN ISLANDS of the UNITED STATES
OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS



Virgin Islands Office of Veterans Affairs Senate Testimony
Women Veterans Coordinator
June 29, 2026

Chairman of the Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, and Consumer Protection, the Honorable Senator Avery L. Lewis; committee members; and other distinguished Senators of the 36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands of the United States, pleasant good day to you.

Additional greetings to everyone physically present, those viewing via the Legislature's LEGIT TV, and those following through other media sources. Special greetings and prayers to our servicemen and women currently serving around the world. You are serving during unpredictable times, but please know you are in our hearts every step of the way.

To those who have borne the battle, known to us as our Veterans, thank you for your service to our country and our beloved Territory.

To the staff of the Virgin Islands Office of Veterans Affairs, whom I refer to as the "Pillars of the Office of Veterans Affairs" (Mrs. Frederick, Ms. Daniel, and Mrs. Gordon), thank you for your daily commitment to our Veterans. Your dedication enhances their quality of life and exemplifies our mission.

I am Patrick D. Farrell, Director of the Virgin Islands Office of Veterans Affairs. I appreciate the opportunity to testify today in strong support of Bill No. 36-0279: An act amending title 3 Virgin Islands Code by creating the position of Women Veterans Coordinator within the Office of Veterans Affairs Proposed by Senator Marise C. James, Esq.

At the onset, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to Senator Marise C. James, the sponsor of this legislation, for her leadership and foresight in recognizing the importance of this issue. Being a Veteran herself of the United States Army, her commitment to ensuring that women who have served our nation receive the advocacy, outreach, and support they deserve is both commendable and deeply appreciated.



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I also wish to thank the members of this Committee for taking the time to consider this important measure and for your continued commitment to improving the lives of Virgin Islands Veterans.

As Director of the Virgin Islands Office of Veterans Affairs, I have often said that our responsibility extends beyond helping Veterans access benefits, it is to improve their quality of life. Bill No. 36-0279 reflects that very principle. It is an investment in the well-being of a growing population of Veterans who have served our nation with distinction and who deserve a dedicated advocate within our agency.

The Virgin Islands has always answered the call when our nation needed us. Our women Veterans also answered that call with courage, professionalism, and honor. Today, through the consideration of this honorable body, we now have an opportunity to answer their call. A call for support.

On behalf of the Virgin Islands Office of Veterans Affairs and the women Veterans we proudly serve, I respectfully ask for your favorable consideration and support of Bill No. 36-0279.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and may God continue to bless the Veterans of the Virgin Islands, the United States Virgin Islands, and the United States of America.

I would be pleased to answer any questions the Committee may have.

Thank you.