

Testimony on Bill 36-0009

March 23, 2026

Good morning, Senator Avery Lewis, Chairperson of the Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, and Consumer Protection; other committee members; other Senators of the 36th Legislature; ladies and gentlemen present; and those in the viewing and listening audience. I am Delia Thomas, Virgin Islands Inspector General. I am here today to offer my full support for the passage of Bill No. 36-0009, a resolution honoring and commending Mr. Steven van Beverhoudt Sr. for his dedicated service and numerous contributions to the people of the Virgin Islands.

From 1989 to 2021, as the Virgin Islands Inspector General, Mr. van Beverhoudt's tenure has been characterized by his unwavering dedication to enhancing government operations. He was responsible for issuing at least 74 reports and making 690 recommendations for improvement to various departments and agencies.

The investigations initiated under his tenure resulted in at least 354 counts and 14 convictions. Fraud charges filed included bribery, conflict of Interest, conspiracy, conversion of government funds, conversion of government property,

embezzlement, extortion, forgery, fraudulent claims against the government, grand larceny, mail fraud, money laundering, obtaining money by false pretense, payroll fraud, perjury, program fraud, and wire fraud. His commitment to upholding government integrity was rooted in his commitment to transparency.

He exhibited an unwavering commitment to building an independent and trusted Virgin Islands Inspector General's Office, which entailed over 10 years of hard work, research, and lobbying to advance legislation toward this end and to serve this community better. His successful effort would not have been possible without the courageous support of this body on December 14, 1999, when the 23rd Legislature provided the override, thereby creating Act 6333, The Office of the VI Inspector General in its current form.

In addition to contributing to the office's structural existence, Mr. van Beverhoudt dedicated himself to supporting his staff's professional development to strengthen the work product. As a result, he left behind six employees who had earned their Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE) designation.

Furthermore, as is evident to everyone who traverses the lower Main Street and Savan area, he took pride in the physical upkeep of the government-owned building

that occupies the Office of the Virgin Islands Inspector General. The building's exterior benefits the community, and its interior provides a safe, positive environment for employees.

As an employee who joined the office in 1989, I have always known Mr. van Beverhoudt to be a humble person, dedicated to his family, his profession, and his employees' progress. He is not the kind of person who would ask for or expect such an honor. But it's an honor well deserved.

As a Virgin Islander, I am proud to have had the opportunity, to have this lived experience, working alongside a true Virgin Islands hero. Future generations will learn about the exemplary person that he is and his works, and be inspired by his life.

I want to express my sincere gratitude for the opportunity to be here today. And, congratulations, Steve. Well deserved.

This concludes my testimony.