



**GOVERNMENT OF
THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES
OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**



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Written Testimony in Support of Bill No. 36-0007

May 20, 2025

Honorable Senator Avery L. Lewis, - Chairman of the Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, and Consumer Protection, other Senators of the 36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands of the United States, all that are present, listening via radio, or viewing via the Legislature's LEGIT TV, a pleasant good day to you.

I am Patrick D. Farrell, your Director of the Virgin Islands Office of Veterans Affairs.

Today I submit this testimony in strong support of Bill No. 36-0007, a resolution honoring and commending Mr. James Sasso for his distinguished service in the mortuary and funeral service industry. In that same breath, I want to say a heartfelt thank you to Senator Angel L. Bolques Jr. for sponsoring this timely and well-deserved measure.

Please accept my sincere apologies for not being physically present for today's hearing. I am currently addressing pressing matters concerning the Veterans of our beloved Virgin Islands, which require immediate attention. Nonetheless, I felt it imperative to submit this written testimony to ensure my voice is added to the choir of many others recognizing the remarkable contributions of Mr. James Sasso.

In my capacity as the State Director of the Virgin Islands Office of Veterans Affairs, I have had the honor of working with many dedicated professionals in the funeral service industry. Among them, Mr. James Sasso consistently stands out for the dignity, grace, and professionalism with which he serves the families of Veterans and residents at large during some of their most difficult moments.

Families, in this case those of our cherished Veterans, repeatedly express how comforted they feel when Mr. Sasso is present at the homegoing of their loved ones. To see him extend his hands containing his penguin styled hat in one and his cane in the other captures the attention of all in attendance. If a song of his liking, or by the family's request is being played for the recession, it then becomes a wrap, you will definitely get a couple of appropriate dance moves right along with it. He leads the coffin with a poise and style that brings a sense of peace to grieving hearts. While there are many capable funeral directors across our territory, Mr. Sasso is frequently requested by name, a testament to the lasting impression he leaves on all who witness his contribution. Let's not get it twisted though, not only is he a joy to watch, Mr. Sasso gives all families the kind of attention needed from start to finish. His attention to detail, compassionate demeanor, and unwavering commitment to excellence have brought honor not only to his profession, but to our entire community. He is more than deserving of this honor.

I respectfully ask this Committee and the full body to pass Bill No. 36-0007 formally recognizing Mr. Sasso's invaluable contributions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony. Respectfully, Patrick D. Farrell