

LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
OFFICIAL TESTIMONY SUBMISSION

Testimony of Vernon Carr

Good Morning Senators,

With established protocol observed, I would first like to thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony this morning on this matter. I also want to express my sincere gratitude to this honorable body for bringing forward a bill that recognizes and honors a great man—one who gave his life in service to protect our community.

Long before any of us ever considered joining the Virgin Islands Police Department, Delberth Phipps Jr. and I were best friends. We were the kind of friends who did everything together—working on cars, building sound systems, and most of all, riding our motorcycles. To know Delberth, or as we all called him, “Buju,” was truly an honor.

Buju was the glue that kept us all connected. Now that he is gone, I truly see just how strong he was—not just as an officer, but as a friend and as a person. He made it a priority to check in on you and your family, always ensuring everyone was doing well and in good health.

More than that, Delberth made sure people found joy, even during difficult times. He had a way of calming situations before they escalated. He was the kind of person you could call at any hour, and he would answer without hesitation, ready to help.

Sadly, that same dedication led to that tragic day on July 4th, 2023. While many were heading to St. John for Carnival, Delberth heard a call for service and chose to respond—leaving his breakfast behind to assist fellow officers in need.

There are many days I still find myself questioning why it had to be him. I did not just lose a coworker or a friend—I lost the only brother I had.

The road being designated in his honor carries a significance far greater than words can express. It connects our community to key institutions and reflects the very path of service he walked every day.

Delberth “Buju” Phipps Jr. will always be a hero in my eyes—not because of how he died, but because of how he lived.

Respectfully submitted,

Vernon Carr