

Vivianne P. Newton (Testifier)  
Testimony for March 23, 2026  
Re: Bill No 36-0191

Good day Honorable Senator-At-Large Angel Bolques, Jr. and his fellow honorable senators. With protocol already established, it is an absolute honor and a blessing to be here today to provide testimony in support of Bill No. 36-0191, an act honoring and commending Detective Delberth Phipps Jr. for his service with the Virgin Islands Police Department and to the Virgin Islands community, by renaming the portion of Hospital Gade where it intersects with Veteran's Drive, at the Alexander Farrelly Criminal Justice Complex, to the beginning of Maude Proudfoot Drive, the "Delberth Phipps, Jr. Street". I know that I first have to speak about Delberth Ian Phipps, Jr. aka "Junie", "Del", "Buju", or "Old man" which were some of the names he would be called by me depending on the mood I was in or if he had gotten me upset. Delberth was not only a colleague, a classmate, or a friend, he was my big brother. He was also my protector, my car guru, my personal chef, my comedian, and my saviour many of times (from frogs, flat(s) on the side of the road, food delivery man, etc.).

Delberth was a son of St. Thomas whose life left a quiet but powerful mark on all who knew him. He was a simple kind of guy who liked nice things but took pride in working for them. He was in every sense, a family man, a gentle giant—loving, peaceful, and grounded in a humility that never sought recognition, yet earned it effortlessly. He carried himself with a calm strength, the kind that made people feel safe and respected in his presence. I can not tell you the number of times that I have called him freaking out about my car making some kind of noise, a flat, being hungry but undecided as to what I want to eat, or even about something my kids did that made me mad. His response would always be "that's what you carrying on about!" and he would fix whatever the issue was and talk out the "frustrating situation" with the kids but would always take their side of course. I would always think to myself, how this boy does stay so calm. Delberth was always trying to get me on a motorcycle with him whether here, Florida, or where ever the crew was going to be for the bike fests as I call them. My response every single time would be "Not me! Not me you deaf! I fraid dem tings!". "We" (I use the word loosely because it was always me arguing) with him about him and these motorcycles. I would always agree that they were beautiful but they are dangerous, they don't have four wheels and four doors. He would always say calmly, "You always with this same story". However, he knew that was because of the love I had for him and did not want anything to happen to him ever. Hence why he would hide his few (but one too many to me) falls from me because he didn't want to hear my mouth. Motorcycles, my cousin Melodi and him "retiring" from the kitchen were our biggest arguments. Oh, and when he gave lil sis Denaesha my black Honda *Si*. It was okay, lil sis, I had gotten one and he used to love driving it on the roadway when he got the chance (I won't speak too much about that). My biggest fear for him would be that he was involved in a bad accident on his motorcycle and didn't make it.

I remember there were many times he used to cook at home or be by big brother Delano's Restaurant on Norre Gade, he would call and say I got something for you....Me: "Tis, food ah coming right now". Plenty times, I would cook and call him asking if he ate yet and tell him swing by the house for food. Once he ate, he would always call or text and say "Wha mommy could cook man" full well knowing I cooked the food. I always looked forward to those thanksgiving plates of food or special occasion plates of food. I would ask him who cook and he would always suck his teeth and say me (meaning him) and Denise (his mother)....I would immediately respond and say one day ma going knock you right in your teeth for calling her

by her first name. We would laugh so hard, then he would say stop ask because you going eat all anyway, you do all the time. Dah ting was a “rude” when he was ready..... The last time I harassed him to make ham for me for the office, he say “You know you is the only person to get me back in the kitchen...”.

I remember the day he told me he was getting a baby...I asked him “with who?”. He says Melodi and I ask him Melodi who?”. He said you is a owl or what with all these who’s.... I then told him no for real “who she fah?”. He said look ting here again. Delberth then starts to explain who Melodi was and I stopped him in his tracks and said...” You know that’s my cousin, right?”. He immediately says “You lie...you can’t be serious...so now I have to deal with two of you!” I laughed so hard that day and, in his face, but he was truly not well but he was okay afterwards. Many times, throughout the years he would call or say to me in person “meano what wrong with your cousin ehno” .....I would shut him down and say one thing “You love her right!” .....silence instantaneously because he did and I would always take her side no matter what, he knew this.

I remember when I was going into the Police Academy in 2006 to become a police officer (twenty years ago as of February), he was so encouraging and supportive. He would say, I should be in the class with you but daddy (Delberth Sr.) ain’t want me be a police officer. I would tell him my mom either but they know why. Talk to daddy some more and see if he would eventually change his mind and give his blessing. To this day, I do not know if daddy every did or not but Delberth later entered the Police Academy Class in 2016. During his time in the academy class I was one of his instructors and we had to act like we did not know each other and not call each other by our nicknames. Talk about restraint and professionalism but after class, he would call and talk about his day, sometimes question the decision to join (based on what occurred that day), and so forth but would never give up. I was so proud of him when he graduated because he worked hard for it and plus, he had daddy’s shoes to fill and his legacy to live up to better yet surpass.

As an officer and detective, he received a variety of trainings and certifications, he upheld the law with integrity, always treating others with dignity, no matter the circumstance. He was no-nonsense when it came to doing what was right, but his heart was always rooted in service. I cannot count the number of times that I would say to Delberth...choose your battles wisely, you have a son, a family, and you don’t have to go running to everything and especially when you are off and done home.... let the officers do their jobs. July 4, 2023, is a day that will be forever be etched in my mind, heart, body and soul, when I got the call that my brother was shot, not knowing how serious his condition was or anything...I dropped to the floor on my knees crying, screaming, wondering what happened, and praying to God to please let Delberth make it. I never would have imagined this would be the call I would be getting. Rushing to the hospital to see my brother in the condition that he was....broke me.

I know that this bill is based on his law enforcement legacy but I cannot reiterate enough that beyond the badge, he was full of life. He had a stubborn streak that made him determined in everything he pursued, a sense of humor that could lighten any moment, and a deep love for the simple joys—especially his motorcycles, which brought him peace and freedom. A proud graduate of Charlotte Amalie High School, Class of 1999, he embodied the resilience and spirit of this island we call home. He was more than all his titles—he was family. He was someone who showed love through the meals he prepared, his actions, and the laughter we shared. I’ll always smile thinking about how we would tease and quarrel over Melodi, who I insisted was

the love of his life, and the pride he carried for his son. Those moments revealed the depth of his love and the kind of man he truly was.

Delberth never asked for recognition, but he lived a life that deserves it. Naming the roadway in front of the Alexander Farrelly Justice Complex in his honor is more than fitting—it is a lasting tribute to a man who dedicated his life to justice, service, community, and who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the performance of his duties. This recognition ensures that his legacy will continue to guide and inspire all who pass that way.

Delberth Ian Phipps, Jr. may have walked quietly among us, but his impact speaks loudly. And today, we honor not just his service, but the heart of a man who gave so much of himself to others. I support Bill 36-0191, an act honoring and commending Detective Delberth Phipps Jr. for his service with the Virgin Islands Police Department and to the Virgin Islands community, by renaming the portion of Hospital Gade where it intersects with Veteran's Drive, at the Alexander Farrelly Criminal Justice Complex, to the beginning of Maude Proudfoot Drive, the "Delberth Phipps, Jr. Street".

Thank you