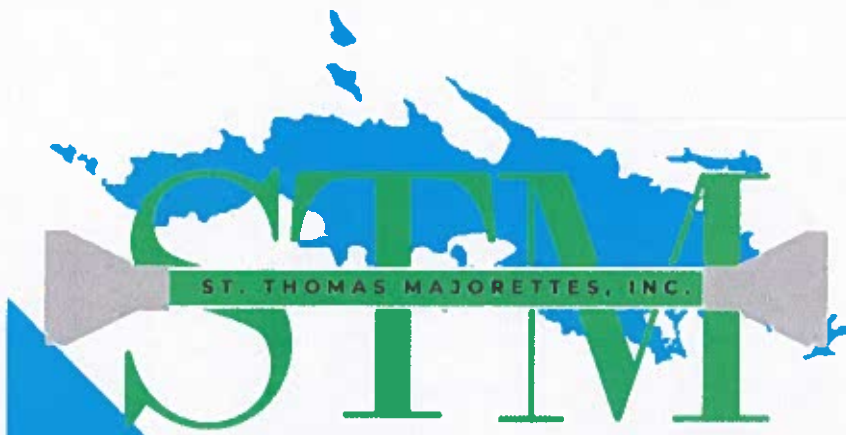




***Love it! Do it! Live it!
Twirl!***

***BILL NO. 36-0327
A resolution honoring and commending the
St. Thomas Majorettes***

Testimony By: Meki'ya Thomas

Monday, October 19, 2026



Good day, Honorable Members of the Virgin Islands 36th Legislature, distinguished guests, community leaders, parents, supporters, and my fellow Virgin Islanders.

My name is Meki'ya A. Thomas, and it is truly an honor to appear before you today.

But today, I am not here simply as a supporter of the St. Thomas Majorettes. I am here with a very personal perspective—as an alumna, a volunteer trainer, and, most importantly, as someone whose life was shaped by this organization.

My journey with majorettes actually began when I was just four years old. I started twirling with the Sebastian Majorettes under the direction of Patricia “Pat” Thomas and the late Jiffany Richards.

So, when Pat decided to start her own organization, I was ready. I was excited. I joined without hesitation.

I was just a little girl with a baton in my hand; excited to learn, excited to perform, and excited to be a part of something special. Little did I know then just how much the St. Thomas Majorettes would become a part of my life.

I joined the St. Thomas Majorettes at eight years old, and along the way, I learned lessons that extended far beyond twirling.

I learned discipline, responsibility, teamwork, perseverance and definitely without a doubt confidence.

But most importantly, I learned what it meant to belong to a community that believed in me.

I vividly remember being the youngest twirler performing with the advanced group. In our debut in 2006, the only memory we were able to successfully capture was a picture of me standing with the older girls—smiling proudly, missing my two front teeth.

And to this day, I cannot live that picture down!

But when I look back at that little girl, I realize how fortunate I was to have women around me who saw something in me before I could fully see it in myself.

Years later, it came full circle.

I returned to the St. Thomas Majorettes; not because I had to, but because I wanted to.

I became a volunteer trainer because I know firsthand what this organization can mean to a young girl.

I know what it feels like to be that little girl looking up to the older girls and trainers.

I know what it feels like to work hard to learn a routine, make mistakes, get corrected, try again, and eventually hear someone say, "You got it!"

I know the pride that comes from putting on that costume and representing your community.

And now, I have the privilege of standing on the other side of that experience.

Now, I get to be one of the people telling these girls:

"You can do this."

"Don't give up."

"Try again."

"Believe in yourself."

Sometimes, those simple words mean more than we realize.

I came back because I wanted today's girls to have the same opportunities I had. I wanted them to experience what it feels like to belong to something. I wanted them to learn what it means to work hard toward a goal. And I wanted them to have positive women in their lives who would encourage them, correct them, challenge them, and believe in them.

I also wanted them to build the kind of lifelong relationships that I have with the women I grew up twirling beside—women I proudly call my sisters.

Those relationships have lasted far beyond the years we spent performing together. They remind me that the St. Thomas Majorettes does not simply create twirlers.

It creates friendships, sisterhood, family, and lifelong bonds.

And that is one of the reasons I hope to help build the kind of young women who will one day come back and do exactly what I am doing now.

Because the impact does not end when a girl puts down her baton; the lessons stay with her.

Sometimes, years later, those same girls come back—not just to watch, but to serve.

That is what happened to me.

I joined at eight years old as a little girl. Today, I am a woman giving back to the organization that helped shape me.

And there is something incredibly powerful about standing in front of a young girl and recognizing a little bit of your younger self in her.

I see the nervous girl.

I see the girl who is afraid she is not good enough.

I see the girl who gets frustrated because she cannot get a routine right.

I see the girl who wants to quit.

And I know exactly what she needs to hear:

“Keep going.”

Because my director, Patricia Thomas, and the amazing trainers told me to keep going.

They invested their time in me; they believed in me; they encouraged me; they challenged me.

And they helped me understand that I was capable of more than I realized at the time.

When I think back on those years, I think about the long practices, the juggling, the balancing—and I mean literally balancing everything: schoolwork, majorette practice, cheerleading practice, JROTC, the University Bound program and still trying to be a kid.

I also think about all the props Pat would challenge us to master for our performances. I was definitely one of the most adventurous and daring of the group. If something looked almost impossible, I was usually one of the first twirlers to volunteer to try it!

Pat would sometimes show up to practice and simply say, “Okay, girls, this is what my vision is.”

And that was it.

We had to figure out how to bring that vision to life—and execute it flawlessly.

Looking back now, I realize those moments taught us so much more than how to perform. They taught us how to think on our feet, work together, trust one another, overcome challenges, and keep trying until we got it right.

Pat, along with the many trainers who poured into me throughout my journey, helped shape the woman I am today.

And now, I have the privilege of pouring into the next generation.

That is what community is supposed to look like.

Someone pours into you, and one day, you come back and pour into someone else.

That is how we build a legacy.

The St. Thomas Majorettes is a legacy of mentorship, sisterhood, discipline, service, and leadership.

It is a legacy of women helping to build confident, capable young women.

When you see these girls performing, you see the finished product.

But as a trainer, I see what happens behind the scenes.

I see the hours of practice, the frustration; the tears; the determination; I see the girls encouraging one another.

And I see them learning that they will not always get everything right on the first try.

More importantly, I see them learning that failure is not the end; it is an opportunity to try again.

Those are life lessons.

And in today's world, our young girls need those lessons.

They need safe spaces.

They need mentors.

They need positive role models.

They need people who will challenge them while also reminding them that they are capable.

Most importantly, they need to know that somebody cares about what happens to them.

Whenever I thought about quitting, I would hear my mother's voice saying, "Take a deep breath, drink some water, and shake it off."

For some reason, my mother thought drinking water was the cure for everything!

But, in her own way, she was reminding me to pause, regroup, and keep going.

And that is exactly what we are teaching these young girls today.

We are teaching them how to keep going.

Today, I am proud that this organization is being recognized by this Legislature—not simply for what people see when the girls perform, but for the work that happens when nobody is watching.

This recognition is for the trainers who give their time.

It is for the parents who make sacrifices.

It is for the volunteers who continue to show up.

It is for the mentors who pour into these young girls.

And it is for the girls themselves—for their hard work, dedication, determination, and willingness to keep pushing forward.

Honorable Members, thank you for allowing me to share my story and speak about an organization that has been such a meaningful part of my life.

I am proud to have once been a St. Thomas Majorette.

I am even prouder to have come back to serve as a volunteer trainer.

And I am grateful for the opportunity to help shape the next generation of young women in our Virgin Islands community.

I am living proof that when you invest in a little girl, you may one day see that same girl return to invest in others.

That is the power of the St. Thomas Majorettes.

That is the power of mentorship.

That is the power of community.

And that is the legacy we must continue.

Like our Motto goes Love it do it live it twirl, St Thomas Majorettes!

Thank you, and may God continue to bless the St. Thomas Majorettes, our young girls, our community, and these beautiful Virgin Islands.