

**Testimony of Sheldon A. Turnbull**  
**Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, and Consumer Protection**  
**Legislature of the Virgin Islands**

**On Bill No: 36-0327**

**A resolution honoring and commending the St. Thomas Majorettes for over two decades of service to the Virgin Islands community, by promoting discipline, teamwork, leadership development, academic encouragement personal growth and mentorship for youth, through the performing art of baton twirling  
Proposed by Senator Milton E. Potter.**

October 19, 2026

The Honorable Senator Avery L. Lewis, Chairman of the Committee on Government Operations, Veteran's Affairs, and Consumer Protection, other senators present, audience in the chambers and the listening and viewing audiences, good morning. I am Sheldon A. Turnbull, and I am pleased to have been given the opportunity to present testimony on Bill No. 36-0327: A resolution honoring and commending the St. Thomas Majorettes for over two decades of service to the Virgin Islands community, by promoting discipline, teamwork, leadership development, academic encouragement, personal growth and mentorship for youth, through the performing art of baton twirling. Proposed by Senator Milton E. Potter.

I often sit and ponder on how this body determines to whom it bestows awards and honors. More often than not, I scoff at the recipients and wonder what criteria or

standards were utilized to make the choice. This is one occasion where I do not question the choice, moreover I view this choice beyond reproach. The attributes of and achievements of the St. Thomas Majorettes far exceed what I would consider the basis upon which any individual, entity or group should receive any such honor. I have been aware of the St. Thomas Majorettes from their inception. I was not knowledgeable initially of the structure or the impetus for the St. Thomas Majorettes but knew of their practices and saw them during their initial performance in the St. Thomas Carnival's children's parade and was impressed by their performance. It was innovative, detailed and done with the precision of a military drill team. I recognized a few individuals I knew personally that appeared to be associated with the group and said to them at the end of the performance, "WOW"! Being the Director of Half-Time Entertainment at Basketball Traveler's Paradise Jam, I thought St. Thomas Majorettes would be perfect fit. Half-times at these NCAA Division One games are time sensitive, as such activities have must be on and off the court within a specific time frame. The St. Thomas Majorettes, team management would ask the amount of time they would be afforded, and their performers would be on and off that court to the second. The St. Thomas Majorettes have been asked to perform at Paradise Jam for both the male and female tournaments every year since. As the organizer of many events through VI Vybe a non-profit and Mello/Side Promotions promotion company I have been privileged

to have the St. Thomas Majorttes perform at several events, to include VI Day which is a celebration of all that is the Virgin Islands for which their performance garnered front page recognition in a daily local periodical. I have also had the pleasure of seeing the St. Thomas Majorettes perform at the St. Thomas Carnival and St. John Celebration parades consistently over the past 20 years. The crowd is always filled with anticipation of their performance, wondering what new twist will they bring this time to basic baton twirling. The innovation and precision of the performances of the St. Thomas Majorettes is unsurpassed. From the costumes to the props utilized it's much more than baton twirling it is a show.

Beyond the dynamic, precise and innovative performances we have come expect from the St. Thomas Majorettes, if you look behind the perfectly detailed and event appropriate costumes you recognize so much more. You will see that the St. Thomas Majorettes is an organization that builds discipline and self-esteem in their members. You will see an organization that takes little girls from the tender age of 2 and 3 years of age and with their parents guide them to adulthood. If you look closely, you will recognize that some who started as tiny twirlers 20 years ago are now integral members of the management team of the same St. Thomas Majorettes.

I would go far beyond the allotted time for my testimony if I were to expound on the costumes, whether it be sailors or butterflies, the props from trampolines and rings suspended in the air, or the precision of the teams that put them in place, time and time again over parade routes and other public performances. Those who know me know that I don't take occasions as this lightly. I believe awards and acknowledgements should be bestowed not upon the ordinary and every day. Not to those who just meet the standard or marginally exceed it. It should be bestowed upon only those who demolish the standard and establish the new standard of excellence that should be met. I find that in the St. Thomas Majorettes. It is for these reasons that I count myself among the persons that feel the St. Thomas Majorettes is wholly deserving of the honor to be bestowed upon them today by Bill No. 36-0327. The St. Thomas Majorettes is truly a Virgin Islands' gem, that sparkles bright, they show us all what dedication, creativity and discipline can produce.

I am honored to be able to speak on their behalf. I thank you for your time and affording me this opportunity.