

September 22, 2025

Testimony Before the Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, and Consumer Protection

Honoring Dennis “PumpA” Lennox Leroy Liburd Jr.

Honorable Chair, Members of the Committee, and Guests,

It is with real pride and deep respect that I share this testimony in support of Bill No. 36-0058, honoring Dennis “PumpA” Lennox Leroy Liburd Jr. for his many contributions to the culture and music of the Virgin Islands.

I would like to thank the members of the 36th Legislature for the work you continue to do in recognizing and uplifting our culture. A special thank you to Senator Marise C. James for sponsoring this bill. Her efforts to shine a light on Virgin Islands talent are meaningful, and to me, personal. If not for her father, the late Randall “Doc” James, my own family’s path might have been very different. My father, Dr. Olaf “Bronco” Hendricks, often tells the story of how Doc James pushed him not to “payass” with a degree in zoology but to go on and get his medical degree. That encouragement changed the course of our family’s life, and I remain grateful.

Now, let’s talk about my good friend for the past 15 years, PumpA. His impact is felt well beyond music, and I can attest that he brings the same energy and focus into everything he does.

On the basketball court, whether it was high school varsity, local league games, or even when he represented in the “NBA Beyond Borders” program in Argentina, his competitive drive was unmatched. And while I’ll admit I’m the better shooter, something he hates to admit - I would be remiss if I didn’t point out PumpA’s own abilities—his vision of the whole court, his ability to pass on a dime, his handles, timing, and scoring. Truth be told, those skills alone could have afforded him another path in life.

When the games are over at our recreational court, his real strengths shine in the conversations. They are never about gossip or passing trends, but almost always about how we can solve the challenges facing our Territory. His contributions are deeply thought out and communicated with clarity. He has an uncanny ability to share his perspective in plain, clear language without overstating, and that is a genuine skill. He and I often argue about what we see as the “right” solutions, but those debates are never dismissive. They are rooted in respect and always with the understanding that we’re both looking for the same outcomes: a stronger community and a better Virgin Islands. That ability to engage in real, respectful debate while keeping focus on the greater good is rare, and it’s one of the qualities I admire most in him.

Let’s face it—PumpA is a superstar. On stage, his energy is unmatched, but off-stage, he is so understated that I’m often amazed at how big his personality really is. In our gatherings, he never self-promotes. If you were a casual visitor, you might not even know this is the same man who has had people bending over on four continents.

His hit “A-List” is a phenomenal song that has achieved global success. I’ll never forget when one of my counterparts in Guyana told me they were planning to attend a Virgin Islands carnival, take part in J’ouvert, and—quote—“bend right ova.” That’s the kind of reach and influence his music carries.

And yet, PumpA didn't appear out of nowhere. He has been an active musical artist since high school, performing with various bands—including the infamous Xtaushun Band—before building the solo career that has carried the name of the Virgin Islands around the world.

His pride in the Virgin Islands is alone worthy of this recognition. PumpA never misses an opportunity to promote the VI. Whether it's in a performance, an interview, a casual shout-out, or even an investment, he always makes sure the Virgin Islands are front and center. For him, this is more than representation—it is his way of giving back and ensuring that Xidani and Xenga will always have a home they can be proud of.

That same pride is reflected in the way he serves the community. He is often performing for children at schools, sponsoring local organizations, or lending his name and energy as a brand ambassador. Whatever the platform, he uses his talents to uplift the people of this land.

Although he could easily relocate somewhere with more convenience, more resources, and more accessibility for his career, he has remained rooted here in St. Croix, in these Virgin Islands. This is his home base, and by choosing to stay, he sends a message that the Virgin Islands is not only where his heart is but also where his legacy will always be anchored.

And for the record, if we're naming a street after him, my vote would go to capitalize the "A" instead of the "P." That is his brand, and it's how I wish to remember him (smile).

I fully support this bill and commend the Legislature for honoring PumpA. He is more than a Soca artist—he is a cultural ambassador, a community leader, and an example of Virgin Islands excellence.

Thank you for allowing me to share this testimony.

Respectfully,

Kai Hendricks