

COMMITTEE ON OPERATIONS, VETERANS AFFAIRS AND
CONSUMER PROTECTION

BILL NO. 36-0281

Thirty-Sixth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

May 8, 2026

An act honoring and commending Hans Lawaetz for his lifetime of exemplary service to the Virgin Islands and awarding him the Virgin Islands Medal of Honor

PROPOSED BY: Senator Novelle E. Francis, Jr.
Sponsor: Angel L. Bolques, Jr.

1 **WHEREAS**, Hans Lawaetz was born in 1936 in Estate River, St. Croix; and

2 **WHEREAS**, Mr. Lawaetz attended St. Patrick's School in Frederiksted St. Croix for eight
3 years before attending Westtown School in Pennsylvania where he played varsity soccer and
4 served as captain of the swimming and baseball teams; and

5 **WHEREAS**, in 1955, he graduated from Westtown School and attended Cornell
6 University, where he was president of his fraternity, played varsity soccer for three years, and
7 served as the highest-ranked Air Force cadet officer in the ROTC program; and

8 **WHEREAS**, during his college summers, he gained extensive agricultural experience
9 working on ranches in Kansas, Colorado, and Florida where he worked with various cattle
10 breeds; and

11 **WHEREAS**, in 1959, Hans Lawaetz graduated from Cornell University with a Bachelor
12 of Science degree in Animal Husbandry, now known as Animal Science; and

13 **WHEREAS**, from 1959 to 1964, Mr. Lawaetz served in the United States Air Force where
14 he achieved the rank of captain and played fast-pitch softball for the base team; and

1 **WHEREAS**, in 1964, Hans Lawaetz returned to St. Croix with his wife, Judy, and
2 daughter, Amy, to become the managing partner of Annaly Farms in partnership with his father,
3 Frits E. Lawaetz, and Ward M. Canaday; and

4 **WHEREAS**, from 1965 to 2002, Mr. Lawaetz served as a council member for the
5 National Association of Conservation Districts where he served as a board member from 1968
6 to 1974 and as chairman of the Education Committee from 1971 to 1974; and

7 **WHEREAS**, from 1965 to 2002, Mr. Lawaetz served as a board member of the Virgin
8 Islands Conservation District where he served as president from 1965 to 1975 and from 1991 to
9 2002; and

10 **WHEREAS**, from 1966 to 1972, Hans Lawaetz served as a Trustee for the Good Hope
11 School and has been an honorary trustee since 1973; and

12 **WHEREAS**, in 1967, Mr. Lawaetz was a founding member of the St. Croix Horse Show
13 Association; and

14 **WHEREAS**, from 1964 through the late 1960s, Mr. Lawaetz modernized Annaly Farms
15 by terminating sugar cane operations, converting land to pangola grass, and implementing
16 rigorous genetic record-keeping and weight-gain calculations to improve the Senepol cattle
17 herd; and

18 **WHEREAS**, in 1971, Hans Lawaetz served as the first swim coach to take a team off-
19 island and became a founding member of the St. Croix Swimming Association; and

20 **WHEREAS**, in 1972, Mr. Lawaetz oversaw the groundbreaking and five-month
21 construction of a 50-meter swimming pool on St. Croix; and

22 **WHEREAS**, in 1972, he was elected the first president of the Virgin Islands Swimming
23 Federation where he served until 1978; and

24 **WHEREAS**, from 1973 to 2012, Hans Lawaetz served as a member of the Virgin Islands
25 Olympic Committee where he served as secretary general from 1976 to 1996, and as president

1 from 1996-2012, leading delegations to numerous Summer and Winter Olympics, Pan
2 American Games, and Central American and Caribbean Games; and

3 **WHEREAS**, in 1974, he was elected vice president of the Central America & Caribbean
4 Swimming Association, where he represented English-speaking countries until 1986; and

5 **WHEREAS**, from 1974 to 2022, Hans Lawaetz served as president of Annaly Farms,
6 Inc.; and

7 **WHEREAS**, in 1974, he secured federal approval and funding to build a refrigerated
8 warehouse and meat processing facility, enabling the inspection and sale of fresh Senepol
9 beef; and

10 **WHEREAS**, from 1976 to 1984, Mr. Lawaetz was one of 12 members of the Fédération
11 Internationale de Natation (FINA) World Swimming Technical Committee and officiated at
12 two Olympic Games and two World Championships; and

13 **WHEREAS**, in 1977, he was named "Sportsman of the Year" and "Horseman of the
14 Year" on St. Croix; and

15 **WHEREAS**, in 1977, Mr. Lawaetz became a founding member and the first chairman
16 of the St. Croix Senepol Association, now known as the Virgin Islands Senepol Association;
17 and

18 **WHEREAS**, from 1977 to 2020, Mr. Lawaetz served as a board member of the Senepol
19 Cattle Breeders Association where he served as its first chairman from 1977 to 1990 and again
20 served as chairman from 2006 to 2009 and from 2015 to 2016; and

21 **WHEREAS**, in 1987, he assisted in transitioning the local association into the American
22 International Senepol Association; and

23 **WHEREAS**, from 1998 to 2015, he served as an executive committee member of the
24 Central American and Caribbean Sports Organization; and

1 **WHEREAS**, from 2000 to 2012, Mr. Lawaetz served as a board member of the St. Croix
2 Landmark Society where he served as president in 2012; and

3 **WHEREAS**, from 2003 to 2015, he served as treasurer of the Central American and
4 Caribbean Sports Organization; and

5 **WHEREAS**, in 2012, Hans Lawaetz was named Honorary Life President of the Virgin
6 Islands Olympic Committee; and

7 **WHEREAS**, from 2012 to 2018, Mr. Lawaetz served as president of the St. Croix
8 Friends of Denmark Society; and

9 **WHEREAS**, from 2013 to 2016, he served as a Trustee for the Good Hope Country Day
10 School; and

11 **WHEREAS**, in 2014, Mr. Lawaetz was appointed by Governor John P. de Jongh, Jr., to
12 serve on the Virgin Islands Transfer Centennial Commission, where he was elected vice
13 chairman in 2017; and

14 **WHEREAS**, in 2016, Hans Lawaetz was named Honorary Life President of the Senepol
15 Cattle Breeders Association; and

16 **WHEREAS**, after Hurricane Maria in 2017, he was appointed by Governor Kenneth E.
17 Mapp to the Hurricane & Resiliency Advisory Group; and

18 **WHEREAS**, on August 6, 2018, Mr. Lawaetz was inducted into the Southeast Region
19 Conservation Hall of Fame; and

20 **WHEREAS**, since 2022, he has served as vice president of Annaly Farms, Inc. and
21 continues to manage his herd at Estate Upper Love and works daily at the Annaly Farms Meat
22 Market; and

23 **WHEREAS**, in May 2025, Hans Lawaetz authored “Memoirs of a Crucian Cowboy”,
24 chronicling his family history, the development of the Senepol cattle breed, and his lifetime of
25 service to the Virgin Islands community; Now, Therefore,

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

SECTION 1. The Legislature of the Virgin Islands, on behalf of the people of the Virgin Islands, honors and commends Hans Lawaetz for his lifetime of exemplary service to the Virgin Islands including his pioneering leadership in the development of the Senepol cattle breed, dedication to the advancement of sports and the Olympic movement, and enduring commitment to community and conservation.

SECTION 2. In recognition and appreciation of the profound impact of Hans Lawaetz' leadership as president of Annaly Farms, Inc.; president of the Virgin Islands Olympic Committee; and his numerous roles in international sports and agricultural organizations, which have brought distinction and recognition to the Virgin Islands on a global stage, the Legislature of the Virgin Islands, under 1 V.I.C § 103(b), awards the Virgin Islands Medal of Honor to Hans Lawaetz. The President of the Legislature, or the President's designee, shall present Hans Lawaetz with the Virgin Islands Medal of Honor, cast in his honor, and shall prepare and present a perma plaque copy of this act to Hans Lawaetz at an appropriate ceremony.

BILL SUMMARY

This bill honors and commends Hans Lawaetz for his lifetime of exemplary service to the Virgin Islands including his pioneering leadership in the development of the Senepol cattle breed, dedication to the advancement of sports and the Olympic movement, and enduring commitment to community and conservation. This bill also awards Hans Lawaetz the Virgin Islands Medal of Honor.

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