



Judicial Branch Administrative Office

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July 17, 2025

The Honorable Carla A. Joseph
Chairperson
Committee on Rules and the Judiciary
Thirty-Sixth Legislature of the Virgin Islands
Old Barracks Yard
Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas VI 00802

RE: Request for Testimony on Bill 36-0077

Thank you for the invitation to testify on behalf of the Judicial Branch on the proposed Bill No. 36-0077, which would amend title 3, chapter 37 of the Virgin Islands Code relating to enact the Virgin Islands Commission on Ethics and Conflicts of interest. As I indicated in previous correspondence, I will not be available to testify on the 22nd due to previously scheduled business travel.

The Judicial Branch acknowledges that a robust and efficient scheme regulating conflicts of interest and the enforcement of the relevant laws within the Branches of the Government is an important and integral part of maintaining public trust and efficient public services. While this Bill which seeks to establish a commission may appear benign on its face in that it only requires an appointment to the membership by the Chief Justice, and two joint appointments of private citizens to be made with the Governor, we acknowledge that nothing in this bill speaks to the jurisdiction and duties of this Commission, which could have far reaching implications for all three branches of Government, including concerns over the separation of powers.

Accordingly, the Judicial Branch offers no substantive comment on the establishment of the Commission or any subsequent legislation enumerating the duties and functions of the Commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Regina Petersen".

Regina Petersen,
Administrator of Courts

CC: The Honorable Kenneth L. Gittens, Majority Leader and Bill Sponsor