



Legislature Of The Virgin Islands

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THE HONORABLE
Carla J. Joseph

SENATOR

36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands

*Liaison to the United States Department of Interior
and Office of Insular Affairs*

CHAIR

Committee on Rules and Judiciary

VICE CHAIR

Committee on Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks

MEMBER

Committee of the Whole


Committee on Education and Workforce Development

Committee on Housing, Transportation, and Telecommunications

Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs,
and Consumer Protection

Memorandum: 26-009

TO: Mrs. Kurell A. Sheridan, JD
Executive Director
36th Legislature of the V.I.

FROM: The Honorable Carla J. Joseph 
Chair
Committee on Rules and Judiciary

DATE: April 24, 2026

SUBJECT: Committee Report for Thursday, April 23, 2026, Hearing

Please find attached the report for the Committee on Rules and Judiciary hearing held on Thursday, April 23rd, 2026, Earle B. Ottley Legislative Hall on St. Thomas.

CC: All Senators
Chief Legal Counsel
Archive Division
Journal Division

RULES AND JUDICIARY
April 23, 2026 COMMITTEE HEARING REPORT

The Committee on Rules and Judiciary held its hearing on Thursday, April 23, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. in the Earle B. Ottley Legislative Hall on St. Thomas. The Committee considered the following Nominations and Bills:

- **The Honorable Denise M. Francois**– Governor’s Nominee for Justice to the Supreme Court of the Virgin Islands
- **Ms. Renee M. Andre, Esq.**– Governor’s Nominee for Judge to the Superior Court of Virgin Islands, Division of St. Thomas – St. John
- **Bill No. 36-0194** – A resolution urging the United States Congress and the Office of the United States Trade Representative to expand and modernize the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) to further support economic growth and development in the Virgin Islands and the wider Caribbean region. **Proposed by Senator Angel L. Bolques, Jr., Sponsored by Senator Carla J. Joseph and Co-Sponsored by Senator Hubert L. Frederick**
- **Bill No. 36-0009** – A Resolution honoring and commending Mr. Steven van Beverhoudt for his years of dedicated service and numerous contributions to the people of the Virgin Islands. **Proposed by Senator Milton E. Potter, Sponsored by Senator Angel L. Bolques, Jr. and Co-Sponsor by Senator Ray Fonseca**
- **Bill No. 36-0207** – An act amending title 3 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 25, subchapter VI, by adding section 590d and title 24 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 1, by adding section 24 requiring employers to grant parents or legal guardians of a child with a diagnosed disability, two hours per month of paid leave to attend the child’s medical appointments. **Proposed by Senators Avery L. Lewis, Sponsored by Senators Angel L. Bolques, Jr., Clifford Joseph, Sr., Kenneth L. Gittens, and Marise C. James**
- **Bill No. 36-0236** – An act amending title 33 Virgin Islands Code, subtitle 3, chapter 111, section 3061 by increasing the amount of money that is to remain in the Virgin Islands Insurance Guaranty Fund before any interest can be deposited into the General Fund. **Proposed by Senator Kurt A. Vialet, Sponsored by Senators Avery L. Lewis, Dwayne M. DeGraff, and Clifford A. Joseph, Sr.**
- **Bill No. 36-0258** – An act reprogramming administrative fees resulting from the bonds issued for the Fortress Investment Group transfer for various projects and initiatives to enhance the economic development of St. Croix and to be deposited into the Budget Stabilization Fund. **Proposed by Senator Kurt A. Vialet, Sponsored by Senators Avery L. Lewis, Dwayne M. DeGraff, and Clifford Joseph, Sr. and Co-sponsored by Senator Hubert L. Frederick**
- **Bill No. 36-0232** – An act amending Act No. 8018 to authorize the disposal of green waste using controlled incineration technologies, including air curtain incinerators, and

for other purposes. **Proposed by Senator Clifford A. Joseph, Sr., Sponsored by Senators Avery L. Lewis, Kenneth L. Gittens, and Franklin D. Johnson**

- **Bill No. 36-0149** – A resolution honoring and commending Janeisha John for her outstanding achievements, pioneering spirit, and significant contributions to the fields of entertainment, modeling, and television production, celebrating her role as a cultural ambassador, trailblazer, and inspirational leader of the Virgin Islands. **Proposed by Senator Angel L. Bolques, Jr.**
- **Bill No. 36-0238** – An act amending title 29, Virgin Islands Code, chapter 23 to redirect hotel development net bond proceeds to the Government Employees' Retirement System of the Virgin Islands. **Proposed by Senator Avery L. Lewis**
- **Bill No 36-0257** – An act transferring Parcel No. 2C Estate Ross, 8 New Quarter, St. Thomas, from the Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority to the Virgin Islands Department of Education for use by the Charlotte Amalie High School. **Proposed by Senator Avery L. Lewis**
- **Bill No. 36-0275** – An act approving the amended lease agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands, acting through the Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement, and Hearts In Service Association, Inc., for the leasing of Parcel No. 175C Estate Anna's Retreat No. 1 New Quarter, St. Thomas for the purpose of providing eligible programs and services to homeless families, individuals, veterans, and at-risk youth and the operation of a soup kitchen and other related purposes. **Proposed by Senators Milton E. Potter, Marvin A. Blyden and Avery L. Lewis, by Request of the Governor**

The meeting was called to order by the Committee Chair, Sen. Carla J. Joseph at 1:15 p.m.

Committee Members Present

Sen. Carla J. Joseph, Chair
 Sen. Kenneth L. Gittens, Vice Chair
 Sen. Alma Francis Heyliger
 Sen. Avery L. Lewis
 Sen. Clifford A. Joseph, Sr.
 Sen. Milton E. Potter
 Sen. Angel L. Bolques, Jr.

Non-Committee Members Present

Sen. Ray Fonseca

Legislative Reporters

Mrs. Nataya Munoz-Melchoir
 Ms. Tricia D. Sealey
 Mrs. Vashti Gerald-Berry
 Mrs. Nadine Coley-Williams

Office of the Executive Director

Mr. Charles Brown, Jr.
 Ms. Jervon Ottley

Sergeant-At-Arms

Mr. Delvin Fleming

Public Affairs/Media

Mr. Bernard Mathews

Ms. Malissa Gustave

Mr. Barry Leerdam

Mr. Jamal Potter

Ms. Chaunte Herbert

Mr. Alwyn Baptiste

Mr. Dequan Milliner

Ms. Saidah Sekou

Ms. Diana Cruz

Mr. Kashief Hamilton

Clerk/Timekeeper

Mrs. Delelah Callwood Daniel

Additional Supporting Staff

Ms. Shania Nieves

Legal Counsel

Mr. Augustin Ayala, Esq.

In block one of the Agenda, the Committee considered the Governor's Nominations: **The Honorable Denise M. Francois for Justice to the Supreme Court of the Virgin Islands and Ms. Renee M. Andre, Esq. for Judge to the Superior Court of the Virgin Islands, Division of St. Thomas – St. John.** Senators proceeded with one (1) round of five (5) minutes of questioning time for the nominees.

Governor's Nominee Name	Position	Placement	Motion	Vote
The Honorable Denise M. Francois	Justice	Supreme Court of the Virgin Islands	Senator Milton Potter motioned that the Honorable Denise M. Francois be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senators Avery Lewis, Kenneth Gittens, and Alma Francis Heyliger.	7 yeas
Ms. Renee M. Andre, Esq.	Judge	Superior Court of the Virgin Islands, Division of St. Thomas – St. John	Senator Avery Lewis motioned that Ms. Renee M. Andre, Esq., be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senators Alma Francis Heyliger, Clifford Joseph, Sr., and Milton Potter.	7 yeas

In block two of the Agenda, the Committee heard testimony and considered **Bill No. 36-0194.** Senators proceeded with one (1) round of four (4) minutes of debate time.

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Bill Number	Short Title	Amendment	Motion	Vote
36-0194	A resolution urging the United States Congress and the Office of the United States Trade Representative to expand and modernize the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) to further support economic growth and development in the Virgin Islands and the wider Caribbean region. Proposed by Senator Angel L. Bolques, Jr., Sponsored by Senator Carla J. Joseph and Co-Sponsored by Senator Hubert L. Frederick	Senator Angel Bolques, Jr. offered Amendment No. 36-724 , which was seconded by Senators Milton Potter and Avery Lewis, the motion was carried.	Senator Angel Bolques, Jr. motioned that Bill No. 36-0194 as amended be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senators Milton Potter and Avery Lewis.	7 yeas

In block three of the Agenda, the Committee considered **Bill Nos. 36-0009, 36-0207, 36-0236, 36-0258, 36-0232, 36-0149, 36-0238, 36-0257, and 36-0275**. Senators proceeded to voting without any time given for speaking on all the bills in Block III.

Bill Number	Short Title	Amendment	Motion	Vote
36-0009	A Resolution honoring and commending Mr. Steven van Beverhoudt for his years of dedicated service and numerous contributions to the people of the Virgin Islands. Proposed by Milton E. Potter, Sponsored by Senator Angel L. Bolques, Jr. and Co-Sponsor by Senator Ray Fonseca	Senator Milton Potter offered Amendment No. 36-722 , which was seconded by Senators Avery Lewis, Clifford Joseph Sr., and Alma Francis Heyliger, the motion was carried.	Senator Milton Potter motioned that Bill No. 36-0009 as amended , be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senators Angel Bolques Jr., Avery Lewis, and Alma Francis Heyliger.	7 yeas

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36-0207	An act amending title 3 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 25, subchapter VI, by adding section 590d and title 24 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 1, by adding section 24 requiring employers to grant parents or legal guardians of a child with a diagnosed disability, two hours per month of paid leave to attend the child's medical appointments. Proposed by Senators Avery L. Lewis, Sponsored by Senators Angel L. Bolques, Jr., Clifford Joseph, Sr., Kenneth L. Gittens, and Marise C. James	Senator Avery Lewis offered Amendment No. 36-778 , which was seconded by Senator Alma Francis Heyliger, the motion was carried.	Senator Avery Lewis motioned that Bill No. 36-0207 as amended , be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senators Alma Francis Heyliger, Milton Potter, Clifford Joseph, Sr., and Angel Bolques Jr.	7 yeas
36-0236	An act amending title 33 Virgin Islands Code, subtitle 3, chapter 111, section 3061 by increasing the amount of money that is to remain in the Virgin Islands Insurance Guaranty Fund before any interest can be deposited into the General Fund. Proposed by Senator Kurt A. Violet, Sponsored by Senators Avery L. Lewis, Dwayne M. DeGraff, and Clifford A. Joseph, Sr.		Senator Clifford Joseph Sr. motioned at Bill No. 36-0236 , be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senators Angel Bolques Jr. and Milton Potter	7 yeas

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36-0258	An act reprogramming administrative fees resulting from the bonds issued for the Fortress Investment Group transfer for various projects and initiatives to enhance the economic development of St. Croix and to be deposited into the Budget Stabilization Fund. Proposed by Senator Kurt A. Vialet, Sponsored by Senators Avery L. Lewis, Dwayne M. DeGraff, and Clifford Joseph, Sr. and Co-sponsored by Senator Hubert L. Frederick		Senator Avery Lewis motioned that Bill No. 36-0258 , be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senators Angel Bolques Jr., and Clifford Joseph Sr.	7 yeas
36-0232	An act amending Act No. 8018 to authorize the disposal of green waste using controlled incineration technologies, including air curtain incinerators, and for other purposes. Proposed by Senator Clifford A. Joseph, Sr., Sponsored by Senators Avery L. Lewis, Kenneth L. Gittens, and Franklin D. Johnson		Senator Avery Lewis motioned that Bill No. 36-0232 be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senators Gittens and Clifford Joseph, Sr. However, the motion fails, and Bill No. 36-0232 is held in committee.	3 yeas 3 nays 1 not voting
36-0149	A resolution honoring and commending Janeisha John for her outstanding achievements, pioneering spirit, and significant contributions to the fields of entertainment, modeling, and television production, celebrating her role as a cultural		Senator Angel Bolques Jr. motioned that Bill No. 36-0149 , be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senator Milton Potter.	7 yeas

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	ambassador, trailblazer, and inspirational leader of the Virgin Islands. Proposed by Senator Angel L. Bolques, Jr			
36-0238	An act amending title 29, Virgin Islands Code, chapter 23 to redirect hotel development net bond proceeds to the Government Employees' Retirement System of the Virgin Islands. Proposed by Senator Avery L. Lewis	Senator Avery Lewis offered Amendment No. 36-800 , which was seconded by Senator Angel Bolques Jr., the motion was carried.	Senator Avery Lewis motioned that Bill No. 36-0238 as amended be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senators Alma Francis Heyliger and Clifford Joseph Sr.	7 yeas
36-0257	An act transferring Parcel No. 2C Estate Ross, 8 New Quarter, St. Thomas, from the Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority to the Virgin Islands Department of Education for use by the Charlotte Amalie High School. Proposed by Senator Avery L. Lewis		Senator Avery Lewis motioned that Bill No. 36-0257 be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senators Angel Bolques Jr. and Alma Francis Heyliger	7 yeas
36-0275	An act approving the amended lease agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands, acting through the Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement, and Hearts In Service Association, Inc., for the leasing of Parcel No. 175C Estate Anna's Retreat No. 1 New Quarter, St. Thomas for the purpose of providing eligible programs and		Senator Milton Potter motioned that Bill No. 36-0275 be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senators Angel Bolques Jr. and Alma Francis Heyliger	7 yeas

	services to homeless families, individuals, veterans, and at-risk youth and the operation of a soup kitchen and other related purposes. Proposed by Senators Milton E. Potter, Marvin A. Blyden and Avery L. Lewis, by Request of the Governor			
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The Chair, Sen. Carla J. Joseph, adjourned the Committee on Rules and Judiciary hearing at 5:27 p.m.