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Good morning, members of the Committee on Rules and Judiciary of the 36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands of the United States. Good morning to friends, family, colleagues, co-workers, and to my staff. Good morning to the listening and viewing audience.

I am Jessica Gallivan, and I am here in support of my nomination to serve a second term as a Superior Court judge, assigned predominantly to the Family Court Division pursuant to Title 4 V.I.C. § 172 and Title 4 V.I.C. §171(c). Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you, and to answer any questions you might have at the end of my presentation. I would also like to publicly thank the Honorable Governor Albert Bryan for the confidence he has shown in nominating me to serve.

On May 16, 2025, I will have served for six years as a Superior Court judge. At the end of June 2025, I will have served as a jurist in the Virgin Islands for 16 years. I have one of the most active calendars. I am in hearings nearly every day, and my office produces thousands of orders each year. My clearance rate is very high, and my docket numbers are reflective of the hard work performed on a daily basis by me, my chamber staff, the Clerk of Court, and the Marshal's Division. I am proud to note that in the almost six years I have served as a Superior Court judge, I have entered more than 11,310 orders and closed, as of April 16, 2005, some 1,657 cases. My current case log is 203 cases (although 14 of these are conservatorships, 116 are guardianships, and 13 are involuntary commitments.)

But performance as a judge cannot be all about numbers – though they are decidedly important. Therefore, in my presentation today, I hope to inform you of the type

of judge and person that I am and/or aspire to be. Speaking about myself and even
lauding myself is difficult, so bear with me.

I was born to my married parents, Marie Louise Espinosa Gallivan and Joseph John Gallivan, in Miami, Florida. While my mother was born on St. Croix, she was living and working in Miami when she met my father. I am the granddaughter of Margrethe Pedersen Espinosa and Pedro Espinosa Almestica. My grandmother was born on St. Croix and my grandfather migrated to St. Croix from Culebra. Senator and Attorney Marise James is my first cousin, as her mother and my mother were sisters. Our family's roots on St. Croix date back to the 1800s. The Virgin Islands is and always has been my home, and I am (like others in my family) dedicated to our Virgin Islands community.

When my mother and father divorced, she brought my siblings and me back to the Virgin Islands. Facing the prospect of life as a divorcee with small children, we moved into the JFK housing community. We did not have much, in fact we were poor, but my mother saw to it that we received a parochial elementary education at the St. Mary's Catholic School. I later attended and graduated from the St. Croix Central High School in 1981. I attended the University of the Virgin Islands, where I graduated with a bachelor's and master's degree in business administration in 1987 and 1992. In 1992, I enrolled in law school at the Southern Methodist University - Dedman School of Law in Dallas, Texas. I obtained my juris doctor in 1995, thirty years ago. I am admitted to practice in the State of Texas since 1995, and in the Virgin Islands since February 1996.

I have worked as a student attorney and chief student counsel in SMU's immigration clinic. I have clerked for a most learned judge in the person of the Honorable Ishmael A. Meyers, and I have worked in private practice for prominent and successful attorneys in matters such as family and domestic issues, insurance defense, labor

litigation, and criminal defense. I have been the beneficiary of mentorship from colleagues such as the Honorable Patricia D. Steele. Emphatically, I note that I have achieved the most satisfaction in my legal career from public service work, such as my work as an assistant attorney general, as a chief labor negotiator, as a magistrate judge, and now a trial judge.

I love my job as a judge, and I am intentional about it. I help people find workable solutions to their everyday and sometimes not so everyday issues. Some I see in hearings and some I simply process their paperwork. Some can be unruly, and some are challenging and unpredictable, but all deserve respect, an efficient and fair proceeding, and a just outcome. I work daily to make this happen.

I interact with court staff, lawyers, litigants, department representatives and busy professionals. I serve families, including children, people with intellectual disabilities and mental diseases, and people who are just trying to make it. I strive to listen intently to each side's evidence and argument. I do my best to wait patiently for all of the evidence before drawing any conclusions or making any final judgment. I aim to make decisions free of bias or prejudice, whether conscious or unconscious. I am open to being corrected, to seeing things I had not seen before, and I believe that I can learn from anyone. I do not hold myself out as aloof, but as a mere public servant given the privilege to make decisions when others cannot or will not and, as always, I aim to help and not hurt.

Outside of court, I have helped coordinate jobs and summer employment for our youth. I have matched some with mentors and I often meet and talk with them. I have visited our schools and HeadStart programs and read to children, and I have made school presentations. Almost every year since I have been on the bench, I have hosted young high school students for a week to learn about our court system. For the last two years,

74 my office has hosted (in conjunction with the Court's Improvement Program) gatherings
75 for at risk youth. This last year, the gathering included a tour of the medical simulation
76 facility at UVI. In 2023, I organized a cleanup at the Youth Rehabilitation Center, where a
77 group of us cleaned, painted, and planted alongside some of the youth who were placed
78 there.

79 Among the most difficult cases I hear are those involving abused and neglected
80 children and the mentally ill. I work arduously to meet benchmarks for moving a case
81 involving children from removal to permanency – whether through reunification or
82 alternative placements. For those involuntarily committed, I insist on regular proceedings
83 to review their care, ensure their appropriate treatment, and their return to the community
84 once they no longer meet the criteria for commitment. Together, I believe that we have
85 raised the standard for addressing, managing, and caring for these vulnerable
86 populations.

87 Is there more work to do? Most definitely, but I am committed to the task. If
88 confirmed, I will bring the same energy to processing my cases timely and efficiently. I
89 will continue to be a jurist who is experienced, active, learned, compassionate, caring,
90 hardworking, connected to our community, firm, fair, sympathetic and empathetic to the
91 plight of the poor and underserved. I will remain open to learning, with a sincere desire
92 to serve well. I will continue to respect and apply the rule of law.

93 I respectfully ask for your approval, and I invite you now to ask your questions.

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JESSICA GALLIVAN
SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE

Blessing no getting
thank you for all ~~your~~ ^{your} ~~just~~ ^{just} ~~get~~ ^{get} ~~gallion~~ ^{gallion}
love? support with
my son you saved him
he is doing super
still room for improve-
ment but let ~~his~~ ^{his} ~~clan-~~
ged since he been to
court. its not easy being
a single parent but
god is ~~god~~ ^{god} thank you
for all that you do.

Blessed love
always

Just two little words, but
they are warmly sent
and honestly meant.

THANK YOU

Blessed
love
always

2-14-20

To: Judge Galan

Thank you for all your
love & support with

[redacted] Thank you for
saving my son God bless
you & the staff of human
services & the alternative
school staff [redacted]

9th grade in [redacted] in
passing all his classes
let us continue to
trust God.

Blessed
love

[redacted]


Dear Judge Jessica Gallivan and Marisol!
Thank you very much for once again
providing our students the opportunity
to intern at the Superior Court of the
Virgin Islands. Your support for
Mini Gusto XXXXI is much
appreciated!

Sincerely, *Priscilla Thelwell*

Mini Gusto Coordinator

Considering how people in my life will feel and be affected by the decision. When I look back at moments like that I can clearly see how I could've handled the decision better and not brought negativity into my loved ones lives. I want to live a life full of complementary relationships, where everyone is benefited. I want to leave this world known as a good man.

In conclusion, I'd like to express my gratitude toward all those involved in my case and the employees of YRL. I have gained a clarity that I don't think I would've if I hadn't spent time in YRL. I was stuck in a cycle that needed to be broken and I'm glad for the fact that it was. Before going to YRL, I had the same goals but I don't think I had the clearness of mind to recognize them. Now however, I am excited and motivated to have the chance to pursue my goals with a clear head and peace of mind. I've had a realization about what I really need and what I really don't, whether it be relationships, habits, and substances. Truly, Thank You All.



Jan, 2023

Youth Rehabilitation
Center

