COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, VETERANS AFFAIRS AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

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BILL NO. 36-0227

Thirty-Sixth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

February 2, 2026

A resolution honoring and commending the Armstrong Family, long-time owners of Armstrong Ice Cream for their exceptional contributions to the economic growth, cultural heritage, and development of the Virgin Islands

PROPOSED BY: Senator Kenneth L. Gittens
Sponsors: Franklin D. Johnson, Avery L. Lewis,
Clifford A. Joseph, Sr., Angel L. Bolques, Jr. and Carla J. Joseph
Co-sponsor: Hubert L. Frederick

WHEREAS, the Armstrong Family, whose business legacy has been rooted in the Virgin Islands since the early 1900s, has made enduring and significant contributions to the territory's economic growth and development through their steadfast entrepreneurship, community engagement, and commitment to excellence;

WHEREAS, Armstrong Ice Cream- also known as Armstrong's Homemade Ice Cream - was founded more than one hundred twenty-five years ago by the late Minerva Petersen, who began the family enterprise by selling homemade vanilla ice cream and local Vienna cake from a cart, laying the foundation for one of the Virgin Islands' most iconic family-owned businesses;

WHEREAS, the business was later carried forward by Minerva Petersen's son, Ivan Armstrong, who assumed ownership in 1942 and, alongside his wife Irenia Armstrong,

continued operations from the family home in Estate Smithfield, Frederiksted, St. Croix while balancing other employment and practicing the values of hard work, perseverance, and community service;

WHEREAS, Irenia Armstrong, through her dedication and craftsmanship, taught the art of ice cream making to her son, Cedric Armstrong, ensuring the preservation of traditional recipes, techniques, and local flavors that have become synonymous with Armstrong Ice Cream;

WHEREAS, Mr. Cedric Armstrong was born on September 24, 1963, on St. Croix to the late Ivan and Irenia Armstrong, and received his early education at St. Patrick's Elementary School and St. Joseph High School;

WHEREAS, after graduation from high school, he pursued further studies at Prospect Hall College in Hollywood, Florida, and later at the University of the Virgin Islands;

WHEREAS, Mr. Cedric Armstrong served the territory as a member of the Narcotics Strike Force from 1984 to 1990, demonstrating a commitment to public service before returning to his family's business in 1990 to assume leadership and continue the Armstrong legacy;

WHEREAS, under Cedric Armstrong's stewardship, Armstrong Ice Cream has grown and thrived as a small, family-owned business in Frederiksted, now operating from its location in Estate Whim (commonly known as the Campo Rico entrance), where it also functions as a deli offering bush tea, veggie burgers, quesadillas, and a variety of sandwiches;

WHEREAS, Armstrong Ice Cream is best known and celebrated for its wide array of homemade ice cream flavors, including traditional favorites such as vanilla, ginger nut, and lemongrass, as well as seasonal and locally inspired offerings such as guavaberry, soursop, mango, and gooseberry - the latter being one of its most sought-after flavors;

WHEREAS, the Armstrong Family's iconic local ice cream business has long served as a cherished cultural and culinary staple in the St. Croix community welcoming visitors as one of their first stops upon arrival and bidding farewell as a beloved final stop before departure while preserving Virgin Islands traditions through its signature local fruit flavors, thereby enriching the territory's cultural heritage and contributing to its economic vitality;

WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes the collective contributions of the Armstrong Family, including Cedric Armstrong's wife, Etherlyn Armstrong; his siblings, Jerolyn Armstrong, Frank Armstrong, and Orville Armstrong; and his children, Louis, Iverissa, Amanda, A'kell, and A'quan, all of whom represent the continuation of a proud family legacy rooted in entrepreneurship, resilience, and service to the Virgin Islands community;

WHEREAS, Armstrong Ice Cream has significantly contributed to the local economy by providing employment opportunities, supporting local farmers and producers, promoting goods made in the Virgin Islands, and attracting both residents and visitors to Frederiksted and the wider St. Croix community;

WHEREAS, the Armstrong Family's dedication over more than a century exemplifies the vital role that local, family-owned businesses play in sustaining the economy, preserving culture, and strengthening the social fabric of the Virgin Islands; Now, Therefore,

Be it resolved 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 the Armstrong Family, past and present, for their outstanding service, entrepreneurial spirit, and exceptional contributions to the economic growth, cultural heritage, and development of the Virgin Islands through the continued operation of Armstrong Ice Cream.

SECTION 2. In recognition and appreciation of their contributions, the President of the Legislature, or the President's designee, shall present perma plaque copy of this resolution to Armstrong Family at an appropriate ceremony held for that purpose.

BILL SUMMARY

This bill honors and commends the Armstrong family for their outstanding service, entrepreneurial spirit, and exceptional contributions to the economic growth, cultural heritage, and development of the Virgin Islands through the continued operation of Armstrong Ice Cream.

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