



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: 26-004

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: March 2, 2026

SUBJECT: Committee Report for Thursday, February 26, 2026 Hearing

Please find attached the report for the Committee on Rules and Judiciary hearing held on Thursday, February 26, 2026, Earle B. Ottley Legislative Hall on St. Thomas.

CC: All Senators
Chief Legal Counsel
Archive Division
Journal Division

RULES AND JUDICIARY
FEBRUARY 26, 2026 COMMITTEE HEARING REPORT

The Committee on Rules and Judiciary held its hearing on Thursday, February 26, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. in the Earle B. Ottley Legislative Hall on St. Thomas. The Committee considered the following Nominations and Bills:

- **Mr. Willard John**– Governor’s Nominee for Governing Board of the VI Port Authority
- **Ms. Leona Smith**– Governor’s Nominee for Governing Board of the VI Port Authority
- **The Honorable Celestino White, Sr.** – Governor’s Nominee for Governing Board of the VI Port Authority
- **Mr. Joseph Donohoo**– Governor’s Nominee to the Virgin Islands Board of Contractors, Trades, and Crafts
- **Bill No. 36-0198** – An act amending Act No. 9035 by redesignating the funding source for several entities and correcting a typographical error and amending Act No. 9045 by inserting and striking appropriations. **Proposed by Senator Kurt A. Vialet**
- **Bill No. 36-0199** – An act approving the lease agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands, acting through the Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement, and Accent Property Management, LLC. for Parcels No. 123 and 129 Submarine Base, South Side Quarter, St. Thomas, to develop the premises to operate, establish, and manage a slate of subtenants, pursuant to an approved development plan. **Proposed by Senator Milton E. Potter by Request of the Governor**
- **Bill No. 36-0204** – An act approving a multi-year lease agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands, acting through its Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement, and Commercial Investments LLC, for Parcel No. 30 Submarine Base, No. 6 Southside Quarter, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, for a logistics storage warehouse and other related purposes. **Proposed by Senator Milton E. Potter by Request of the Governor**
- **Bill No. 36-0209** – An act amending title 23 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 10 to establish civil penalties for disregarding marine advisories and to create the Territorial Marine Safety Fund. **Proposed by Senators Hubert L. Frederick, Avery L. Lewis, and Ray Fonseca**
- **Bill No. 36-0219** – An act amending title 22 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 31 relating to the Virgin Islands Producer and Adjuster Licensing Act by modifying renewal provisions for insurance producer licenses. **Proposed by Senator Milton E. Potter by Request of the Governor**
- **Bill No. 36-0237** – An act approving a multi-year lease agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands, acting through its Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement, and DM Hospitality LLC, for Parcel No. 2C Crystal

Gade, Queen’s Quarter, St. Thomas, consisting of a 2-story building; and a portion of Parcel No. 3 Crystal Gade, consisting of a 2-story building to operate a food and beverage management company with a bakery and deli, a jewelry business management company, and other related purposes. **Proposed by Senator Milton E. Potter by Request of the Governor**

- **Bill No. 36-0084** – An act honoring and commending Alva Alphonse Swan also known as “Coach Tumba” for his significant contributions to the sport of basketball in the Virgin Islands by bestowing upon him the Key to the Territory. **Proposed by Senators Marvin A. Blyden and Angel L. Bolques, Jr.**
- **Bill No: 36-0220** – An act honoring and commending former Senator Lorraine L. Berry posthumously for her decades of outstanding public service by renaming Hull Bay Road located in North Side, St. Thomas, the “Lorraine L. Berry Drive”. **Proposed by Senators Avery L. Lewis, Angel L. Bolques, Jr., and Marvin A. Blyden**
- **Bill No. 36-0150** – An act honoring and commending Thelma Leona Petersen-Springer, posthumously, for her outstanding community service to the children and the people of the Virgin Islands. **Proposed by Senators Kenneth L. Gittens, Avery L. Lewis and Clifford A. Joseph, Sr.**
- **Bill No. 36-0225** – A resolution honoring and commending Sharon Maria Williams for her outstanding achievements and significant contributions to the fields of education and culinary arts. **Proposed by Senators Kenneth L. Gittens, Avery L. Lewis, Clifford A. Joseph, Sr. and Angel L. Bolques, Jr.**
- **Bill No. 36-0226** – A resolution honoring and commending Mrs. Janet Brow Phillips for her outstanding achievements and significant contributions to the fields of education and culinary arts to the Virgin Islands community. **Proposed by Senators Kenneth L. Gittens, Avery L. Lewis, Clifford A. Joseph, Sr. and Angel L. Bolques, Jr.**
- **Bill No. 36-0227** – 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 Senators Kenneth L. Gittens, Franklin D. Johnson, Avery L. Lewis and Clifford A. Joseph, Sr.**

The meeting was called to order by the Committee Chair, Sen. Carla J. Joseph at 10:05 a.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

Non-Committee Members Present

Sen. Novelle E. Francis, Jr.
 Sen. Marvin A. Blyden

Committee Member Absent/Excused

Sen. Angel L. Bolques, Jr.

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

Legislative Reporters

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

Clerk/Timekeeper

Mrs. Deleka Callwood Daniel
Ms. D'Liyah Pamphile

Additional Supporting Staff

Ms. Shania Nieves

Legal Counsel

Mrs. Nandi Sekou, Esq.

In block one of the Agenda, the Committee considered the Governor's Nominations: **Mr. Willard John, Ms. Leona Smith, and The Honorable Celestino White Sr. to Governing Board of the Virgin Islands Port Authority.** Senators proceeded with one (1) round of four (4) minutes of questioning time for the nominees.

Governor's Nominee Name	Position	Placement	Motion	Vote
Mr. Willard John	Chairman	Governing Board of the Virgin Islands Port Authority – STX	Senator Avery Lewis motioned that Mr. Willard John 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 Alma Francis Heyliger. The motion was objected to by Senator Kenneth Gittens.	4 yeas 1 nay 1 not voting 1 absent
Ms. Leona Smith	Member	Governing Board of the Virgin Islands Port Authority – STJ	Senator Avery Lewis motioned that Ms. Leona Smith 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 Alma Francis Heyliger. The motion was	4 yeas 1 nay 1 not voting 1 absent

Comm. on Rules and Judiciary February 26, 2026 Committee Report

			objected to by Senator Kenneth Gittens.	
The Honorable Celestino White, Sr.	Member	Governing Board of the Virgin Islands Port Authority – STT	Senator Avery Lewis motioned that The Honorable Celestino White, Sr. 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 Alma Francis Heyliger. The motion was objected to by Senator Kenneth Gittens.	4 yeas 1 nay 1 not voting 1 absent

In block two of the Agenda, the Committee considered the Governor’s Nomination: **Mr. Joseph Donohoo for the Virgin Islands Board of Contractors, Trades, and Crafts.** Senators proceeded with one (1) round of four (4) minutes of questioning time for the nominee.

Governor’s Nominee Name	Position	Placement	Motion	Vote
Mr. Joseph Donohoo	Member	Virgin Islands Board of Contractors, Trades, and Crafts	Senator Avery Lewis motioned that Mr. Joseph Donohoo 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 Kenneth Gittens and Alma Francis Heyliger	6 yeas 1 absent

In block three of the Agenda, the Committee considered **Bill Nos. 36-0198, 36-0199, 36-0204, 36-0209, 36-0219, 36-0237, 36-0084, 36-0220, 36-0150, 36-0225, 36-0226, and 36-0227.** Senators proceeded with one (1) round of two (2) minutes to talk pertaining to all the bills in the third block.

Bill Number	Short Title	Amendment	Motion	Vote
36-0198	An act amending Act No. 9035 by redesignating the funding source for several entities and correcting a typographical error and amending Act No. 9045 by inserting and striking appropriations. Proposed by Senator Kurt A. Vialet		Senator Avery Lewis motioned that Bill No. 36-0198 , 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	5 yeas 1 not voting 1 absent

Comm. on Rules and Judiciary February 26, 2026 Committee Report

			Clifford Joseph, Sr. and Milton Potter.	
36-0199	An act approving the lease agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands, acting through the Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement, and Accent Property Management, LLC. for Parcels No. 123 and 129 Submarine Base, South Side Quarter, St. Thomas, to develop the premises to operate, establish, and manage a slate of subtenants, pursuant to an approved development plan. Proposed by Senator Milton E. Potter by Request of the Governor		Senator Milton Potter motioned at Bill No. 36-0199 , 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 Avery Lewis.	6 yeas 1 absent
36-0204	An act approving a multi-year lease agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands, acting through its Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement, and Commercial Investments LLC, for Parcel No. 30 Submarine Base, No. 6 Southside Quarter, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, for a logistics storage warehouse and other related purposes. Proposed by Senator Milton E. Potter by Request of the Governor		Senator Milton Potter motioned at Bill No. 36-0204 , 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 Avery Lewis and Clifford Joseph, Sr.	6 yeas 1 absent

Comm. on Rules and Judiciary February 26, 2026 Committee Report

36-0209	An act amending title 23 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 10 to establish civil penalties for disregarding marine advisories and to create the Territorial Marine Safety Fund. Proposed by Senators Hubert L. Frederick, Avery L. Lewis, and Ray Fonseca	Senator Milton Potter offered Amendment No. 36-694 , which was seconded by Senator Avery Lewis, the motion was carried.	Senator Milton Potter motioned that Bill No. 36-0209 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 Senator Clifford Joseph, Sr.	6 yeas 1 absent
36-0219	An act amending title 22 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 31 relating to the Virgin Islands Producer and Adjuster Licensing Act by modifying renewal provisions for insurance producer licenses. Proposed by Senator Milton E. Potter by Request of the Governor		Senator Milton Potter motioned that Bill No. 36-0219 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 and Clifford Joseph, Sr.	6 yeas 1 absent
36-0237	An act approving a multi-year lease agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands, acting through its Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement, and DM Hospitality LLC, for Parcel No. 2C Crystal Gade, Queen's Quarter, St. Thomas, consisting of a 2-story building; and a portion of Parcel No. 3 Crystal Gade, consisting of a 2-story building to operate a food and beverage management company with a bakery and deli, a jewelry business management		Senator Alma Francis Heyliger motioned that Bill No. 36-0237 , be removed from agenda and held in committee at the call of the chair . The motion was seconded by Senators Clifford Joseph and Avery Lewis.	5 yeas 2 absent

Comm. on Rules and Judiciary February 26, 2026 Committee Report

	company, and other related purposes. Proposed by Senator Milton E. Potter by Request of the Governor			
36-0084	An act honoring and commending Alva Alphonse Swan also known as “Coach Tumba” for his significant contributions to the sport of basketball in the Virgin Islands by bestowing upon him the Key to the Territory. Proposed by Senators Marvin A. Blyden and Angel L. Bolques, Jr.		Senator Clifford Joseph, Sr. motioned that Bill No. 36-0084 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.	6 yeas 1 absent
36-0220	An act honoring and commending former Senator Lorraine L. Berry posthumously for her decades of outstanding public service by renaming Hull Bay Road located in North Side, St. Thomas, the “Lorraine L. Berry Drive”. Proposed by Senators Avery L. Lewis, Angel L. Bolques, Jr., and Marvin A. Blyden		Senator Avery Lewis motioned that Bill No. 36-0220 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	6 yeas 1 absent
36-0150	An act honoring and commending Thelma Leona Petersen-Springer, posthumously, for her outstanding community service to the children and the people of the Virgin Islands. Proposed by Senators Kenneth L. Gittens, Avery L. Lewis and Clifford A. Joseph, Sr.		Senator Kenneth Gittens motioned that Bill No. 36-0150 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 and Clifford Joseph, Sr.	6 yeas 1 absent

Comm. on Rules and Judiciary February 26, 2026 Committee Report

36-0225	A resolution honoring and commending Sharon Maria Williams for her outstanding achievements and significant contributions to the fields of education and culinary arts. Proposed by Senators Kenneth L. Gittens, Avery L. Lewis, Clifford A. Joseph, Sr. and Angel L. Bolques, Jr.		Senator Kenneth Gittens motioned that Bill No. 36-0225 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 and Clifford Joseph, Sr.	6 yeas 1 absent
36-0226	A resolution honoring and commending Mrs. Janet Brow Phillips for her outstanding achievements and significant contributions to the fields of education and culinary arts to the Virgin Islands community. Proposed by Senators Kenneth L. Gittens, Avery L. Lewis, Clifford A. Joseph, Sr. and Angel L. Bolques, Jr.		Senator Kenneth Gittens motioned that Bill No. 36-0226 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 Clifford Joseph, Sr., Senator Milton Potter, and Avery Lewis.	6 yeas 1 absent
36-0227	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 Senators Kenneth L. Gittens, Franklin D. Johnson, Avery L. Lewis and Clifford A. Joseph, Sr.		Senator Kenneth Gittens motioned that Bill No. 36-0227 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 Clifford Joseph, Sr., Senator Milton Potter, Avery Lewis, and Alma Francis Heyliger.	6 yeas 1 absent

The Chair, Sen. Carla J. Joseph, adjourned the Committee on Rules and Judiciary hearing at 5:04 p.m.