



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: 25-002

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: February 28, 2025

SUBJECT: Committee Report for Thursday, February 27, 2025 Hearing

Please find attached the report for the Committee on Rules and Judiciary hearing held on Thursday, February 27, 2025 in the Earle B. Ottley Legislative Hall, St. Thomas.

Cc: All Senators
Chief Legal Counsel
Archive Division
Journal Division

**RULES AND JUDICIARY
FEBRUARY 27, 2025 COMMITTEE HEARING REPORT**

The Committee on Rules and Judiciary held its hearing on Thursday, February 27, 2025, at the Earle B. Ottley Legislative Hall on St. Thomas. The Committee received testimony on the operations of the Judiciary Branch of the Virgin Islands and considered the following Governor's Nominations:

- **Dr. Safiya George** – Virgin Islands Government Hospital and Health Facilities Corporations, District Governing Board of St. Thomas-St. John, and
- **Mr. Anthony Mardenborough, Jr.** – Board of Career and Technical Education- St. Croix.

The meeting was called to order by the Committee Chair, Sen. Carla J. Joseph at 10:03 a.m.

Committee Members Present

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

Office of the Executive Director

Mr. Charles Brown, Jr.
Ms. Myrna De-Altier-Pickard
Ms. Jevon Ottley
Mr. Issac Winston

Sergeant-At-Arms

Mr. Delvin Fleming

Public Affairs/Media

Mr. Omari Hicks
Mr. Kashief Hamilton
Mr. Barry Leerdam
Ms. Chaunte Herbert
Mr. Dequan Milliner
Mr. Jamal Potter
Mr. Alwyn Baptiste, Jr.
Mr. Alvin Burke, Jr.
Mr. Eustace Browne
Ms. Chaunte Herbert

Non-Committee Members Present

Sen. Marvin A. Blyden
Sen. Ray Fonseca
Sen. Novelle E. Francis, Jr.
Sen. Hubert L. Frederick

Legislative Reporters

Ms. Nataya Melchoir-Munoz
Ms. Vashti Berry
Ms. Joanne Samuel
Mrs. Nadine Coley-Williams

Clerk/Timekeeper

Ms. Khadijah Hodge

Supporting Staff

Ms. Knysha Berkeley
Ms. Neta Christopher

Legal Counsel

Attorney Sharline Rogers

In block one of the hearing, Mrs. Regina deChabert Petersen, Administrator of Courts for Judiciary Branch of the Virgin Islands; Mr. Miguel Tricoche, Assistant Administrator of the Court for the Judiciary Branch of the Virgin Islands; Mrs. Paulette Rabsatt Simmonds, Chief Financial Officer of the Judiciary Branch of the Virgin Islands; Mr. Paul Gimenez, General Counsel of the Judiciary Branch of the Virgin Islands; and Ms. Tamara Charles, Clerk of the Superior Court testified on the operations to include, but not limited to enabling law and jurisdiction, current challenges and plan of action to resolve challenges. Senators were allotted one (1) round of seven (7) minutes and one (1) lighting round of two (2) minutes each of questioning. Mrs. deChabert Petersen stated that as of September 30, 2024, the Court has a pending case load of 91 appeals. Mrs. deChabert Petersen also stated since September 30, 2024, the Complex Litigation Division has disposed of over 3,000 mass tort and or toxic tort cases. Since the 2016 administrative unification and the 2017 hurricanes, the Judiciary has struggled with a stagnant budget of about \$35.2 million per year, which was approximately \$7.3 million below the annual funding request. Mrs. deChabert Petersen stated that one of the biggest achievements of the court was the implementation of a modern enterprise case management system and public portal, which occurred in 2020, which introduced electronic filing to the Superior Court for the first time.

In block two of the hearing, Dr. Safiya George, the Governor's nominee for the Virgin Islands Government Hospital and Health Facilities Corporation, District Governing Board of St. Thomas-St. John read her testimony into the record. Senators proceeded with one (1) round of three (3) minutes each of questioning. Senator Avery Lewis motioned that the nomination of Dr. Safiya George to the Virgin Islands Government Hospital and Health Facilities Corporations, District Governing Board of St. Thomas-St. John be voted upon favorably in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body with a favorable recommendation, for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senators Gittens, Francis Heyliger and Potter. Voting in favor were Senators Joseph, Gittens, Bolques, Francis Heyliger, Lewis, and Potter. The motion was carried. **(6 yea, 1 Absent)**

In the final block of the hearing, Mr. Anthony E. Mardenborough, Jr., the Governor's Nominee for the Board of Career and Technical Education-St. Croix read his testimony into the record. Senators proceeded with one (1) round of three (3) minutes each of questioning. Senator Kenneth L. Gittens motioned that the nomination of Mr. Anthony E. Mardenborough, Jr., to the Board of Career and Technical Education-St. Croix be voted upon favorably in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senators Bolques, Francis Heyliger, Potter and Lewis. Voting in favor were Senators Joseph, Gittens, Bolques, Francis Heyliger, Lewis, and Potter. The motion was carried. **(6 yea, 1 Absent)**

The Chair, Sen. Carla J. Joseph, adjourned the Committee on Rules and Judiciary hearing at 4:26 p.m.