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WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF

**DR. SAFIYA GEORGE
PRESIDENT**

UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

**BEFORE THE
THIRTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN
ISLANDS COMMITTEE ON RULES AND JUDICIARY**

**REGARDING
NOMINATION TO SERVE AS A MEMBER OF THE
VIRGIN ISLANDS GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL AND
HEALTH FACILITIES CORPORATION, DISTRICT
GOVERNING BOARD OF ST. THOMAS-ST. JOHN**

FEBRUARY 25, 2025

Good day Senate President Potter, Chairperson Joseph, members of the 36th Legislature and distinguished guests.

I am honored to be here today and deeply grateful for the opportunity to be considered for service on the Virgin Islands government Hospital and health facilities, corporation district governing board of St. Thomas/St. John. I appreciate the confidence placed in me through this nomination and welcome the opportunity to contribute to the vital work of strengthening healthcare governance in our territory.

As President of the University of the Virgin Islands, I have dedicated my career to courageous caring leadership, research & transformational healthcare. I believe that strong, strategic leadership and collaboration are essential to improving healthcare access, quality, and sustainability in our community.

Throughout my nearly 30-year career in healthcare, I have remained committed to improving patient outcomes, advancing healthcare education, and strengthening the connection between healthcare institutions and the communities they serve. My journey began in 1997 as a nurse at Seaview Nursing Home and Rehabilitation Center, followed by years of clinical experience at Juan Luis Medical Center and multiple leading healthcare institutions, including Johns Hopkins University Hospital, Grady Memorial Hospital, Northside Hospital, and Piedmont Medical Center in Atlanta. In addition, my early training as a nursing student at the University of the Virgin Islands provided me with hands-on experience at Schneider Regional Medical Center and outpatient clinics on St. Croix.

Beyond direct patient care, I have dedicated nearly 20 years to higher education, focusing on healthcare education and workforce development. I have served on numerous healthcare boards, including an international board representing 30,000 nurses globally, where I was an active leader for a decade. My service also includes organizations such as Boca Helping Hands, which addresses food security, job training, and healthcare access including primary care and behavioral health service in Palm Beach County, Florida. Additionally, as Chair of the Florida Association of Colleges of Nursing, I was part of the leadership team that successfully advocated for legislative support to expand nursing education and strengthen partnerships between universities and healthcare institutions across the state.

As a health scientist, I have authored over 50 peer-reviewed journal articles and contributed to multiple book chapters. My research has focused on critical public health issues, including HIV/AIDS outcomes, sexually transmitted infections, and risk behaviors. I have also leveraged data science and machine learning to develop predictive models for COVID-19 outcomes such as mortality risk, ICU admissions, hospital length of stay, and ventilator use as well as models for predicting Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

Besides my PhD in Nursing, I have been nationally recognized for my outstanding contributions in the healthcare industry. I have significant professional certifications, advanced practice and credentials that indicate my level of research and clinical experience.

With this breadth and depth of experience in both healthcare and education, I am eager to bring my expertise to the Virgin Islands government Hospital and health facilities, corporation district governing board of St. Thomas/St. John and contribute to efforts that enhance healthcare access, quality, and innovation in the Virgin Islands.