



Friday, July 10, 2026

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Before the Committee on Rules and Judiciary - Bill No. 36-0237

Chairwoman Joseph, Honorable members of the Committee on Rules and Judiciary, good morning.

My name is **Pash Daswani**, and I appear before you today together with my business partner, **Giresh Mirpuri**, on behalf of DM Hospitality LLC in support of Bill No. 36-0237.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and thank you for your continued service to the people of the Virgin Islands.

Before I speak about the bill and lease itself, I believe it is important that you know who is asking for your support.

This morning, I am not asking you to judge us by promises. I am asking you to judge us by our record.

I came to St. Thomas in 1982 with little more than a dream and a willingness to work hard. Like so many who have chosen to make these islands their home, I built my life here. I raised my family here. I started businesses here. Today, more than four decades later, I still consider it one of the greatest privileges of my life to call the Virgin Islands home.

My business partner, **Giresh Mirpuri**, shares that same commitment. Giresh is a lifelong Virgin Islander, born here and a graduate of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. Throughout his career, he has focused on building responsible businesses, creating employment opportunities, and making long-term investments in our community. Together, we share the same values: integrity, stewardship, and a belief that private investment should leave our island stronger than we found it.



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Over the years, we have invested in downtown Charlotte Amalie, mainly retail and tourism, and recently in hospitality & food and beverage operations, with historic preservation in mind. Those investments were never made because we were looking for a quick return. They were made because we believe in our island, our people, and our future.

One of the projects we are most proud of is the restoration of the former Daily News Building at 4 Wimmelskafts Gade. What had become a deteriorating and underutilized property is today a restored and productive part of downtown Charlotte Amalie. That project reflects the same philosophy we bring to Crystal Gade: preserve what is important, improve what has been neglected, and invest for the long term.

The lease before you today is another opportunity to continue that work. The property will support DM Hospitality's existing business operations, including F&B management activities, administrative offices, logistics, storage, and other related purposes permitted under the lease agreement. Our objective is to create an operational support facility that strengthens businesses already serving our community while respecting the surrounding neighborhood.

Throughout this process, we have listened carefully to the questions and concerns raised by neighbors and members of the community.

- We attended meetings.
- We answered questions.
- We clarified misunderstandings.
- And where appropriate, we offered reasonable accommodations because we believe that being a good neighbor is every bit as important as being a good business owner.

We respect the St. Thomas Reformed Church and the important role it has played in our community for generations. While we may have different views regarding this project, our sincere hope has always been that, if this lease is approved, we can move forward as respectful neighbors who share a common interest in preserving and strengthening downtown Charlotte Amalie.

This project has already undergone extensive review by the Department of Planning and Natural Resources, the Department of Property and Procurement, the Office of the Attorney General, and the Governor of the Virgin Islands before being transmitted to this Legislature for your consideration.

Today, we respectfully ask you to affirm that process.

The decision before you today is about more than one building. It is about encouraging responsible private investment. It is about preserving historic properties rather than allowing them to sit vacant and deteriorate.

It is about creating opportunities for locals, like us, and local businesses like ours to continue growing and employing Virgin Islanders.

And it is about demonstrating that when individuals follow the established governmental process, invest their own resources, and commit themselves to this community, that commitment is recognized and respected.

Giresh and I are not asking for special treatment. We are simply asking for the opportunity to continue doing what we have done for many years: investing in St. Thomas, creating jobs, preserving historic properties, and contributing to the community that has given so much to us.

Chairwoman Joseph and distinguished Senators, thank you again for your time, your consideration, and for the work each of you does on behalf of the people of the Virgin Islands.

We respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of Bill No. 36-0237 and for the opportunity to continue investing in downtown Charlotte Amalie and in the future of our community.

Thank you.

We would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.