

Written Testimony for Ardrina Scott Elliott, nominee for the V.I. Parole Board

Good morning, Honorable Chairperson of the 36th Legislative's Committee on Rules and Judiciary, Senator Carla J. Joseph, committee members, Vice-Chair and Senator Kenneth L. Gittens, Senator Avery L. Lewis, Senator Angel L. Bolques, Jr., Senator Alma Francis-Heyliger, and Senator Clifford A. Joseph, Sr., other senators present, esteemed legislative staff, and those viewing and listening from the chambers, legislative portal, Facebook and YouTube.

My name is Ardrina Scott Elliott. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as a nominee to the Virgin Islands Board of Parole. I am grateful for the confidence placed in me and recognize the responsibility that comes with this nomination.

My professional career spans more than thirty years in education, administration, and leadership. Throughout those years, I have worked with people from different backgrounds, served in positions of trust, and made decisions that required fairness, sound judgment, and accountability.

My educational background includes degrees in Psychology, Economics, and Business Administration. I am currently pursuing a doctorate in Creative Leadership for Innovation and Change at the University of the Virgin Islands. While I value education, I believe that some of life's most important lessons come from our experiences and the people who shape our lives.

I grew up in a military family. My father was a career military man who believed strongly in discipline, structure, respect for authority, and good citizenship. He held our family to those standards. Although I may not have appreciated every lesson at the time, those values became part of the foundation that guides me today. My Christian faith has strengthened my belief in integrity, compassion, service, and treating others with dignity. These influences have taught me that compassion and accountability can coexist and that the best decisions must be guided by principle rather than convenience.

Community service has also been an important part of my life. Over the years, I have organized fundraising and relationship-building activities to support local schools, churches, and nonprofit organizations. In addition, I served as a member and president of the UVI Senate, PTSA officer, and Cub Scout leader. These experiences have reinforced my belief that we all have a responsibility to contribute to the well-being of our community.

My experience as a mother has also shaped the way I understand responsibility, growth, and the importance of second chances. Parenting has taught me that people develop at different rates, that guidance must sometimes be firm and sometimes patient, and that accountability is most meaningful when it is connected to the opportunity to learn and improve. It has also taught me to consider the impact of decisions on families and future generations.

I believe people can learn from their mistakes, grow, and make meaningful changes in their lives. I also understand that actions have consequences and that protecting the public must remain a central responsibility of this Board. I acknowledge that every parole decision deserves careful consideration of the facts, the law, and the people affected.

I do not come before you believing that I have all the answers. I bring a willingness to listen, learn, ask thoughtful questions, and make fair and responsible decisions.

If confirmed, I will approach this responsibility with humility, integrity, compassion, and respect for the law. I recognize that parole is not an automatic entitlement nor should it be viewed simply as an act of mercy. It is a decision that requires careful consideration of the information presented, the individual's institutional conduct, demonstrated accountability, rehabilitation efforts, and prospects for successful reintegration, as applicable under the law. Most important, I will remain mindful that the decisions the Parole Board makes affect individuals, families, and the safety of our Virgin Islands community.

I thank you again for your consideration. I see this nomination as another opportunity to serve a community that has given me so much. I am ready to answer any questions you may have.