

BILL NO. 36-0247

Thirty-Sixth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

February 10, 2026

An act amending title 32 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 2, establishing the Territorial Park Naming Program creating a uniform process for naming and renaming parks, recreational areas, and facilities owned by the Government of the Virgin Islands

PROPOSED BY: Senator Marise C. James

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

SECTION 1. The Legislature of the Virgin Islands finds that parks, recreational areas, and facilities are essential to the quality of life, culture, and identity of Virgin Islands communities. The Legislature further finds that consistent and transparent naming practices promote community engagement, historical preservation, and recognition of civic contributions.

SECTION 2. Title 32 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 2 is amended by adding the following new section 27:

“§ 27. Territorial Park Naming Program

(a) When reviewing a proposal to name or rename a park, recreational area, or facility, the Division of Territorial Parks and Protected Areas shall consider the following:

(1) the geographic location, descriptive features, or adjoining subdivision, street, or school;

(2) outstanding natural or geological features;

(3) cultural, historical, or community significance;

(4) a major historic event, group, or organization with a direct connection to the park or its community;

(5) an individual (living or deceased) whose accomplishments or service substantially benefited the Virgin Islands community; or

(6) an individual or organization that contributed significantly to the acquisition or development of the property or facility, including through a deed, donation, sponsorship, or other substantial financial support.

(b) Any person or organization may submit a written request to name or rename a park, recreational area, or facility to the Division of Territorial Parks and Protected Areas.

(1) The request must include:

(a) the proposed name;

(b) the location and description of the site; and

(c) documentation showing how the proposed name meets the criteria in subsection

(2) The Division shall:

(a) review each submission for compliance with this section;

(b) notify all property owners within a 1,000-foot radius of the site;

(c) conduct at least one public meeting to receive public comment; and

(d) forward its recommendation and findings to the Legislature for approval.

(c) Renaming may only occur when:

(a) continued use of the existing name is contrary to the best interests of the community;

(b) the name conflicts with the Division's mission, cultural, or educational goals;

1 or

2 (c) the proposed new name is demonstrably more appropriate based on the
3 criteria in subsection (a). Names commemorating individuals, groups, or historic events
4 may not be changed except under the circumstances listed in this subsection.

5 (d) All signs, plaques, markers, and memorials placed within a park or
6 recreational area must conform to the Division's graphic and sign standards. The
7 Division shall approve the design and placement of such items before submission to the
8 Legislature for final approval. No signage containing commercial messages or
9 advertisements may be authorized on government property. All signage and related
10 expenses must be funded from the Territorial Park Trust Fund established under section
11 31 of this title."

12 **SECTION 3.** (a) The Department of Planning and Natural Resources, through the
13 Division of Territorial Parks and Protected Areas, shall promulgate regulations within 180 days
14 of the effective date of this act to implement section 27 of this act.

15 (b) The Department of Sports, Parks, and Recreation shall coordinate with the Division
16 to ensure all parks and recreational facilities under its management are properly identified and
17 documented under this act.

18 (c) The Division shall maintain an official registry of all named territorial parks,
19 recreational areas, and facilities, to be updated annually and submitted to the President of the
20 Legislature.

21 **BILL SUMMARY**

22 This bill amends title 32 Virgin Islands Code chapter 2 to establish the Territorial Park
23 Naming Program, creating a standardized process for the naming and renaming of parks,
24 recreational areas, and facilities owned by the Government of the Virgin Islands. The bill sets
25 forth criteria for naming based on geographic, cultural, and historical significance; provides for

- 1 public participation and review by the Division of Territorial Parks and Protected Areas;
- 2 requires legislative approval for final naming decisions; and directs the Division to maintain
- 3 an official registry of territorial park names.

4 **BR25-0533/December 2, 2025/KEH**