



# Legislature Of The Virgin Islands

CAPITOL BUILDING, P.O. 1690 ST. THOMAS, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS 00804

Tel. (340) 693-3515 Fax. (340) 693-3633 Email: senatorcarlajoseph@legvi.org Website: www.senatorcarlajoseph.com

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: 25-020**

**TO:** Mrs. Kurell A. Sheridan, JD  
Executive Director  
36<sup>th</sup> Legislature of the V.I.

**FROM:** The Honorable Carla J. Joseph   
Chair  
Committee on Rules and Judiciary

**DATE:** September 11, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Committee Report for Monday, September 8, 2025, Hearing

---

Please find attached the report for the Committee on Rules and Judiciary hearing held on Monday, September 8, 2025, in the Frits E. Lawaetz Legislative Conference Room, St. Croix

CC: All Senators  
Chief Legal Counsel  
Archive Division  
Journal Division

**RULES AND JUDICIARY  
SEPTEMBER 8, 2025, COMMITTEE HEARING REPORT**

The Committee on Rules and Judiciary held its hearing on Monday, September 8, 2025, at the Frits E. Lawaetz Conference Room on St. Thomas. The Committee received testimonies from four (4) of the Governor's nominees and considered on bills:

- **Mr. Roy Moorehead** -- Governor's Nominee for Board of Parole,
- **Mr. L. Damian M. Cartwright** -- Governor's Nominee for the Virgin Islands Board of Land Use Appeals,
- **Mr. Xavier A. Acevedo** -- Governor's Nominee for the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority Governing Board,
- **Ms. Safiya George, PhD** -- Governor's Nominee for the Virgin Islands Government Hospitals and Health Facilities Corporation Board of Directors,
- **Bill No. 36-0101** – An act to provide for continuity of operations in the Superior Court of the Virgin Islands in the event of prolonged judicial vacancies. **Sponsored by: Senator Novelle E. Francis Jr.,**
- **Bill No. 36-0112** – An act amending title 4 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 31, section 516 increasing the filing fee for general civil complaints in the Superior Court of the Virgin Islands and title 5 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 41, section 426 allowing for the collection of nine percent prejudgment interest when an offer of judgment is filed with the court. **Sponsored by: Senator Carla J. Joseph,**
- **Bill No: 36-0144** - An act amending title 14 Virgin Islands Code, Chapter 113 to define and prohibit assault rifles, ban suppressors and silencers, and requiring safety training for licensed rifles and shotgun holders; prohibiting large-capacity magazines and preventing the illegal sales of firearms, firearm accessories and ammunition. **Sponsored by: Senator Clifford A. Joseph, Sr.,**
- **Bill No: 36-0105** - An act amending title 7 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 13, subchapter III by prohibiting the possession, sale, or manufacture of tetrahydrocannabinol acid, delta-6 THC, and delta-8 THC and delta-10 THC products in the Virgin Islands and for other related purposes. **Sponsored by: Senator Clifford A. Joseph, Sr.,**
- **Bill No. 36-0123** - An act amending title 20 Virgin Islands Code, part II, chapter 43, subchapter I, section 493 making it unlawful for a person who has 0.04 percent or more, by weight, of alcohol in his blood to operate a commercial motor vehicle, and making it unlawful for a person under the age of 21 years who has any detectable amount of alcohol in his blood, to operate a motor vehicle. **Sponsored by: Senator Ray Fonseca, and**
- **Bill No. 36-0136**- An act amending title 23 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 17, subchapter II by adding new sections 1331 through 1336 mandating lethal weapon training for security guards and investigators. **Sponsored by: Senator Avery L. Lewis.**

The meeting was called to order by the Committee Chair, Sen. Carla J. Joseph at 10:02 a.m.

**Committee Members Present**

Sen. Carla J. Joseph, Chair  
 Sen. Kenneth L. Gittens, Vice Chair  
 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.  
 Mr. Isaac Winston  
 Ms. Myrna De-Altier-Pickard

**Sergeant-At-Arms**

Mr. Delvin Fleming  
 Mr. Walton Jack

**Public Affairs/Media**

Mr. Bernard Mathews  
 Ms. Malissa Gustave  
 Mr. Alwyn Baptiste  
 Mr. Alvin Burke  
 Mr. Barry Leerdam

**Non-Committee Members Present**

Sen. Novellette E. Francis, Jr.

**Committee Member Absent**

Sen. Angel L. Bolques, Jr.

**Legislative Reporters**

Mrs. Nataya Munoz  
 Ms. Tricia D. Sealey  
 Ms. Nadine Williams  
 Mrs. Vashti Gerald-Berry

**Clerk/Timekeeper**

Ms. Neta Christopher

**Legal Counsel**

Atty. LaVerne Mills-Williams

**Public Affair/Media Continued**

Ms. Chaunte Herbert  
 Mr. Omari Hicks  
 Mr. Kashief Hamilton  
 Mr. Jamal Potter

In block one, Mr. Roy Moorehead, the Governor's Nominee for the Board of Parole read his testimony into the record; followed by Mr. L. Damien Cartwright, Governor's Nominee for the Virgin Islands Board of Land Use Appeals. Senators proceeded with one (1) round of five (4) minutes of questioning and a second lightning round. Senator Avery L. Lewis moved that the nomination of Mr. Roy L. Moorehead to the Board of Parole be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senators Francis Heyliger, Potter, and Chair Joseph. The committee voted and the motion was carried **(6 yeas – 1 absent)**. Then, Senator Avery L. Lewis moved that the nomination of Mr. L. Damien Cartwright to the Virgin Islands Board of Land Use Appeals be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senator Milton E. Potter. The committee voted and the motion was carried **(6 yeas – 1 absent)**.

In block two, Mr. Xavier A. Acevedo, the Governor's Nominee to the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority Governing Board and Dr. Safiya George, Governor's Nominee to the Virgin Islands Government Hospitals and Health Facilities Corporation Board of Directors read their testimonies into the record. Senators proceeded with one (1) round of four (4) minutes of questioning and a second lightning round. Senator Avery L. Lewis moved that the nomination of Mr. Xavier A. Acevedo to the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority Governing Board be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senators Francis Heyliger, and Carla Joseph. The committee voted and the motion was carried **(6 yeas – 1 absent)**. Then, Senator Avery L. Lewis moved that the nomination of Dr. Safiya George to the Virgin Islands Government Hospitals and Health Facilities Corporation Board of Directors be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and

action. The motion was seconded by Senator Joseph, Jr. The committee voted and the motion was carried **(6 yeas – 1 absent)**.

In block three of the meeting, the Committee received testimonies on **Bill No. 36-0101** – An act to provide for continuity of operations in the Superior Court of the Virgin Islands in the event of prolonged judicial vacancies Ms. Regina deChabert Petersen, Administrator of Courts, The Honorable Harold E.L. Willocks, Judge of the Judicial Branch of the Virgin Islands, Mr. J. Russell B. Pate, Esq., President of the Virgin Islands Bar Association, The Hon. Gordon C. Rhea, Esq., Attorney General of the Virgin Islands Department of Justice, and Ms. Julie S. Todman, Esq., Chief Territorial Public Defender. The Chair allowed for one (1) round of four (4) minutes of questioning by each Senator. The testifiers identified concerns relative to the proposed legislation. Then, Senator Avery L. Lewis motioned that Bill No. 36-0101 be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senators Clifford Joseph and Francis Heyliger. Voting in favor of the motion were Senators Francis Heyliger, Carla J. Joseph, Clifford A. Joseph, Sr., Lewis, and Gittens. The motion was carried **(5 yeas – 2 absent)**.

In block four of the meeting, the Committee received testimonies on **Bill No. 36-0112** – An act amending title 4 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 31, section 516 increasing the filing fee for general civil complaints in the Superior Court of the Virgin Islands and title 5 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 41, section 426 allowing for the collection of nine percent prejudgment interest when an offer of judgment is filed with the court from Ms. Regina deChabert Petersen, Administrator of Courts of the Judicial Branch of the Virgin Islands, and Mr. J. Russell B. Pate, Esq., President of the Virgin Islands Bar Association. The Chair allowed for one (1) round of three (3) minutes of questioning by each Senator. The Administrator of Courts indicated that the Judicial Branch is currently reviewing proposed increases for court and other filing fees. Furthermore, Administrator deChabert Petersen stated it is true that other court filing fees are included in the statutes. Additionally, Ms. deChabert Petersen indicated that the fund should be changed from the Superior Court Capital Improvement Fund to the Judicial Branch Improvement Fund. Attorney Pate indicated his strong support of the bill and reiterated that the increase in fees do not affect small claims, but only those larger civil litigations which can afford to pay the increased fines. Moreover, the increased fees are still lower than other jurisdictions across the nation. Senator Carla J. Joseph moved Amendment No. 36-529 to align with the recommendation of the Administrator of Courts. The motion was seconded by Senator Clifford A. Joseph, Sr. and the amendment carried. Then Senator Carla J. Joseph moved that Bill No. 36-0112 as amended be favorably voted upon in the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and forwarded to the full body for further consideration and action. The motion was seconded by Senators Clifford Joseph and Lewis. Voting in favor of the motion were Senators Francis Heyliger, Carla Joseph, Clifford A. Joseph, Sr., Lewis, Potter, and Gittens. The motion was carried **(6 yeas – 1 absent)**.

Lastly, Senator Clifford Joseph Jr. motioned to remove block five of the agenda which consisted of Bill Nos. 36-0144, 36-0105, 36-0124, and 36-0136 be held in the committee at the call of the Chair. The motion was carried.

Having no further business, the Chair, Sen. Carla J. Joseph, adjourned the Committee on Rules and Judiciary hearing at 4:28 p.m.