COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, VETERANS AFFAIRS AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

10/22/2026-REPORTED OUT TO THE FLOOR
09/28/2026-AMENDED AND REPORTED OUT TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND JUDICIARY

BILL NO. 36-0218

Thirty-Sixth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

January 12, 2026

An act honoring and commending Jerome Austin Browne for his outstanding achievements and contributions to baseball and the youth of St. Croix by renaming Prince Street in Christiansted "Jerry Browne Street"

PROPOSED BY:	Senator Angel L. Bolques, Jr., Sponsors: Franklin D. Johnson, Clifford A. Joseph, Sr. and Avery L. Lewis Co-sponsor: Novelle E. Francis, Jr.

WHEREAS, Jerome Austin Browne, nicknamed "The Governor" was born in Christiansted, St. Croix, Virgin Islands, on February 13, 1966; and

WHEREAS, he was the fourth of five children born to Rudolph and Iris Browne; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Browne played Little League, Babe Ruth League, and American Legion baseball; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Browne started playing baseball through his uncle, Norman "Wampy" Williams who introduced him to Horace Clarke and Elmo Plaskett, two major-leaguers from St. Croix who became government-paid baseball instructors when they retired from baseball; and

WHEREAS, according to Mr. Browne, Horace Clarke and Elmo Plaskett arranged for Mr. Browne and his teammates to travel to Puerto Rico opening opportunities to play winter ball and to gain recognition; and

WHEREAS, in March 1983, before he graduated from Central High School, the Texas Rangers signed Mr. Browne as an undrafted free agent scouted by Orlando Gomez. Gómez, a longtime catcher and manager in Puerto Rico, had played with Horace Clarke, Joe Christopher, and José Morales, all from St. Croix; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Browne showed off his excellent speed on four minor-league teams: Sarasota Rangers (Rookie League, 1983); Burlington Rangers (Midwest League, 1984); Salem Red Birds (Carolina League, 1985); and Tulsa Drillers (Texas League, 1986); and

WHEREAS, Mr. Browne hit .303 with 39 stolen bases in the Tulsa Drillers Minor League Baseball Team in 1986; and

WHEREAS, in the winter of 1986-87, Browne became the fourth Virgin Islander to win Rookie of the Year in the Puerto Rican Winter League, batting .316 and scoring a league-leading 36 runs for the Santurce Cangrejeros. Luis Rodriguez Mayoral, who was the Latin-American liaison for the Rangers, secured an exemption for Mr. Browne to play as a "native" of Puerto Rico, and not as an "import"; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Browne played ten seasons in Major League Baseball (MLB) with the Texas Rangers from 1986 to 1988, the Cleveland Indians from 1989 to 1991, the Oakland Athletics from 1992 to 1993 and the Florida Marlins from 1994 to 1995;

WHEREAS, Mr. Browne played second base, third base and outfield during his ten seasons in Major League Baseball; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Browne was awarded the Rangers Rookie of the Year in 1987; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Browne was awarded the Cleveland Baseball Writers Association of America (BBWAA) Man of the Year Award in 1989; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Browne was awarded the Cleveland Gordon Cobbledick Golden Tomahawk Award in 1989; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Browne finished his major-league career in 1995 with 23 home runs, 288 RBIs, and a .271 average. He played in 982 games, second only to Horace Clarke on the lifetime list among Virgin Islanders; and

WHEREAS, after his career in Major League Baseball ended, Mr. Browne coached several minor league teams including: 2002-Infield Instructor for the Toronto Blue Jays; 2005-Coach for the Augusta Green Jackets; 2006-Coach for the Savannah Sand Gnats; 2007-Coach for the Hagerstown Suns; 2008-Coach for the Potomac Nationals; and 2010-2011-Coach for the Syracuse Chiefs; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Browne continues to contribute to baseball and its players; and

WHEREAS, in June of 2023, Mr. Browne returned to St. Croix to conduct a baseball camp to inspire young Crucians interested in the sport of baseball, providing them instructions on playing the game and sharing stories of how he became a professional player from St. Croix; Now, Therefore,

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature of the Virgin Islands, on behalf of the people of the Virgin Islands, honors and commends Mr. Jerome Austin Browne for his outstanding achievements and contributions to the sport of baseball and the youth of St. Croix by renaming Prince Street in Christiansted, St. Croix the "Jerry Browne Street".

(b) The Department of Public Works shall erect appropriate signage on Jerry Browne Street in Christiansted, St. Croix.

(c) The sum of $2,000 is appropriated from the General Fund of the Treasury of the Government of the Virgin Islands in the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025, to erect the proper signage on the road.

SECTION 2. The President of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands shall present a perma plaque of this act to Mr. Jerome Austin Browne at an appropriate ceremony.

BILL SUMMARY

The bill honors and commends Mr. Jerome Austin Browne for his achievements as a baseball player in Major League Baseball and his contributions to the sport of baseball and the youth of St. Croix.

BR25-0061/September 25, 2025/CBM/Revised November 14, 2025

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