

35TH LEGISLATURE 100-DAY REPORT



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SENATOR NOVELLE E. FRANCIS, JR.
35TH LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
PRESIDENT

CHAIRPERSON

Committee on the Whole

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Budget, Appropriations
& Finance

MEMBER

Health, Hospitals &
Human Services

Culture, Sports, Parks &
Youth

3022 Est. Golden Rock
Christiansted, VI 00820

(340) 773-2424

senatorfrancis@legvi.org

A Message from the Senate President

I count it as a distinct privilege to serve as the President of the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands. My pride in this institution, our employees, and our mission as the first branch of government knows no bounds.

A lot of emphasis is placed on the first 100 days of any administration. The 35th Legislature is comprised of a dynamic blend of veteran senators, experienced sophomore senators and energized freshman senators who have shown that they are ready and willing to tackle the issues of our time and to make the tough decisions that true leadership requires. How we began is certainly how we intend to proceed – with a demonstrated commitment to progress and accountability.

As President, it is my intention and hope that the legislative process during this term will exceed the expectations that have been set for us as a deliberative body. Our first 100 days are a testament to the collaborative spirit of the 35th Legislature and my colleagues and I have begun implementing plans and delivering results on issues that impact the quality and life and well-being of all Virgin Islanders,

The true test of what the 35th Legislature can accomplish lies ahead. I trust that this report will be a useful source of information as well as a strong indicator of the goals and objectives of its members – both individually and collectively – to move legislation that will have a meaningful impact on our community. In the weeks, months and years ahead, we look forward to working with you and for you to create a better future for all Virgin Islanders.

Sincerely,

Novelle E. Francis, Jr.
Senate President
35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands



The Honorable
Marvin A. Blyden
Vice-President

Legislature of the Virgin Islands

CAPITOL BUILDING, P.O. BOX 1690
ST. THOMAS, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS 00804
(340) 774-0880

CHAIRMAN
Housing, Transportation &
Telecommunications

VICE CHAIR
Culture, Sports, Parks, & Youth

MEMBER
Economic Development &
Agriculture

Finance

Health, Hospitals, & Human Services

Message From the Vice-President

Dear Fellow Virgin Islanders:

It is an honor and a pleasure to play a part in presenting to you the 100-day Report of the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands. In the pages that follow, you will see the hard work, dedication, and leadership of all 15 members of this body over the first three and a half months of this term, as well as our participation in the life and culture of the Virgin Islands community.

As a people, we are presented with many challenges, as well as many opportunities, in a variety of areas that impact the quality of life for all Virgin Islanders. You will see that over our first three months, we have worked hard to meet those challenges and opportunities by gathering information, interacting with stakeholders at all levels, meeting and assisting constituents, and developing and passing legislation designed to address the needs of our community.

The activities and the various legislative measures passed, proposed, and in progress will differ in areas of focus and scope from senator to senator and from committee to committee. Yet, you will see a unifying thread running through them. That common thread—shared by each and every senator and staff member in this body—is a concern for the well-being of the people and the land of the Virgin Islands, and a desire to improve not only the living conditions for today, but the prospects for our children tomorrow.

I join with Senate President Novelle E. Francis, Jr. and the other members of the 35th Legislature in offering to you this report on efforts and progress thus far, and we pledge to continue representing you with integrity, diligence and passion as we struggle, together, to make the Virgin Islands a better place for all.

Sincerely,

Marvin A. Blyden
Vice-President
35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands





THE HONORABLE

Novelle E. Francis, Jr.

SENATE PRESIDENT, 35TH LEGISLATURE

ST. CROIX DISTRICT

E-MAIL: SENATORFRANCIS@LEGVI.ORG

TELEPHONE: (340) 773-2424 EXT. 2281



Since taking the helm as President of the 35th Legislature, I have effectively balanced the administrative demands of the Office with advancing my legislative agenda. This work would not be possible without the capable and competent individuals in the Office of the Executive Director, Central Staff, and my own staff. This first 100 days has been a whirlwind of activity and accomplishments as I continue to advance a legislative agenda that supports economic and community development, education and quality of life issues that affect all Virgin Islanders.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

In addition to chairing the Committee of the Whole, I am excited to serve as Vice-Chair of the Committee on Budget, Appropriations and Finance and as a member of the Committee on Health, Hospitals and Human Services. The Committee of the Whole has convened three times to consider zoning matters, and once to receive testimony relative to the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority.

To date, the Committee of the Whole has heard four zoning requests for the St. Croix district and four zoning requests and one Coastal Zone Permit for the St. Thomas/St. John district. All were approved by the Committee and forwarded to the full body for further action.

After having served as a de facto member of the Finance Committee since taking office in the 31st Legislature, this year I am proud to sit on the Committee on Budget, Appropriations and Finance as the Vice-Chair. As a member of the Committee on Health, Hospitals and Human Services, I have participated in tours of JFL North and the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center, as well as Schneider Regional Medical Center.

Despite the demands of the Senate President's Office, I have successfully continued my practice of attending as many committee meetings as possible. I believe it is important to participate in as many steps of the legislative process as possible.

LEGISLATION

My office has filed over 60 bill draft requests, which include zonings and leases filed on behalf of Governor Albert Bryan, Jr.

In these first 100 days, I successfully sponsored Bill 35-0010, now Act 8705, which recognizes the life work of Aloy W. "Wenty" Nielsen and names the Christiansted Bypass in his honor. I also worked with the Department of Health to eliminate the sunset clause in legislation that allows the Medical Examiners Board to serve as the de facto Board for any Board that does not have a quorum. Removing this barrier of the sunset clause clears the way for licensure of critically needed medical professionals in the territory.

I continue to have discussions with stakeholders on the implementation of legislation that I successfully sponsored in past Senate terms. Key priorities include the enforcement of the Noise Pollution Control Act (Act 8682) and the marketing and development of the South Shore Enterprise Zone (Act 8376). Both of these measures significantly benefit the people of the Virgin Islands, and I am committed to the full achievement of their mandates.



I also remain in constant communication with the Executive Branch and community stakeholders on the mandates of Act 8688, or the Behavioral Health Reform Act. While the passage of Act 8688 was an important first step in the territory's efforts to improve the standard of behavioral health care and services, we must act with urgency to both fund and implement the mandates of the legislation. Behavioral health is healthcare.

Bills that I look forward to offering during this term include:

BR 23-0149, establishes the Virgin Islands Beautification Tax Credit; **Bill 35-0029**, honors Dr. Donna M. Christensen for her service to this territory and renames the Charles Harwood Hospital Complex in her honor, once rebuilt.

BR 23-0153, establishes the Virgin Islands Anti-Blight Act and addresses Abandoned and Dilapidated Properties;

BR 23-0155, establishes standards for school resource officers; and

BR 23-0157, establishes greater regulatory oversight of the real estate industry.

OUTREACH EFFORTS

My office intends to host town halls and continue community engagement, especially as we work to refine the Anti-Blight Act and pass definitive legislation to address the territory's distressed properties and assist those property owners. As a representative of the people, I make every effort to listen and learn from my constituents and to assist in resolving their vexing concerns.

CONTACT US

Please feel free to contact my office. My staff and I are ready and available to assist you.

Telephone: (340) 712-2306 St. Croix
(340) 693-3569 St. Thomas

Email: senatorfrancis@legvi.org

COMMITTEES

CHAIR - Committee of the Whole
VICE CHAIR - Budget, Appropriations and Finance

MEMBER:
Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks
Health, Hospital and Human Services







THE HONORABLE
Marvin A. Blyden
VICE PRESIDENT, 35TH LEGISLATURE
ST. THOMAS - ST. JOHN DISTRICT
 E-MAIL: MBLYDEN@LECVI.ORG
 TELEPHONE: (340) 774-0880 EXT. 3567



COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

- The Committee on Housing, Transportation & Telecommunications has held two hearings in which it has received updates from government and private entities regarding matters under the committee's jurisdiction, including affordable housing, the status of the housing market, senior housing issues, telecommunications, and roads and public transportation.
- Chairman Blyden has also written to V.I. Delegate to Congress, Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett, to enlist her help in ensuring that the Virgin Islands is treated fairly in terms of federal broadband equity funding.

LEGISLATION

Primary Sponsor of over 60 pieces of legislation in the 35th Legislature, including:

1. **Resolution No. 1901 (Bill No. 34-0002)** — A Resolution adopting the Rules of the Thirty-Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands.
2. **Act No. 8700 (Bill No. 35-0003)** — An Act appropriating funds for the adoption of various portions of the Virgin Islands Agricultural Plan, submitted by the Agricultural Plan Task Force on December 29, 2021, as the official Agricultural Plan for the Territory.
3. **Act No. 8702 (Bill No. 35-0006)** — An Act honoring and commending former Senator George E. Goodwin for his many years of expansive contributions to the Virgin Islands community as a whole, through his roles in various areas of service to the territory as well as advocacy for social justice for underserved people in the Virgin Islands; to rename the Cricket Field located on Parcel H of Tract 1, Estate Nazareth, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands in his honor; and to award former Senator George E. Goodwin the Virgin Islands Medal of Honor; and for other related purposes.
4. **Act No. 8704 (Bill No. 35-0009)** — An Act amending title 1 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 11, section 171(a) relating to the observance of national holidays and enacting The Juneteenth National Independence Day Act to declare June 19 a legal holiday in the Virgin Islands.
5. **Act No. 8706 (Bill No. 35-0011)** — An Act honoring and commending former Senator Horace A. Callwood, Sr. posthumously for his dedication, service, and commitment to the people of the Virgin Islands and naming the north-south street immediately east of Windward Passage in his memory.
6. **Act No. 8717 (Bill No. 35-0050)** — An Act amending the Virgin Islands Code, title 3, chapter 7, by designating the existing provisions as subchapter I and adding a subchapter II establishing the Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance within the Virgin Islands Department of Education for budgetary purposes; amending title 33, chapter 111, section 3092a, changing the Education Maintenance Fund to the School Construction, Maintenance and Capital Fund; and making an appropriation of \$2,500,000 from the Virgin Islands Education Initiative Fund to the School Construction, Maintenance and Capital Fund and for other related purposes.
7. **Bill No. 35-0015** — An Act amending title 28 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 31, subchapter I, section 752 relating to notice for the termination of month-to-month residential tenancies, and adding section 752 (b) requiring fair notice for rent increase for residential tenancies.
8. **Bill No. 35-0043** — An Act amending title 2 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 1, section 6 allowing the Police Chief of the Legislature; the Sergeant-of-Arms; or any security officer of the Legislature; who has peace officer status, to arrest a person who neglects or refuses to appear before the Legislature in obedience to subpoena.
9. **Bill No. 35-0074** — An Act honoring and commending former Senator Almando "Rocky" Liburd for his lifetime of service to the people of the Virgin Islands especially St. John, and renaming the North Shore Road on St. John "The Almando "Rocky" Liburd Highway".
10. **Bill No. 35-0016** — A Resolution honoring and commending the Board of Elections; the Supervisor of Elections, Caroline Fawkes, and the entire Virgin Islands Election System team for their tireless service and contributions to the Virgin Islands community and on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the establishment of the Election System of the Virgin Islands.
11. **BR# 23-0141** — To provide free tuition to Career Technical Education programs for Virgin Islands youth who have graduated from or dropped out of high school.



12. **BR# 23-0138** — To create a Probate Division in the Virgin Islands Judicial Branch.
13. **BR# 23-0136** — To rename Lindberg Bay to Emancipation Bay.
14. **BR# 23-0147** — To appropriate \$500,000 to refurbish and operate a transitional housing facility.
15. **BR# 23-0159** — To honor and commend Dr. Fenella Cooper for her outstanding service and accomplishments in the fields of education and sports.
16. **BR# 23-0169** — To update the Professional Counselor Practice Act.
17. **BR# 23-0172** — To place the regulation of limousines under the V.I. Taxicab Commission.
18. **BR#23-0171** — To erect statues of Julian Jackson and Tim Duncan at the Cyril E. King and Henry E. Rohlsen Airports, respectively.
19. **BR# 23-0167** — To protect local beaches by forbidding anchoring and mooring in certain culturally and environmentally sensitive Areas of Particular Concern.
20. **BR# 23-0176** — The V.I. Paid Sick and Family Leave Act.
21. **BR# 23-0268** — To require the Government of the Virgin Islands to develop a Digital Information Plan.
22. **BR# 23-0139** — To establish the Workforce Development and Middle-Income Housing Tax Credit Program.
23. **BR# 23-0142** — To create a franchise tax exemption for affordable housing developers, thus encouraging the development of more housing stock.
24. **BR# 23-0175** — The V.I. Source Separation Act.
25. **BR# 23-0450** — To honor and commend Aliyah Boston for her accomplishments in the field of basketball, and to award her the Key to the Territory.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

January

- STT Bordeaux Agricultural Fair
- Swearing-in of Housing Tenant Council Members

February

- STX Agricultural Fair
- STT Little League Opening Day Parade & Ceremonies
- Dominican Republic Independence Day Parade
- Career & Technical Education Fair
- Town Hall on Comprehensive Land and Water Use Plan

March

- Grand Opening of KARTion—Locally Owned small business
- Battle of the Agencies
- Inaugural STT flight of Sky High Dominicana Airlines
- National Girl Scouts Month Parade

April

- Bucket Drop Fundraiser with Victims United, Inc
- Grand Opening-French Academy of Dance
- Clinton E. Phipps Racetrack Groundbreaking

May

- Site visit and food distribution at Celestino A. White, Sr. Senior Center
- Attended the CTE 2023 Perkins Regional Conference
- 175th Emancipation Celebration Awards Ceremony and Commemoration UVI School of Nursing Pinning Ceremony
- UVI Commencement

COMMITTEES

CHAIR - Housing, Transportation and Telecommunications
VICE CHAIR - Committee of the Whole
VICE CHAIR - Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks

MEMBER:
 Budget, Appropriations and Finance
 Economic Development and Agriculture
 Health, Hospital and Human Services







THE HONORABLE
Carla J. Joseph
SECRETARY, 35TH LEGISLATURE
 ST. THOMAS - ST. JOHN DISTRICT
 E-MAIL: SENATORJOSEPH@LEGVI.ORG
 TELEPHONE: (340) 774-0880 EXT.3515



FOREWORD

The 35th Legislature's Secretary, The Honorable Carla J. Joseph, started her 2nd term in office with excitement and a renewed commitment to working with all stakeholders, the Governor, her senate colleagues, and the people of the Virgin Islands. Here is a synopsis of Sen. Joseph's accomplishments from January 2023 to May 2023.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Sen. Joseph remains actively involved in the community through her support of various initiatives throughout the Territory. During the first 100 Days, Sen. Joseph participated in several meetings, events and activities with various stakeholders. Here are a few highlights.



1) Sen. Joseph with Mr. Willard John at St. Croix Agriculture Food Fair. 2) Sen. Joseph's 3rd Annual Black/VI History Month Art Competition Winner BCB Student Ava Daniel. 3) Residents Actions Committee, Inc., the Office of Sen. Carla J. Joseph, Estate Bovoni Weed and Seed Program, and Bovoni Housing Residents conducted a community clean-up in Estate Bovoni. 4) Sen. Joseph at the 2023 Little League Baseball Season Opening Parade on St. Thomas. 5) Sen. Joseph attended the VIHA Resident Council Swearing-in Ceremony. 6) Sen. Joseph meets with Veterans at a Veterans Affairs Town Hall meeting at Nisky on St. Thomas; 7) Sen. Joseph was the guest speaker for the 29th Annual Moot Court Competition. 8) Sen. Joseph at the Seatrade Global Conference 2023, held in Miami, Florida.

To keep abreast of Senator Joseph's legislative actions and community involvement, visit her website at www.senatorcarlajoseph.com, follow her on Facebook, and listen to her bi-weekly radio program "On Point" every other Tuesday on WSTA Radio 1340 AM.

LEGISLATION

Sen. Joseph continues to introduce and support legislation with the well-being of citizens and the territory's future in mind. Areas of focus within the first 100 Days include the UVI GERS Annuity, Housing Discrimination, Water and Power Authority, assisted living, Civil Rights, Veterans Affairs, Law Enforcement, Boards and Commissions, and honoring Virgin Islanders who have positively contributed to the community.

Sponsor Bill Number: 35-0004 Allows retirees employed by the University of the Virgin Islands ("UVI"), to continue to receive their GERS annuity while receiving their salary from the University if the retiree enrolls in a different retirement plan.

Sponsor Bill Number: 35-0005 Amends title 28 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 31 relating to landlord and tenants by adding a Section 754 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of a tenant's source of legitimate income.

Sponsor Bill Number: 35-0006 (Act No. 8702) Honors former Senator George E. Goodwin for his contributions to the Virgin Islands; renames the Cricket Field located in Estate Nazareth, St. Thomas in his honor; and awards him the Virgin Islands Medal of Honor.

Sponsor Bill Number: 35-0011 (Act No. 8706) Honors former Senator Horace A. Callwood, Sr. posthumously and renames the north-south street immediately east of Windward Passage in his memory. Now Act 8706.

Sponsor Bill Number: 35-0016 Honors and commends the Board of Elections and the entire Virgin Islands Election System team on the 60th Anniversary of the Election System of the Virgin Islands.

Sponsor Bill Number: 35-0061 Seeks to direct the Virgin Islands Inspector General to conduct an audit of the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority, and appropriate \$250,000 to conduct the audit.



Sponsor Bill 35-0054 Section 2 (Act 8722) Amends 8617 section 1, 0100 to permit FY 2022 funds of \$450,000 for Veterans Medical and Burial Expenses to remain available until expended.

Co-Sponsor Bill Number: 35-0007 (Act 8703) Honors Mr. Boyd "Boyzie" Orlanzo Todman for his many contributions to the people and the youth of the Virgin Islands. Now Act 8703.

PENDING BILL REQUEST

BR 23-0099 - Seeks to appropriate \$500,000 to the Department of Justice to fund the Civil Rights Commission.

BR 23-0105 - Seeks to create rules and regulations for assisted living in the Virgin Islands to encourage informed private enterprise creation of assisted living facilities, as well as regulate them.

BR 23-0106 - Seeks to require law enforcement officers trained by the POST to work in the government for 6 years prior to leaving any department.

BR 23-0256 - Seeks to establish the "Restorative Justice Act" to provide an opportunity for offenders to hear from victims how their offence has affected the lives of the victims and family.

BR 23-0260 - Seeks to Honor Bishop Dr. William A. Industrious and rename Strand Gade the Bishop Dr. Williams Industrious Street.

BR 23-0397 - An act amending title 32, Chapter 21, Section 407, by removing the provision allowing a member of the Commission to continue to receive annuity while receiving a salary as a commissioner.

BR 23-0469 - Seeks to clarify the parameters relating the appointment of members residing outside of the Territory to boards and commissions.

BR 23-0495 - Seeks to put the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority into administrative receivership.

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

As chair of the Committee on Government Operations, Veterans and Consumer Affairs, Senator Joseph successfully chaired three (3) committee meetings held on February 28, March 20, and April 25. The Virgin Islands Office of Veteran Affairs, the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs, and the Virgin Islands Lottery appeared before the Committee to provide operational updates. A total of seven (7) bills were vetted and approved by the Committee.

During the March 20 Committee meeting, the Office on Veterans Affairs said that there are approximately 8,000 veterans in the Virgin Islands. A local Vietnam Veteran appealed for an increase in medical travel reimbursement for vets. Based on the line of questioning, the Committee asked for a copy of the medical travel policy and the number of veteran burials in FY 2022, the name of the contractor being used to gather the name of all veterans, and the performance period of the contract.

Also, at the March 20 meeting, Commissioner Richard T. Evangelista, Esq. of the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs, testified that one of their major challenges is the need for more staff. He also stated that \$3,215,423.24 was awarded to DLCA in grants from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The ARPA funds were used to purchase St. Thomas Vendors' Plaza kiosks.

At the April 25 Committee meeting, Executive Director Raymond Williams of the Virgin Islands Lottery testified that they recently launched a new campaign, "I am V.I. Lottery, - V.I. Lottery is me!", designed to instill a sense of national pride. As part of its mandated contributions, Executive Director Williams noted that for the first quarter of 2023, the Lottery had transferred \$535,000 to the Department of Education and another \$535,000 to the Department of Human Services.

COMMITTEES

SECRETARY - Committee of the Whole
 CHAIR - Government Operations, Veteran Affairs and
 Consumer Protection

MEMBER:
 Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning
 Education and Workforce Development
 Housing, Transportation and Telecommunications
 Rules and Judiciary







THE HONORABLE
Kenneth L. Gittens
MAJORITY LEADER, 35TH LEGISLATURE
 ST. CROIX DISTRICT
 E-MAIL: SENATORGITTENS@LEGVI.ORG
 TELEPHONE: (340) 712-2243



Majority Leader and Chairman of the 35th Legislature's Committee on Homeland Security, Justice & Public Safety, Senator Kenneth L. Gittens, has spent the first 100 days of this term drafting new policies and conducting overview hearings with departments and agencies that provide the Territory with security and emergency services. Senator Gittens, who also serves as Vice Chairman of the Committee on Health, Hospitals & Human Services, said that general assessments must be routinely made of these agencies' operations and initiatives.

Those invited to testify at the Committee on Homeland Security, Justice & Public Safety inaugural hearing on February 7, 2023, included leadership from Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency, the V.I. National Guard, V.I. Justice Department, the V.I. Bureau of Corrections, and V.I. Fire & Emergency Medical Services. The Committee heard from the V.I. Police Department and the Office of Highway Safety on April 19, 2023.

"There is much to discuss as we work to rebuild our public safety infrastructure, recruit qualified personnel, and ensure that we are adequately prepared for a natural disaster or other emergency," Senator Gittens said. "Priorities were shifted as a result of the pandemic and it's important that we are back on track with response, training, recruitment, and overall preparedness."

Senator Gittens said he remains very concerned about the physical infrastructure of these agencies.

"Many first responders and other public servants have been working in substandard conditions since the 2017 hurricanes," Senator Gittens said. "We must ensure that these departments and agencies have adequate equipment and training to effectively carry out their important duties and responsibilities."

Following up on the hearings, Senator Gittens met with the leadership of V.I. Fire and Emergency Medical Services and toured the Emile Henderson Sr. Station, located in the town of Frederiksted. He also toured the temporary location for the Grove Place Station, which is under renovation in order to be utilized while the new station is being constructed.

He made numerous other site visits during his first 100 days, including to Wilfred Pedro Homes (Whim Gardens) and the Herbert Grigg Home for the Aged where he held sit-down discussions with executive staff as the well-being of the Territory's seniors remains foremost on his mind. He has consistently advocated for the residents and staff of Herbert Grigg and Wilfredo Pedro Homes.

From the oldest in our community to the youngest among us, Senator Gittens also celebrated Reading Across America Month on St. Croix with the students at the Happy Faces Academy. He spent time with them in the reading corner, read two stories, and gifted the classroom with new books.

Saying that it is a significant step towards greater food security, Senator Gittens toured the new School of Agriculture at the University of the Virgin Islands and vowed continued support after seeing the enthusiasm of the students and the strides they are making in research and implementation of new techniques.



He also had the opportunity to take part in the townhall meetings held with Department of Planning and Natural Resources officials and community members to discuss implementation of the Comprehensive Land & Water Use Plan. Senator Gittens maintains that rezonings should be removed from the jurisdiction of the Legislature and has a bill pending in this regard.

This term, Senator Gittens has remained focused on bringing greater accountability to the Virgin Islands Water & Power Authority, praising the Virgin Islands Superior Court's recent ruling on legislation that compels the reorganization of WAPA's Board of Directors. Act# 8472 restructures the WAPA board to afford greater independence and establishes professional criteria for those who serve. Following the bill's passage, the Administration took steps to prevent the implementation of the new law by filing for a temporary restraining order and a permanent injunction with the Virgin Islands Supreme Court.

Senator Gittens was one of four senators that voted against a deal to pay off VITOL, the propane company that is now owed millions by WAPA. Instead, he once again brought forward legislation to conduct a special audit of WAPA that was approved at the April 5, 2023, Legislative Session. The audit found unanimous support from his colleagues, however, was later vetoed by the Governor a second time.

"I am calling on my colleagues to reconsider the WAPA audit legislation as, to date, no one has been held accountable for the millions in losses and so-called cost overruns," he said. "The 35th Legislature's Majority Caucus had determined it essential to address energy reliability and affordability this term."

In addition to the WAPA initiatives, Senator Gittens has proposed several bills aimed at improving quality of life for all Virgin Islanders, to include the School Medic Act, Speedy Trial Act, reform of Historic Preservation laws, requiring visiting boaters to register with DPNR, establishing Auxiliary Communications at VITEMA, and consolidating all gaming under the Casino Control Commission.

COMMITTEES

CHAIR - Homeland Security, Justice
 and Public Safety
 VICE CHAIR - Health, Hospitals and Human Services

MEMBER:
 Committee of the Whole
 Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning
 Gov. Op., Veteran Affairs and Consumer Protection
 Rules and Judiciary







THE HONORABLE
Angel L. Bolques, Jr.
SENATOR-AT-LARGE, 35TH LEGISLATURE
 AT-LARGE TERRITORIAL
 E-MAIL: SENATORBOLQUES@LEGVI.ORG
 TELEPHONE: (340) 774-0880 EXT. 3571



SUMMARY

As the Committee on Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports & Parks Chairman, Senator Bolques maintains the responsibility of caring for those that came before us, and that engaging with future generations must always be at the forefront of his mission. Culture is essential to our collective identity as a nation of people. Senator Bolques believes wholeheartedly that in order to do the work of the people, we have to be willing to listen to the needs of the people. Disseminating information and receiving feedback is at the foundation of conducting work and addressing the concerns of constituents. He and his staff are committed to having the conversations that will lead to solutions that the general public can buy into.

COMMITTEE HEARINGS OVERVIEW

The hearing held on February 22, 2023, was focused on culture. The hearing was well attended with 13 of 15 Senators in attendance to hear testimony from the 175th Emancipation Commemoration Committee. One of the highlights of this hearing was the blowing of the conch shell by high schooler Adeaja Longville. On April 21, 2023, the Committee received a comprehensive testimony from both Calvert White, Commissioner of the Department of Sports, Parks, and Recreation, as well as State Director of AARP for USVI, Troy A. De Chabert-Schuster. Both discussed various programs, initiatives, obstacles, and needs within their respective agencies who serve in a multi-generational capacity, from youths to seniors.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Outreach continues to be a high focus for my entire office. Some of our highlights include groundbreakings for the community living development on St. John & a School on St. Croix, certificates for newly naturalized individuals, serving lunch to the homeless with Catholic Charities' Soup Kitchen, and more.

YOUTH

Spending time with our future generations is something I, and my staff place a high priority on. From reading to kindergarteners, to playing basketball, to donating to and supporting softball teams, to stretching and participating in a martial arts class, I take every opportunity to engage and empower our youth of the territory. We have as much to learn from our young people as we have to teach them.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

From the Territorial Concern Survey to the "Bolques Bulletin" newsletter, my staff and I are continuously looking at creative ways to inform and engage the people of the Virgin Islands, utilizing cutting edge technologies and progressive strategies.



COMMITTEES

CHAIR - Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks
 VICE CHAIR - Economic Development
 and Agriculture

MEMBER:
 Committee of the Whole
 Homeland Security, Justice and Public Safety
 Housing, Transportation and Telecommunications
 Rules and Judiciary



LEGISLATION

35-0016 - A Resolution honoring and commending the Board of Elections; the Supervisor of Elections, for their tireless service and contributions to the Virgin Islands community and on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the establishment of the Election System of the Virgin Islands.

35-0031 - An Act to create the Child Victims' and Child Witnesses' Rights Act.

35-0036 - An Act clarifying the duties and responsibilities of the Executive Director of the Taxicab Commission.

35-0037 - An Act to allow for insurance coverage for the auxiliary police officers.

35-0047 - An act honoring and commending Linval Joseph for his achievements in professional football and his contribution to his community through his creation of a foundation that seeks to raise awareness about bullying.

35-0074 - An Act honoring and commending former Senator Almando "Rocky" Liburd for his lifetime of service to the people of the Virgin Islands especially St. John, and renaming the North Shore Road on St. John "The Almando "Rocky" Liburd Highway".

35-0075 - An Act to designate the third Monday in February as Virgin Islands Governors Day.

35-0076 - An Act honoring and commending former Senator and St. John Administrator, Noble Samuel, posthumously for his many years of dedicated service to the Virgin Islands National Park, visitors to St. John, and the people of the Virgin Islands, by renaming the Centerline Road on St. John from the roundabout in Cruz Bay to the Bordeaux Road entrance, Noble Samuel Drive.

35-0078 - An Act requiring the Commissioner of the Department of Tourism to conduct a survey to assist in the establishment of an official dish and dessert of the Virgin Islands.







THE HONORABLE
Diane T. Capehart
SENATOR, 35TH LEGISLATURE
 ST. CROIX DISTRICT
 E-MAIL: SENATORCAPEHART@LEGVI.ORG
 TELEPHONE: (340) 773-2424 EXT. 2256

I heartily welcome all my constituents to Capehart Cares. In this edition, I am proud to announce the mark of my first 100 days in Office in the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands, discuss upcoming activities on my agenda—pending bills, legislative goals, programs, initiatives, and key activities. I aim to educate the public and clarify information in my publications.

As a Senator elected by the People of St. Croix, I worked hard to deliver relief to the construction industry, provided several votes in the right direction for Agriculture reform, several leases and zonings that amount to the development and expansion of local businesses, funding for school maintenance, as well as support for Centennials and their families and resolutions honoring Virgin Islanders.

My fellow Residents, please be encouraged. It is my goal to work on your behalf to make these Virgin Islands a better residential community, one that welcomes businesses and promotes development for businesses already in existence.

You may contact my office at senatorcapehart@legvi.org or (340) 712-2335 to discuss community related concerns or schedule an appointment.

Regards, Senator Diane T. Capehart

LEGISLATIVE BILLS

1. **Bill Number 35-0056:** Increase the Veterans home loan amount from \$200,000 to \$350,000.
2. **BRN #23-0177, Transshipment Port:** Establishes a transshipment port on the Southside of St. Croix for ocean-going trade hub.
3. **BRN #23-0441, Office of Mobile Health Legislation:** Establishes and Funds the Mobile Integrated Healthcare Program, Paramedicine Component.
4. **BRN #23-0478, Cannabis Microbusiness Act:** Legal relations for operating microbusinesses and provides guidance.
5. **BRN #23-0180, Cannabis Cooperatives Act:** Legal relations for operating cooperatives and provides guidance.
6. **BRN #23-0476, Agricultural Cooperatives Act:** Legal relations for operating cooperatives and provides guidance.
7. **BRN #23-0528, Fisheries:** To enhance the local, regional, and international access based on the strategic location for economic opportunities by mandating the creation of fisheries.
8. **BRN #23-0518, Building Code Revisions:** To provide clarification to the VI Building code and adopt nationally recognized census-based codes and standards.
9. **BRN#23-0182, High School Graduation Plan Act:** An Act amending Title 17 to add a Chapter 46 that mandates resources that provides for No High School Student graduates without a high school graduation plan.
10. **BRN #23-0551, Suspended Students:** To establish services and criteria and services for students during suspension from the Virgin Islands Department of Public Schools system and their legal guardian.
11. **BRN #23-0178, Community Schools Act:** An Act amending Title 19 creating and funding for Community Schools in the Virgin Islands.
12. **BRN #23-0181, Charter Schools Act:** An Act enacting The Virgin Islands Charter Schools Act.
13. **BRN #23-0338, PACE Financing:** To create a financing option to be included and added as an ad valorem tax in the tax bill for upgrading energy efficiency. Eligible improvements include energy efficiency, water conservation, renewable energy, and resiliency upgrades.
14. **BRN #23-0408, Computer Crimes Act:** Amending Act 7512, which relate to the Virgin Islands Computer Crimes Act of 2013.
15. **BRN #23-0412, Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT), 9-8-8:** To increase access to behavioral health services, with a focus on crisis services and the 9-8-8 telecommunication system. Establishes an MOU with the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline program and requires a suicide prevention media & mental health resources campaign.
16. **BRN #23-0519, Electronic Citations:** To add definitions and allow for the issuance of electronic citations.



17. **BRN #23-0520, Real-time Crime Center:** Establishes a Real-time Crime Center to collect data and solve crimes.
18. **BRN #23-0548, Women's Caucus:** To establish a Women's Caucus.
19. **BRN #23-0549, Subcommittee on Women and Children:** To establish a Subcommittee of the Committee on HHS for Women and Children.

KEY CALENDAR ACTIVITIES

- **January 2023:** Martin Luther King Day Parade; GERS Retirees Meeting; Department of Education School Presentations; Sinclair Williams Radio Show; Veteran's Town Hall Meeting.
- **February 2023:** VIPA Airports Investor Forum; Henry E. Rohlsen Airport Tour; St. Croix Coastal Zone Management; White House Briefing on Infrastructure Implementation & Workforce Development; GERS Update, & ESVI 60th Anniversary Celebration and Open House; St. Croix Ag & Food Fair; ESVI Diamond Jubilee Celebration; New Arthur A. Richards Groundbreaking Ceremony; Health, Hospitals, & Human Services Committee Tour.
- **March 2023:** JFL North Facility Ribbon Cutting Ceremony; DPNR Townhall Meeting for CLWUP Water Use Plan; Arch Institute VI Youth Health Equity & Leadership Symposium; Pearl B. Larsen VI History Month Presentation and UVI School of Agriculture Annual Legislature Day; SeaTrade Cruise Global.
- **April 2023:** 175th Emancipation Commemoration Award Ceremony & Reception; Grand Opening of UVI's 13D Research & Strategy Innovation Center; Vendor's Plaza Ribbon Cutting Ceremony; Louis E. Brown Senior Homes Tenant Planning Meeting; "Child Sexual Abuse No More Family Secrets" Workshop; 2023 Fair Housing Expo; Perma Plaque Ceremony – Kelly L. Charleswell, Sr.; Whale Welcome and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony; St. Thomas Carnival.

COMMITTEE ON RULES & JUDICIARY

- **February 24, 2023, Judicial Council:** The meeting was merely an introduction for all related agencies of Council. There was a resounding message regarding the overload of these agencies and the burdens they bear due to lack of resources to meet legal mandates and the need to update the VI Code.
- **March 9, 2023:** All approved nominees and bills were forwarded to the full body for further consideration. In Block 1, Committee members considered the nomination of Mr. Luther F. Renee to the Virgin Islands Casino Control Commission. In Block 2, we further considered and unanimously approved Bill No. 35-0006, Bill No. 35-0011, Bill No. 35-0007, Bill No. 35-0009. In honor of National Women's Month and Virgin Islands History Month, I recognized Activist and Cariso Queen of the 50's/60's Mrs. Leona Brady Watson for her contribution to the Virgin Islands culture.
- **April 11, 2023:** We moved 9 bills in this Committee on April 11th and four nominees, for a total of 13 bills and 5 nominees. The nominees were Mr. Aaron Hutchins to serve on the Virgin Islands Territorial Park Board of Trustees; Celestino White and Willard John to the Virgin Islands Port Authority Governing Board; and Superior Court Judge is Nominee Carol Thomas-Jacobs, Esq. The Committee voted in the affirmative Bill No. 35-0010, Bill No 35-0017, Bill No. 35-0018; Bill No 35-0019; Bill No. 35-0025; Bill No. 35-0055; Bill No. 35-0026; Bill No. 35-0050; Bill No. 35-0054; Bill No. 35-0013 was held in Committee.
- **May 10, 2023:** Lawmakers considered the Governor's Nominees: Judge Harold Willocks on his renomination to The Superior Court of the Virgin Islands for the District of St. Croix; Nomination of Yvette D. Ross-Edwards, Esq. to The Superior Court of the Virgin Islands, District of St. Croix; Ariel M. Smith, Esq. as The Virgin Islands Attorney General of the Department of Justice; Ms. Anna Wallace to The Virgin Islands Territorial Park Board of Trustees. Several resolutions, honoring organizations and community members 35-0016, Bill No. 35-0062, and Bill No. 35-0012.

COMMITTEES

CHAIR - Rules and Judiciary VICE CHAIR - Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning	MEMBER: Committee of the Whole Economic Development and Agriculture Education and Workforce Development Health, Hospital and Human Services
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THE HONORABLE
Samuel Carrión
SENATOR, 35TH LEGISLATURE
 ST. CROIX DISTRICT
 E-MAIL: SENATORCARRION@LEGVI.ORG
 TELEPHONE: (340) 773-2424 EXT. 2280



DEAR FELLOW VIRGIN ISLANDERS,

Thank you, once again, for entrusting me to be your voice and re-electing me to serve you in the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands. From the beginning of my first term, my legislative record has proven that I'm working to improve the quality of life for all residents. With the passing of the Territorial Park System Act, Bilingual Education Act, and Seed Banking Act, much work has been done to advance our territory in the areas of infrastructure development, environmental sustainability, and public safety.

The first 100 days of my second term have been a compilation of legislative hearings, facility tours, constituent casework, and community service. Since taking office in the 35th Legislature, my office has been working diligently for you, the people of the Virgin Islands. I have met with stakeholders and worked with my colleagues to ensure that every legislation I proposed empowers the territory. So far, I am the primary sponsor for over 30 pieces of legislation and amendments. Legislation to positively change how we view Public Safety, Animal Cruelty, Agriculture, Tenant Safety and Landlord Liability, Horse Racing, and Small Business Ownership. My office has resolved over 60 constituent cases since the start of the 35th Legislature. My office and I take pride in offering quick responses and solutions to our constituents who are in need. I know firsthand how frustrating it is for residents when they feel unheard, which is one of the reasons I choose to become a public servant for the residents of the Virgin Islands.

WHAT'S TO COME?

Senator Samuel Carrión commits to pioneering innovative legislation in the 35th Legislature. These laws will address some of the many issues that have emerged by concerned citizens. The job of a Senator is never done; however, Senator Carrión is determined to push the barriers and create a memorable impact during his tenure as a public servant.



SPONSORED & CO- SPONSORED LEGISLATION

Resolution #1902 - Establishes the Minority Caucus of the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands.

Act #8702 - An Act honoring and commending former Senator George E. Goodwin.

Act #8716 - Establishes a Local Food and Farm Council.

Act #8722 - Relates to the Centennial Treasures Award.

Bill #35-0073 - Establishes powers and duties for the horse racing commissions for each district and relating to antidoping of race horses to provide for regulation by district and joint horse racing commissions.

Bill #35-0013 - Ensures that all Virgin Islands residents are eligible to obtain a Limited Purpose ID/ Driver's License.

BR #23-0069 - Establishes the "21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act."

BR #23-0274 - A Resolution honoring and commending Music in Motion School of Higher Dance Education.

BR #23-0275 - Posthumously honors Dr. Eugene Petersen and names Island Center for the Performing Arts in his honor.

BR #23-0276 - Establishes "Miya's Law," which requires apartments landlords to require an employee background screening upon hiring.

BR #23-0281 - Amends the Free Tuition Act to allow part-time students to qualify for free tuition.

BR #23-0307 - Requires that all public property or spaces named after specific persons display a plaque with the person's biography and accomplishments.

BR #23-0306 - An Act establishing a Small Estate Affidavit for estates under \$10,000.

BR #23-0072 - Establishes the Virgin Islands Public Building Authority.

BR #23-0071B - Establishes separate horse racing commissions for each district.


COMMITTEES

MEMBER:
 Committee of the Whole
 Budget, Appropriations and Finance
 Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks

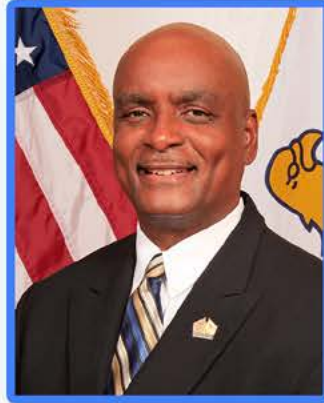
Gov. Op., Veteran Affairs and Consumer Protection
 Health, Hospital and Human Services
 Housing, Transportation and
 Telecommunications





consider and make recommendations on all bills relating FIND US ON 





THE HONORABLE

Dwayne M. DeGraff

MINORITY LEADER, 35TH LEGISLATURE

ST. THOMAS - ST. JOHN DISTRICT

E-MAIL: DDEGRAFF@LEGVI.ORG

TELEPHONE: (340) 774-0880 EXT. 3603

ENACTED LEGISLATION

- **ACT NO. 8703:** A Resolution honoring and commending Mr. Boyd "Boyzie" Orlanzo Todman for his many contributions to the people and the youth of the Virgin Islands.
- **ACT NO. 8722:** An Act amending title 1 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 7, section 103b, relating to the Centennial Treasures Award, to provide for a single, lumpsum award payment.

BILLS

- **BILL NO. 35-0008:** An Act amending title 3 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 1, section 8a relating to the Office of Veterans Affairs to establish the Veterans Council under the Office of Veterans Affairs to serve as advisor to the office of Veterans Affairs and as a liaison between the Office of Veterans Affairs and all private entities serving veterans in the Territory.
- **BILL NO. 35-0012:** An Act amending title 23 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 19, subchapter III, section 1556 relating to the retirement from the National Guard to increase the retirement pension.

PROPOSED LEGISLATION

- **BR NO. 23-0124:** To require background checks for all employees of the Bureau of Information Technology and agencies with their own IT personnel.
- **BR NO. 23-0128:** To prohibit the posting and dissemination of photographs of victims of homicide on social media
- **BR NO. 23-0129:** To provide for veterans traveling outside of Puerto Rico for VA healthcare services to be reimbursed by the Office of Veteran Affairs.
- **BR NO. 23-0131:** Regulating the use of unmanned aircrafts or drones in the Territory.
- **BR NO. 23-0246:** To appropriate revenues collected from the Timeshare Environmental Infrastructure Impact Fee to the V.I. Waste Management Authority to address cleanup and beautification in the Territory.
- **BR NO. 23-0247:** To provide an appropriation of \$20 million from the settlement agreement with Epstein Estate for the establishment of two nursing home facilities in the Territory.

OFFICE INITIATIVES/EVENTS:

MEETINGS WITH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

After being sworn in as a member of the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands, Senator DeGraff hit the ground running and had several meetings with various government agencies and organizations to include Department of Public Works, V.I. Water and Power Authority and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). These meetings were held to discuss concerns regarding the territory's roads, streetlighting and issues affecting our seniors.



ST. JOHN VETERANS TOWNHALL

The Office of Senator Dwayne DeGraff held a townhall meeting on St. John on March 16, 2023 to discuss the implementation of Act No. 8281, which mandates the creation of the Veterans Circle monument. The Act seeks to honor the men and women of St. John who lost their lives while serving in the United States Armed Forces.

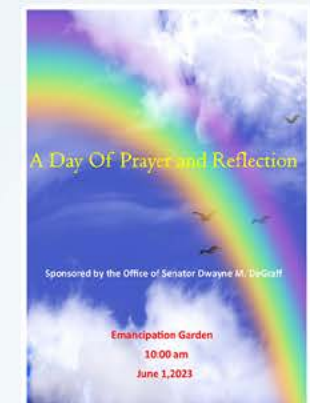


AH SAVAN COMMUNITY CLEANUP

The Office of Senator DeGraff worked diligently throughout the week of March 20 - 24, 2023 on its "Ah Savan Community Cleanup." Senator DeGraff, his staff, with assistance from two teams from the Department of Public Work, the V.I. Waste Management Authority, Division of Environmental Health and the Office of the St. Thomas Administrator along with several Savan residents worked diligently in cleaning up the area.

FUTURE INITIATIVES

- The senator will be hosting a Day of Prayer and Reflection on June 1, 2023 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Emancipation Garden to pray for God's protection against hurricanes, as well as to pray for our youth, seniors, leaders and first responders.
- Senator DeGraff will also resume his Pre-Father's Day Luncheon on St. John on Thursday, June 15, 2023.



LEGISLATIVE MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- Senator DeGraff participated in all meetings of the committees that he is a member of.
- The senator participated in other events sponsored by the Legislature to include the Perma Placque Ceremony of Kelly "Pupa Kelly" Charleswell, Sr. and the hosting of the Girls Scouts for a mock Legislative Session during Girl Scouts Week.

COMMITTEES

MEMBER:
Committee of the Whole
Budget, Appropriations and Finance
Economic Development and Agriculture

Education and Workforce Development
Homeland Security, Justice and Public Safety
Housing, Transportation and Telecommunications







THE HONORABLE

Alma Francis Heyliger

SENATOR, 35TH LEGISLATURE

ST. THOMAS - ST. JOHN DISTRICT

E-MAIL: SENATORFRANCISHEYLIGER@LEGVI.ORG

TELEPHONE: (340) 774-0880 EXT. 3577



100 DAY SUMMARY

In the first 100 days in office, Senator Francis Heyliger has been focused on: introducing and amending current legislation which will have a meaningful impact to better the lives of the People of the Virgin Islands; addressing the Government of the Virgin Islands fiscal responsibility and infrastructure and the improvement of quality of life for all Virgin Islanders.

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Attended Oath of Office Ceremonies for the 35th Legislature in January on both St. Thomas and St. Croix.
- Submitted over 70 pieces of Legislation and Amendments on January 9, 2023.
- Assisted in establishing the 35th Legislature Minority Caucus.
- Attended the State of the Territory Address.
- Attended VI Port Authority P3 Investor Forum.
- Attended GERS Senatorial Orientation.
- Participated in 'Meet your Representative' Interview with Legit TV.
- Representation at the Women's Day-Embrace Equality Event.
- Hosted Girl Scout 'Miss Sylvia Brown' and participated in Girl Scout's Legislature Day.
- Attended SeaTrade Cruise Conference, Fort Lauderdale, FL.
- Participated in Pro-Forma session.
- In attendance to all assigned Legislative Committee Meetings: Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure & Planning; Economic Development and Agriculture; Government Operations, Veterans Affairs and Consumer Protection; Homeland Security, Justice and Public Safety; Culture, Youth, Sports, Parks and Recreation; Legislative Session, Special Sessions and Committee of the Whole.

AUTHORED & PRO-FORMA (ASSIGNED TO COMMITTEE) LEGISLATION

On January 9, 2023, Senator Francis Heyliger has submitted more than 70 pieces of legislation and amendments for consideration by the 35th Legislature, four of which have been assigned to committee, known as Pro Forma. Senator Francis Heyliger has also signed on as Sponsor on impactful Legislation submitted by her colleagues of the 35th Legislature.

PRO FORMA LEGISLATION

- **35-0014** – An Act posthumously honoring and commending Wayne "Facts Man" Adams for articulating and bringing events of historic significance to the people of the Virgin Islands, by naming the bridge at the Nadir intersection on the island of St. Thomas the "Wayne 'Facts Man' Adams Bridge.
- **35-0042** – An Act amending the Rules of the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands, Rule 205 (a), by removing the provision that a minority caucus must consist of not less than five Senators.
- **35-0048** – An Act amending title 3 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 27, section 719(b), requiring the Government Employees Retirement System to send each active member an annual report of contributions by U.S. mail or by electronic means, at the members option.
- **35-0060** – A Resolution amending Rule 1003(a) of the Rules of the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands by removing the language that gives the President of the Legislature direct authority and supervision over the Chief Legal Counsel.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Senator Francis Heyliger has a dedicated group of individuals who are in the community and considered the 'eyes and ears' for the Senator. These individuals represent the office as Community Liaisons and are out every week distributing 'Community Care Packages' which include items varying from: toiletries, flashlights, water, masks, sanitizer, clothing, and healthy snacks, just to name a few. In addition, Constituents can submit forms for items/needs they would like to see addressed by the Senator. Ensuring our large Spanish population needs are addressed, Senator Francis Heyliger has included Bi-Lingual Staff and Community Liaisons on both St. Thomas and St. Croix.

COMMUNITY EVENTS IN ATTENDANCE OR REPRESENTATION

Senator Francis Heyliger has attended the following events and activities or has had representation from the Office of Senator Alma Francis Heyliger:

- Alpha Phi Alpha's Martin Luther King Peace March
- Breaking Through Barriers Outreach Event
- VI Port Authority P3 Investor Forum
- St. Thomas/St. John District Intermediate Spelling Bee
- GERS Senatorial Orientation
- VI Agriculture and Food Fair – STX
- Women's Day – Embrace Equality Event
- Victims United, Inc. – for the past three years, Senator Francis Heyliger, her staff, liaisons and volunteers have excitedly offered their time and energy for the yearly 'Bucket Drop' Fundraiser which assists survivors of violent crimes. This event has been a popular initiative with the Office of Senator Francis Heyliger working with Victim's United, Inc. and the community's willingness to support this endeavor each year continues to grow.
- St. Clair Institute – served as Event Moderator for their mental health awareness event held at Cutlass & Cane Restaurant.
- Youth Essay Contest – Senator Francis Heyliger in conjunction with WVWI Radio One AM1000 held a contest to honor the life and contributions of Virgin Islands Native, Dr. Lezmore Emanuel. The contest was open to Jr. High and High School Students. Cash prizes were awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place.

LOOKING AHEAD

"Being elected for a second term as a Virgin Islands Senator, I am honored and humbled by the trust and confidence that the people of this Territory have placed in me. I am eager to continue to serve the People of the Virgin Islands and to work with my colleagues in the 35th Legislature to address the challenges and opportunities that our Islands experience. I will continue to work hard to deliver results that improve the lives of our citizens and strengthen our democracy, while upholding the highest standards of integrity and transparency in everything I do." – Senator Alma Francis Heyliger

COMMITTEES

MEMBER:
 Committee of the Whole
 Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks
 Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning

Economic Development and Agriculture
 Government Operations, Veteran Affairs
 and Consumer Protection
 Homeland Security, Justice and Public Safety







THE HONORABLE

Donna A. Frett-Gregory

SENATOR, 35TH LEGISLATURE

ST. THOMAS - ST. JOHN DISTRICT

E-MAIL: SENATORFRETT-GREGORY@LEGVI.ORG

TELEPHONE: (340) 774-0880 EXT. 3512



A MESSAGE FROM THE SENATOR

Fellow Virgin Islanders, it remains my privilege and honor to be your representative as the 35th Legislature continues to do its work. It has been a busy four months in the Legislature. This term I am serving as the Chair of the newly revamped Committee on Budget, Appropriations and Finance. In this capacity, I will steer the Legislature through the upcoming budget cycle as well as exercise oversight over the government's finances. Through the Budget, Appropriations and Finance Committee's work several changes to budgeting and reporting will be adopted and as the changes are made, I will ensure that you remain updated.

On the legislative front, I remained steadfast in my commitment to ensure the passage of meaningful legislation that will positively impact the lives of all Virgin Islanders. While I am pleased about current legislative successes, there remains much work to be done. The state of our community remains one of my priorities. I am working closely with stakeholders on legislation that will resolve the issue of derelict properties in the territory and to address the beautification of neighborhoods across our territory. Creating pathways to homeownership for our residents is another initiative that I will continue to work on. In the 34th Legislature the work began and in the 35th Legislature it will continue as I work on legislation to allow moderate income families who otherwise would not qualify for federal homeownership programs the opportunity to become homeowners in the territory.

I am excited about the work that I have started on your behalf in the 35th Legislature and look forward to having meaningful legislation enacted that creates a better Virgin Islands for us now and for generations to come.

LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

Act No. 8700: Funding Key Components of the Territorial Agricultural Plan

Committed to a sustainable local food market, Senator Frett-Gregory successfully moved legislation appropriating \$2.2 million dollars to implement the Territorial Agricultural Plan. The Territorial Agriculture plan was developed by the University of the Virgin Islands and the Department of Agriculture pursuant to Bill No. 33-0376, now Act No. 8404, also sponsored by Senator Donna A. Frett-Gregory. With the adoption of Act No. 8700, the territory can establish the Agricultural Business Center to afford local farmers opportunities for assistance, hire staff to assist with the full implementation of the Territorial Agriculture Plan and move the agriculture in the territory forward.

Act No. 8716: Establishing the Local Food and Farm Council

Ensuring the full implementation of the Territorial Agriculture Plan, Bill No. 35-0049 sponsored by Senator Frett-Gregory establishes the Local Food and Farm Council. The council will be responsible for making recommendations regarding existing law and the Territorial Agriculture Plan. The council will also collaborate with community stakeholders to research, explore and enhance food security options. Further the council will conduct community outreach programs, perform engagement surveys, and host townhalls and meetings.

Resolution No. 1903: Honoring Mr. Kelly Charleswell, Sr.

This legislation honors and commends Mr. Kelly Charleswell, Sr., musician, educator and entrepreneur for his profound impact on music education within our territory, Virgin Islands culture and the music industry throughout the Caribbean. The 2023 Carnival Village will be named in his honor and it is only fitting that he receives his accolades.

Act No. 8714: Federal Home Loan Bank

Ensuring the financial solvency of insurers in the territory benefits the entire community. This legislation enables Virgin Islands insurers to become members of a Federal Home Loan Bank of New York, which makes homeownership more of an attainable goal for Virgin Islanders. The Federal Home Loan Bank of New York provides a source of funding to its members that may result in reduced costs for homeowners' insurance and make other financial products available to consumers.



Act No. 8717: Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance

This legislation establishes the Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance that is responsible for constructing and maintaining schools within our territory. While the bureau focuses on school facilities, school administrators, teachers and support staff can concentrate on student achievement to maximize student success.

CHAIRING THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGET, APPROPRIATIONS AND FINANCE

As Chair of the Committee on Budget, Appropriations and Finance, Senator Donna A. Frett-Gregory has held four (4) committee meetings since the convening of the 35th Legislature. In the Senator's first meeting as Chair, the Committee received testimony from the Governor's Financial Team on the overview of the financial status of the government of the Virgin Islands. The discussion covered the government's operational budget and potential shortfalls, appropriation of ARPA funds, the issuing of social security check benefits and the status of tax returns.

In the subsequent meetings held financial and appropriation measures were considered. Additionally, the Committee received an update on the Compliance Agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands and the U.S. Department of Education. The agreement which has been in place since 1999 currently have nine outstanding items that require resolution. Senator Frett-Gregory pledged to remain steadfast in having those nine items resolved and will reconvene a hearing in six months to receive further updates.

In addition to being Chair of the Committee on Budget, Appropriation, and Finance, Senator Frett-Gregory is also the Vice Chair of the Committee on Education and Workforce Development and serves on the Committees on Economic Development and Agriculture and Health, Hospitals and Human Services.

DFG IN THE COMMUNITY

Valentine's Day Luncheon at the Adrian Center in STJ

Senator Frett-Gregory continued Valentine's Day celebrations on Love City, St. John at the Adrian Senior Center. Complete with a tasty luncheon, games, song and dance, seniors enjoyed a joyous afternoon with the Senator and her staff. This annual tradition was adopted by Senator Frett-Gregory in her inaugural term as a Senator and the seniors on St. John look forward to the yearly event.

GET IN TOUCH

Our office is always open to the entire Virgin Islands community to share concerns, ask questions, or pitch ideas that will positively impact our territory. You can reach us right here on the website via "Get Involved" or you can:

- Email us at senatorfrett-gregory@legvi.org
- Call us at (340) 693-3686

COMMITTEES

CHAIR - Budget, Appropriations and Finance
VICE CHAIR - Education and Workforce Development

MEMBER:
Economic Development and Agriculture
Health, Hospital and Human Services







THE HONORABLE
Ray Fonseca
SENATOR, 35TH LEGISLATURE
 ST. THOMAS - ST. JOHN DISTRICT
 E-MAIL: SENATORRAYFONSECA@LEGVI.ORG
 TELEPHONE: (340) 774-0880 EXT. 3577



Upon taking the oath of office on Monday, January 9, 2023, Senator Ray Fonseca hit the ground running by submitting key legislation that will impact the lives of the residents of this territory.

- **BR-23-0324**- An Act amending Virgin Islands Code relating to a scholarship program to provide financial aid for tuition to residents of the Virgin Islands for post-secondary education at an accredited school or institute for Vocational, Technical, or Allied health Professional Program. This legislation addresses individuals who are not university bound but seeks a secondary education in a career that will impact our community.
- **BR-23-0267**- An Act amending Title 3 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 19, adding a new section 339c, "Virgin Islands Office of Musical Hall of Fame". This legislation seeks to create and establish an office designated to address Virgin Islanders in the field of Music, Radio Personalities, Bands, Disc-Jockeys, Singers, Songwriters, Songs, Dance Performers that have been recognized for their formidable contributions to the musical industry through resolutions of the Legislature.

Senator Ray Fonseca in collaboration with his colleagues, co-sponsored several legislations to honor and commend individuals that served our community in an esteem manner.

- **Act No. 8706**- An Act honoring and commending former Senator Horace A. Callwood, Sr. posthumously for his dedication, service, and commitment to the people of the Virgin Islands and naming the north-south street immediately east of Windward Passage in his memory.
- **Act No. 8703**- A Resolution honoring and commending Mr. Boyd "Boyzie" Orlanzo Todman for his many contributions to the people and the youth of the Virgin Islands.
- **Act No. 8702**- An Act honoring and commending former Senator George E. Goodwin for his many years of expansive contributions to the Virgin Islands community as a whole, through his roles in various areas of service to the territory as well as advocacy for social justice for underserved people in the Virgin Islands; to rename the Cricket Field located on Parcel H of Tract 1, Estate Nazareth, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands in his honor; and to award former Senator George E. Goodwin the Virgin Islands Medal of Honor; and for other related purposes.
- **Resolution No. 1903**- An Act honoring and commending Kelly L. Charleswell, Sr. better known as "Pupa Kelly" for his contribution to the people of the Virgin Islands in the field of music as a teacher and instructor in the Public School system and his involvement with the musical bands of the Virgin Islands.

In full support of the members of the Virgin Islands National Guards, Senator Fonseca co-sponsored **Bill No. 35-0012**, An Act amending title 23 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 19, subchapter III, section 1556 relating to the retirement from the National Guard to increase the retirement pension. This measure increases the monthly payment from \$100.00 which was enacted over 40 years ago to \$350.00, plus authorizes the Adjutant General to increase the pension annuity every five years to reflect the changes based on the Consumer Price Index.

On February 16, 2023, Senator Ray Fonseca, Chairman of the Committee on Health, Hospitals, & Human Services, was invited to tour the Schneider Regional Medical Center by Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Tina M. Comissiong, Esq. During this visit, the Chairman gains insight on information that has continued to stymie the financial stability of the medical facility.



On February 24, 2023, Chairman Fonseca conducted a site visit of the Governor Juan F. Luis Medical Center on the island of St. Croix. The chairman and his committee members received a complete tour of the new facility by the Chief Executive Officer Doug Koch and his team. The chairman was reassured at that time that the transfer of patients will be seamless.

On the same day, Chairman Fonseca coordinated a site visit of the Herbert Grieg Home for the aged. He was met by Commissioner Kimberley Causey-Gomez and her staff, as they conducted a walkthrough of the facility. The chairman saw firsthand, the dilapidated state of the facility, the lack of supplies for the employees and the lack of essential food items for the elderly residents of the facility.

April 12, 2023, Senator Fonseca, and his staff toured the Myrah Keating Clinic on the island of St. John. The Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Tina Comissiong, Esq., and the Clinic's Administrator explained the shortfalls of the facility. They reiterated to the senator that the facility is temporary, and the permanent Clinic is still pending in the development phase, and critical needs for St. John's residents will continue to still be address at the St. Thomas hospital.

Thursday, April 20, 2023, Senator Fonseca hosted an introductory meeting with the entire executive staff of the Department of Health. Commissioner Justa E. Encarnacion and her team provided background data and information necessary for the agency to function to meet the needs of the community.

Wednesday, May 3, 2023, Chairman Fonseca convened an oversight hearing in the Earle B. Ottley legislative Chambers to received testimony on the operational and implementation status of the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital & Medical Center. CEO Doug Koch, placed on the record that his team executed a successful transfer of patients from the heavily damaged Juan Luis Hospital to the temporary JFL modular North facility completed in April.

The committee also received testimony on the operational and the redevelopment status of the Schneider Regional Medical Center. Schneider Regional CEO, Tina Comissiong, highlighted the recent full accreditation by the Joint Commission, an independent body which evaluates hospitals nationwide.

The CEO also reported that in addition to rebuilding the hospital after the devastation of both hurricanes, Schneider Regional Medical Center is facing financial hardship. Ms. Comissiong reported that while they are some progress in increasing revenues, the additional dollars are overshadowed by ongoing and increasing indebtedness. The committee vowed to work with the hospital to address their long-term debt.

COMMITTEES

CHAIR - Health, Hospital and Human Services
 VICE CHAIR - Homeland Security, Justice
 and Public Safety

MEMBER:
 Committee of the Whole
 Budget, Appropriations and Finance
 Gov. Op., Veteran Affairs and Consumer Protection
 Housing, Transportation and Telecommunications







THE HONORABLE
Javan E. James, Sr.
SENATOR, 35TH LEGISLATURE
 ST. CROIX DISTRICT
 E-MAIL: SENATORJJAMES@LEGVI.ORG
 TELEPHONE: (340) 773-2424 EXT. 2246



Since taking my oath of office as Senator to serve the people of St. Croix and the US Virgin Islands for the 35th Legislature as Chairman of the Committee on Economic Development and Agriculture, three hearings were held which fall under my purview as follows:

On February 8, 2023, testimonies were received providing an update from The Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture, University of the Virgin Islands as well as VI Good Foods, a non-governmental organization (NGO).

On March 8, 2023, testimonies were received from the following agencies: USVI Office of Cannabis Regulations, Virgin Islands Department of Tourism, and the Virgin Islands Port Authority.

Bill No. 35-0049 - An act amending title 7, chapter 1 of the Virgin Islands Code by adding subchapter VIII, establishing a Local Food and Farm Council in accordance with mandate five of the Virgin Islands Agriculture Plan. Proposed by Senator Donna A. Frett-Gregory, Senator Angel L. Bolques, Jr, and Senator Javan E. James, Sr., Bill No. 35-0049 was approved favorably with a vote of seven (7) yeas.

On April 12, 2023, The Committee received an update from the President of the University of Virgin Islands, School of Agriculture about its programs, funding availability, and grants as well as successes and challenges with the program as well as an update on the overall status of the Virgin Islands Economic Development Authority with regards to funded programs and grants within the VIEDA; as well as an update on the implementation of the Vision 2040 plan, capital projects, and personnel.



Senator Javan James Sr. visits the University of the Virgin Islands School of Agriculture, along with his colleagues for a tour of the facility.



Senator Javan James Sr. visits New Breed Farms in St. Croix, where he met with the owners and operators of the facility.



Senator Javan James Sr. discussing farming techniques with the owners and operators of Echo Valley Farms in St. Croix.



Senator Javan James Sr. with his colleagues at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Arthur A. Richards school in St. Croix.



Senator Javan James Sr. speaks at the Level Up Conference held at the University of the Virgin Islands, St. Croix Campus.



Senator Javan James Sr. speaks to students at his alma mater, Pearl B. Larsen Elementary School in St. Croix.

UPCOMING LEGISLATION

BR 23-0270

An Act appropriating \$600,000 to the Department of Agriculture to be used to fund farmers in the Virgin Islands that produce crops and other food products and for other related purposes.

BR 23-0302

To appropriate funds to purchase and subdivide several lots into half acres for sale to the Virgin Islands veterans of the Armed Forces.

BR 23-0492

To appropriate funds to the Department of Education to maintain all public schools in the USVI.

BR 23-0498

To appropriate \$3,000,000 to the Virgin Islands Police Department from the general fund to create crime prevention initiatives for all three islands.

LOOKING AHEAD

As we forge ahead, the future looks bright, and I am committed to advocating for more economic development for the island of St. Croix. I will work with my colleagues to find ways and means for more growth of our agriculture and agri-business industries that will contribute to our economy.

COMMITTEES

CHAIR - Economic Development and Agriculture
 VICE CHAIR - Government Operations, Veteran Affairs and Consumer Protection

MEMBER:
 Committee of the Whole
 Budget, Appropriations and Finance
 Education and Workforce Development
 Homeland Security, Justice and Public Safety







THE HONORABLE

Marise C. James

SENATOR, 35TH LEGISLATURE

ST. CROIX DISTRICT

E-MAIL: MCJAMES@LEGVI.ORG

TELEPHONE: (340) 773-2424 EXT. 2269



My first 100 days as a senator in the 35th Legislature can be called a "baptism by fire" as the senate held many Committee meetings and sessions that considered and passed substantive bills, some controversial. However, this journey has only strengthened my commitment to serving our people, particularly our most vulnerable members, as well as preserving the cherished island we call home. I have realized the importance of being a voice for those who are not present in the room, and I am fully aware of the responsibility I hold to fight for their rights and interests. Rest assured, I will continue to dedicate myself to this cause, with a special focus on crucial issues such as education, health, and housing recognizing that they form the bedrock of a thriving community. I look forward to advocating for the passage of my proposed legislation, but I also value cooperation and collaboration. Working alongside my esteemed colleagues, I firmly believe that we can bring about transformative change and improve the quality of life for all residents of the Virgin Islands. Thank you to the community for your support, prayers, and well-wishes. Your encouragement serves as a constant source of inspiration, motivating me to approach each day with renewed determination. Together, let us build a stronger and more prosperous community for all.

OVERSIGHT OF EXECUTIVE BRANCH DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

As the chairperson of the Committee on Education & Workforce Development I presided over a meeting focused on the status of literacy in our public schools. I participated in meetings for the committees of which I am a member – the Committee on Rules and Judiciary vetted gubernatorial nominees and acted on bills from other committees; the Committee on Disaster Recovery & Infrastructure/DPNR received an update on the status of the disaster recovery projects; and the Committee on Health, Hospitals & Human Services heard the concerns and issues facing our territory's hospitals. The Committee on Housing, Transportation & Telecommunications, of which I am the vice-chairperson conducted an in-depth review from government and non-profit agencies on homelessness, public housing communities, affordable housing, the newly established VI Slice program, and the status of telecommunications in the territory. Among other activities, I participated in the Virgin Islands Department of Education Territory Wide School Site Data Presentations, Veterans Town Hall Meeting, DPNR Town Hall Meeting on the creation of a Comprehensive Land & Water Use Plan, and toured JFL North and WAPA on St. Thomas.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

My involvement in various community activities demonstrates key themes that reflect my commitment to making a positive impact. I actively promoted literacy through the "Readers are Leaders" Books for Babies Program and the "Teddy Bear Clinic" at JFL North, and the "Read out Loud" student readings at various schools and, fostering a love for reading and learning. Additionally, I supported charitable organizations by donating toiletries to Catholic Charities. Recognition in the form of Principal and Honor Roll Certificates in all public schools, as well as Mu Alpha Theta Mathematics Honor Society Certificates highlighted my dedication to academic excellence. Contributing to community well-being, I donated bottled water to Whim Gardens and books to Ricardo Richards Elementary School for their Book-Fair. Finally, my engagement in the Juanita Gardine Elementary School PTA and sponsor of a gift for their raffle underscores my support for local schools. These activities collectively demonstrate my commitment to themes of literacy, charity, academic achievement, and community contributions.

CONSTITUENT WORK

My staff and I actively address constituents' issues, making a positive impact in their lives. My staff supported parents by referring them to the appropriate agency to assist them with obtaining a hearing implant for their child. Guiding a first-time homebuyer and resolving a resident's sewage infrastructure problem were additional areas of assistance. We assisted with a social security disability claim and aided a healthcare worker with inquiries on overdue premium pay. Furthermore, I provided advice on student disciplinary issues and followed up on the status of construction of a home for an Envision Tomorrow Program participant.



Several of these matters are pending and will require further monitoring and advocacy to ensure they are satisfactorily resolved for my constituents. These varied activities demonstrate my commitment to addressing critical community needs and providing meaningful assistance to constituents in diverse areas of their lives.

LAW-MAKING

During the first 100 days of the 35th Legislature, I co-sponsored various pieces of legislation initiated by my colleagues, including measures that were enacted to establish the Bureau of School Construction and Maintenance; to allow insurers to become members of a Federal Home Loan Bank; to declare June 19th a legal holiday in the Virgin Islands; to honor and commend former Senator George E. Goodwin for his expansive contributions to the Virgin Islands community as a whole; and to honor and commend Mr. Aloy "Wenty" Nielsen and name the Christiansted Bypass in his honor. In addition, I am a co-sponsor to the following measures awaiting assignment to committee or passage by the full body:

- BN 35-0012** – Increase of the retirement pension of Virgin Islands National Guard service members.
- BN 35-0016** - A Resolution honoring and commending the entire Virgin Islands Elections System team on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of its establishment.
- BN 35-0008/35-242** – Establishment of the Veterans Advisory Council.
- BN 35-0043** - An Act allowing the Police Chief of the Legislature; the Sergeant-of-Arms; or any security officer of the Legislature; who has peace officer status, to arrest a person who neglects or refuses to appear before the Legislature in obedience to subpoena.

My office is the primary sponsor of the following drafted legislation for which I am seeking the support and sponsorship of my colleagues:

- BN 35-0032/35-300** – Government Personnel Candidacy for public office.
- BN 35-0058** - The Public-Private Partnership Agreement Act.
- BN 35-0066** - Reading Initiative for Scholastic Excellence Program (RISE) in the public schools of the Virgin Islands.
- BR 23-0253** – Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) Program.
- BR 23-0254** – Government Data Collection & Dissemination Practices Act.
- BR 23-0255** – Virgin Islands Solicitation of Charitable Funds Act.
- BR 23-0256** – Creation of Office of Early Childhood.
- BR 23-0257** – Ancient Mortgage Statute.
- BR 23-0541** – Substitution of Parities in Court Proceedings.
- BR 23-0542** – Direct Action Against an Insurer.
- BR 23-0543** –Indirect Purchasers Permitted to Bring Actions.
- RESOLUTION 23-0510** – A Resolution to name the Labor and Delivery/Post-Partum Unit "Maternity Services" in JFL North in honor of Dr. Ralph A. DeChabert.
- RESOLUTION 23-0515** – A Resolution to honor Willard John, Founder & Director of The Guardians of Culture Mocko Jumbies.

COMMITTEES

CHAIR - Education and Workforce Development	MEMBER:
VICE CHAIR - Housing, Transportation and Telecommunications	Committee of the Whole
	Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning
	Health, Hospital and Human Services
	Rules and Judiciary







THE HONORABLE
Franklin D. Johnson

SENATOR, 35TH LEGISLATURE
ST. CROIX DISTRICT
E-MAIL: SENATORJOHNSON@LEGVI.ORG
TELEPHONE: (340) 773-2424 EXT. 2210

It is my honor and pleasure to present a synopsis of my first 100-days as your Senator. I remain focused on ensuring government honesty, integrity, and accountability; reduce crime and violence through early childhood intervention; promote social development of our youth; grow our economy by enhancing our infrastructure and agriculture; and provide resources to enhance and develop home and land ownership in our Territory. Thank you once again for the opportunity to serve you.

PROPOSED LEGISLATION

35-0028 To amend Title 33 Virgin Islands Code, Section 431 to add Virgin Islands physicians and healthcare facilities who receive TRICARE reimbursements to the payment of gross receipts taxes at a rate of 2.5 percent on the TRICARE reimbursements and as currently paid on Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements by Virgin Islands physicians and healthcare facilities. This Bill would add TRICARE reimbursements as being subject to a 2.5 percent gross receipts rate and as currently provided for Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements.

35-0038 To increase minimum salary for Government Employees.

35-0059 All certified 911 Dispatch Operators of the Virgin Islands Territorial management, who are multi-lingual, as determined by the Director, shall be paid a differential of 10 percent.

35-0045 An Act amending title 5 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 407 relating to eligibility for parole, by adding a new section 4601a to establish Medical Parole as a basis for parole; further, amending title 5 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 407 by adding a new section 4601b to establish Geriatric Parole as a basis for parole; and providing for other related purposes.

35-0044 An Act amending title 14 Virgin Islands Code Chapter 31 section 622 expanding the threshold for disorderly conduct.

35-0046 To amend Title 20 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 35, by adding a new Section 381 which would allow the Bureau of Motor Vehicles to issue a parking decal for Expectant Mothers and Newborns. The decal shall be issued for a period not to exceed 365 days and will allow women with a valid driver's license to park their vehicles in parking spots designated for persons with disabilities. The Bureau of Motor Vehicles shall establish an application and the required medical documentation and fees to be paid for the Expectant Mothers and Newborns Decals.

35-0055 To repeal Act No. 8684 and revert to the language from Act No. 4844 To offer course specific material as opposed to integrated material when it comes to the subject of VI History and Caribbean History.

Office Staff Contact Information:

Maureen M. Maynard, Chief of Staff
mmaynard@legvi.org

Diane Hazelwood, Executive Assistant
dhazelwood@legvi.org

Constancia Ebanks-Hodge, Legislative Assistant
cebankshodge@legvi.org



COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE

- JANUARY 23, 2023**
Session and State of the Territory
- FEBRUARY 07, 2023**
Homeland Security, Justice and Public Safety
- FEBRUARY 08, 2023**
Economic Development and Agriculture
- FEBRUARY 22, 2023**
Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks
- MARCH 06, 2023**
Budget, Appropriations and Finance
- MARCH 08, 2023**
Economic Development and Agriculture
- MARCH 10, 2023**
Committee of the Whole
- MARCH 13, 2023**
Committee of the Whole
- MARCH 15, 2023**
Homeland Security, Justice and Public Safety
- MARCH 16, 2023**
Disaster Recovery and Infrastructure
- MARCH 17, 2023**
Girls Scout Senate Mock Session
- MARCH 22, 2023**
Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks
- MARCH 23, 2023**
Education and Workforce Development
- APRIL 05, 2023**
Special Session
- APRIL 11, 2023**
Rules and Judiciary
- APRIL 14, 2023**
Legislative Session
- APRIL 19, 2023**
Homeland Security, Justice and Public Safety
- APRIL 21, 2023**
Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks
- MAY 03, 2023**
Health, Hospitals and Human Services

OFFICE MEETINGS, ACTIVITIES AND UPDATING CONSTITUENTS

- JANUARY 25, 2023** ▶ VI In the Morning" with Mr. St. Claire Williams
- JANUARY 26, 2023** ▶ Dept. of Education Principals Site Data Presentations, VITEMA Conference Room (STX)
▶ Latino 91.9 FM PapiLove Radio
- JANUARY 27, 2023** ▶ Presentation by Blue Grass Holdings, LLC and Premiere Distilling Group
- JANUARY 31, 2023** ▶ Mario Moorhead Radio Show WSTX AM 970
- FEBRUARY 16, 2023** ▶ The 51st Annual Agriculture and Food Fair Agriculture 2023 award Ceremony
- FEBRUARY 17, 2023** ▶ Election System of the Virgin Islands 60th Anniversary
▶ GERS Orientation Retirement System
- FEBRUARY 18, 2023** ▶ Inauguration 51st Annual Agricultural and Food Fair of the US Virgin Islands
- FEBRUARY 20, 2023** ▶ ESVI Diamond Jubilee Celebration Government House, St. Croix USVI
- FEBRUARY 26, 2023** ▶ 14th Annual Dominican Republic Parade
- MARCH 02, 2023** ▶ Limetree Bay Refinery hearing at the Almeric L. Christian Federal Building and Courthouse
- MARCH 07, 2023** ▶ JFL North Ribbon Cutting
- MARCH 11, 2023** ▶ Elmo Plasket Little League Opening Ceremony
▶ St. Croix Central High School JROTC Military Ball
- MARCH 12, 2023** ▶ Gospel Music "The Experience, We Are One, Sinach and Friends Concert"
- MARCH 18, 2023** ▶ Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade
- MARCH 24, 2023** ▶ Latino 91.9 FM PapiLove Radio
- MARCH 26, 2023** ▶ Williams Delight Homeowners Association meeting
- MARCH 27, 2023** ▶ Meeting with DOE Commissioner, Asst. Commissioner and St. Croix Famers
- MARCH 28, 2023** ▶ U.S.V.I. Men Soccer Team Game U.S. Virgin Islands VS St. Maarten
- MARCH 29, 2023** ▶ Meeting with American Rapper, Singer, Songwriter, Businessman and Actor Armando Christian Perez AKA "Pitbull"
- APRIL 2, 2023** ▶ 8th Annual March & Program "Our Love Ones Are Alive in Our Hearts"
- APRIL 09, 2023** ▶ Daddy Day Out Easter Egg Hunt (Grove Place, St. Croix)
- APRIL 11, 2023** ▶ Presented Former Governor Kenneth E. Mapp – with Act No. 8147 Gold Medal
- APRIL 17, 2023** ▶ VI In the Morning" with Mr. St. Claire Williams
▶ Vendor's Plaza Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, STT
- APRIL 21, 2023** ▶ Latino 91.9 FM PapiLove Radio
- APRIL 24, 2023** ▶ Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to welcome, Fly the Whale Airline, St. Croix, USVI
- APRIL 25, 2023** ▶ Mario Moorhead Radio Show WSTX AM 970

COMMITTEES

MEMBER:
Committee of the Whole
Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks
Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning

Education and Workforce Development
Homeland Security, Justice and Public Safety
Rules and Judiciary







THE HONORABLE
Milton E. Potter

SENATOR, 35TH LEGISLATURE
ST. THOMAS - ST. JOHN DISTRICT
E-MAIL: MPOTTER@LEGVI.ORG
TELEPHONE: (340) 774-0880 EXT. 3519



Senator Milton Potter serves as Chairman of the Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning; Vice Chairman of the Committee on Rules and Judiciary and is a member of the Committee on Health, Hospitals, and Human Services; the Committee on Culture, Sports, Parks, and Youth; and the Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, and Consumer Protection.

LEGISLATION SUBMITTED 11

Senator Potter has submitted numerous Bill Draft Requests covering a wide range of issues, such as, economic development, environmental protection, public education, public sector employment, the Government Employees Retirement System, energy, history and culture and more.

COMMITTEE ON DISASTER RECOVERY, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND PLANNING

The Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning, is empowered to receive, consider, and make recommendations on all bills and matters related to the mitigation, planning, response, and recovery actions in connection with Natural Disasters. The Committee has oversight and investigative authority over all government agencies involved in disaster recovery and the rebuilding of the Territory's infrastructure. Special oversight is provided to the operations of the Office of Disaster Recovery, the Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management, the Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority, the Department of Public Works, and the Department of Planning and Natural Resources. The Committee is charged with making specific findings and recommendations concerning the operations of these critical government agencies.

From the inception of the 35th Legislature, when Senator Potter was granted his committee chairmanship, he made the commitment to have one-on-one meetings with agency personnel and other entities that play a role in the disaster recovery process. The objective is to ensure that the Virgin Islands prudently and efficiently utilize federal dollars in a timely manner. That is of paramount importance. As public officials, it is imperative that we not squander this unprecedented opportunity to utilize federal dollars to rebuild and transform the Virgin Islands of the United States into a modern, progressive and resilient community that we can all be proud of.

The Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning met on two occasions during the first 100 days of the 35th Legislature:

March 16, 2023. The Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning received testimony from Mrs. Adrienne Williams-Octalien, Director, Office of Disaster Recovery and Ms. Dayna Clendenin, Interim Executive Director Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority, along with her entire leadership team. Testimony and discussion centered around updates on all federal funding, challenges experienced, and timelines for completion of various projects.

May 15, 2023. The Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning received testimony from Ms. Jenifer O'Neal, Director, Virgin Islands Office of Management and Budget; Mr. Derek Gabriel, Commissioner, Virgin Islands Department of Public Works; and Mr. Darryl Smalls, Executive Director, Virgin Islands Territorial Hospital Redevelopment Team. We received updates on all anticipated and underway disaster recovery related projects and programs. We also discussed the status of pertinent federal funding, timelines for project completion, and programs that may need to be extended.



During the first 100 days, under Senator Potter's stewardship, the Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning received updates from a total of five (5) government agencies. In terms of future plans, Senator Potter is in the process of coordinating a delegation of his colleagues to travel to Washington, DC to engage in meetings with key federal stakeholders to discuss challenges and barriers that have delayed our recovery, and determine what actions territorial and federal agencies can take to jump-start the disaster recovery processes.



SPECIAL PROJECTS/COMMUNITY OUTREACH

During the first 100 days, the Office of Senator Milton Potter participated in a number of community outreach initiatives and special projects. The Office collaborated with the University of the Virgin Islands School of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Services for the third annual Plant-a-Seed contest in the district of St. Thomas/St. John and other agricultural initiatives at Ebenezer Garden and Yellow Cedar residential facilities. The Senator also interacted and collaborated with constituents, government agencies and businesses via several St Thomas and St John Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours Events. Senator Potter read to students during the Gomez Elementary School Read-to-a-Class Day, supported Victims United Inc. during the National Crime Victim's Rights Week Annual Bucket Drop Fundraiser, attended the Bordeaux Farmers Rastafari Agricultural Cultural Food Fair, and hosted a student from the Ivanna Eudora Kean High School On-the-Job Training Internship Program for Business Students.



LOOKING AHEAD

Senator Potter and his team continue to develop meaningful legislation and innovative community outreach initiatives that will continue to address the "bread and butter" issues within this territory. These bills and resolutions and programs will focus on financial literacy, economic development, GERS initiatives, mental health, strategies for protecting our eco-system, and honoring our "home grown" Virgin Islands heroes for exemplary acts of service to our beautiful territory.

COMMITTEES

**CHAIR - Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure,
and Planning**
VICE CHAIR - Rules and Judiciary

MEMBER:
Committee of the Whole
Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks
Gov. Op., Veteran Affairs and Consumer Protection
Health, Hospital and Human Services





COMMITTEES AT A GLANCE



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair - Senator Novelle E. Francis Jr.
Vice Chair - Senator Marvin A. Blyden

Members: Sen. Carla J. Joseph, Sen. Kenneth L. Gittens, Sen. Angel L. Bolques Jr., Sen. Diane T. Capehart, Sen. Samuel Carrión, Sen. Dwayne M. DeGraff, Sen. Alma Francis Heyliger, Sen. Donna A. Frett-Gregory, Sen. Ray Fonseca, Sen. Javan E. James Sr., Sen. Marise C. James, Sen. Franklin D. Johnson, Sen. Milton E. Potter



BUDGET, APPROPRIATIONS AND FINANCE

Chair - Senator Donna A. Frett-Gregory
Vice Chair - Senator Novelle E. Francis, Jr.

Members: Senator Marvin A. Blyden, Senator Samuel Carrión, Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff, Senator Ray Fonseca, Senator Javan E. James Sr.



CULTURE, YOUTH, AGING, SPORTS, AND PARKS

Chair - Senator Angel L. Bolques Jr.
Vice Chair - Senator Marvin A. Blyden

Members: Senator Novelle E. Francis Jr., Senator Samuel Carrión, Senator Alma Francis Heyliger, Senator Franklin D. Johnson, Senator Milton E. Potter



DISASTER RECOVERY, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND PLANNING

Chair - Senator Milton E. Potter
Vice Chair - Senator Diane T. Capehart

Members: Senator Carla J. Joseph, Senator Kenneth L. Gittens, Senator Alma Francis Heyliger, Senator Marise C. James, Senator Franklin D. Johnson



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND AGRICULTURE

Chair - Senator Javan E. James Sr.
Vice Chair - Senator Angel L. Bolques Jr.

Members: Senator Marvin A. Blyden, Senator Diane T. Capehart, Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff, Senator Alma Francis Heyliger, Senator Donna A. Frett-Gregory



EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Chair - Senator Marise C. James
Vice Chair - Senator Donna A. Frett-Gregory

Members: Senator Carla J. Joseph, Senator Diane T. Capehart, Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff, Senator Javan E. James Sr., Senator Franklin D. Johnson



GOV. OP., VETERAN AFFAIRS AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Chair - Senator Carla J. Joseph
Vice Chair - Senator Javan E. James Sr.

Members: Senator Kenneth L. Gittens, Senator Samuel Carrión, Senator Alma Francis Heyliger, Senator Ray Fonseca, Senator Milton E. Potter



HEALTH, HOSPITAL AND HUMAN SERVICES

Chair - Senator Ray Fonseca
Vice Chair - Senator Kenneth L. Gittens

Members: Sen. Novelle E. Francis Jr., Sen. Marvin A. Blyden, Sen. Diane T. Capehart, Sen. Samuel Carrión, Sen. Donna A. Frett-Gregory, Sen. Marise C. James, Sen. Milton E. Potter



HOMELAND SECURITY, JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Chair - Senator Kenneth L. Gittens
Vice Chair - Senator Ray Fonseca

Members: Senator Angel L. Bolques Jr., Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff, Senator Alma Francis Heyliger, Senator Javan E. James Sr., Senator Franklin D. Johnson



HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Chair - Senator Marvin A. Blyden
Vice Chair - Senator Marise C. James

Members: Senator Carla J. Joseph, Senator Angel L. Bolques Jr., Senator Samuel Carrión, Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff, Senator Ray Fonseca



RULES AND JUDICIARY

Chair - Senator Diane T. Capehart
Vice Chair - Senator Milton E. Potter

Members: Senator Carla J. Joseph, Senator Kenneth L. Gittens, Senator Angel L. Bolques Jr., Senator Marise C. James, Senator Franklin D. Johnson

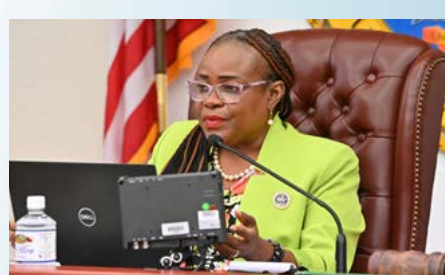
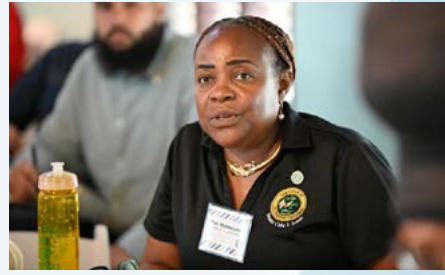
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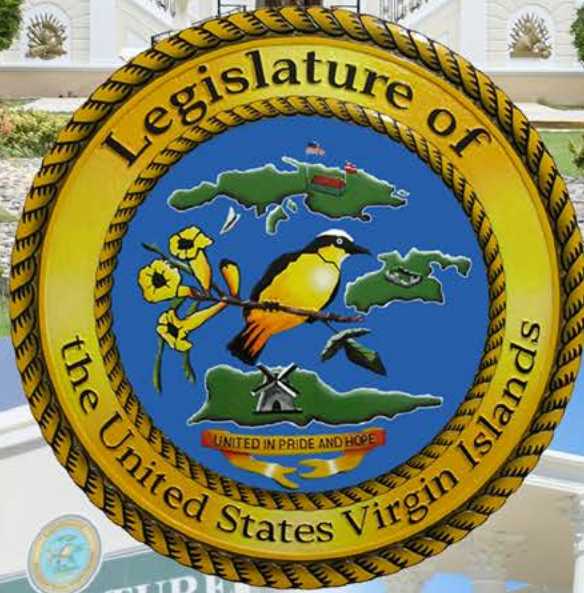


100 - DAY REFLECTION IN PICTURES



100-DAY REFLECTION IN PICTURES





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