

FLOOR

10/30/2025-SPECIAL ORDERED TO THE FLOOR

BILL NO. 36-0203

Thirty-Sixth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

October 30, 2025

A resolution petitioning the Congress of the United States to amend federal law to include the Virgin Islands as full participants in the Affordable Care Act

PROPOSED BY: Senator Kurt A. Vialet

1 **WHEREAS**, the federal government of the United States has entered a shutdown due to
2 disagreements in Congress over spending priorities, particularly the extension of health-care
3 subsidies and tax credits under the Affordable Care Act (“ACA”); and

4 **WHEREAS**, this shutdown underscores the fundamental importance of affordable
5 health care and the critical role that subsidies and tax credits play in ensuring that citizens and
6 residents across the nation have access to necessary medical coverage; and

7 **WHEREAS**, the irony of the current situation is that, while the federal government is
8 paralyzed over policies related to the continuation of health-care benefits for Americans, the
9 Virgin Islands and other U.S. territories are not fully included in or eligible for those same
10 benefits under the ACA; and

11 **WHEREAS**, further compounding this irony is the fact that the federal government
12 shutdown stemming from disputes over programs from which the Virgin Islands are excluded,
13 disrupts and delays essential federal services and funding upon which the territory depends;
14 and

1 **WHEREAS**, this inequitable arrangement results in Virgin Islanders being adversely
2 affected by federal policy decisions and shutdowns tied to programs they cannot benefit from,
3 illustrating the urgent need for comprehensive inclusion in national health care initiatives; and

4 **WHEREAS**, Virgin Islanders are American citizens who, despite their citizenship,
5 remain excluded from the full participation in the nation's health reform law, including access
6 to health insurance marketplaces, premium tax credits, and cost-sharing reductions available to
7 residents of the fifty states and the District of Columbia; and

8 **WHEREAS**, Virgin Islands residents proudly serve in uniform at rates comparable to or
9 above many states, contributing to the defense and security of the United States through the
10 Armed Forces and the Virgin Islands National Guard, yet remain excluded from certain federal
11 benefits and protections, including those provided under the ACA; and

12 **WHEREAS**, the Virgin Islands also hosts U.S. military personnel and operations as part
13 of a multi-service anti-drug and counter-narcotics mission in the Caribbean, demonstrating the
14 Territory's strategic importance to national security and its integral role in protecting the
15 nation's borders and combating transnational crime; and

16 **WHEREAS**, this exclusion has contributed to disproportionately higher rates of
17 uninsured individuals, limited access to affordable health insurance options, and greater
18 financial barriers to care for Virgin Islands residents; and

19 **WHEREAS**, without access to premium tax credits or cost-sharing reductions, health
20 insurance coverage is often unaffordable for working families; and

21 **WHEREAS**, the Government of the Virgin Islands must shoulder a disproportionate
22 share of the cost for public health programs due to limited federal funding and capped Medicaid
23 allocations, unlike states that receive open-ended federal matching support; and

24 **WHEREAS**, this inequity leads to delayed care, adverse health outcomes, and higher
25 uncompensated care costs for hospitals and the local government; and

1 **WHEREAS**, inclusion under the ACA would stabilize the Virgin Islands' health care
2 system, improve health outcomes, expand access to preventive services, and reduce the strain
3 on public health resources; and

4 **WHEREAS**, equitable inclusion would also promote economic stability by fostering a
5 healthier population, increased workforce productivity, reducing uncompensated care costs for
6 the territorial hospitals, attracting greater investment in the territory's health sector, and
7 alleviating local fiscal pressure; and

8 **WHEREAS**, extending ACA eligibility to the Virgin Islands would align with the
9 principles of fairness, equality, and full citizenship for all Americans, ensuring that residents
10 of the Virgin Islands are not left behind in national health care policy; and

11 **WHEREAS**, the Legislature of the Virgin Islands recognizes that the ongoing exclusion
12 of the territory from the ACA is inconsistent with the federal government's stated commitment
13 to equity and inclusion across U.S. jurisdictions; Now, Therefore,

14 ***Be it resolved by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:***

15 **SECTION 1.** The Legislature of the Virgin Islands petitions the Congress of the United
16 States to amend federal law to include the Virgin Islands as full participants in the Affordable
17 Care Act, with access to the same subsidies, tax credits, and marketplace options available to
18 residents of the fifty states and the District of Columbia.

19 **SECTION 2.** The Legislature of the Virgin Islands urges the President of the United
20 States and the United States Department of Health and Human Services to take all
21 administrative and legislative actions necessary to ensure equitable treatment for the residents
22 of the Virgin Islands in all federal health programs.

23 **SECTION 3.** The President of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands shall forward
24 certified copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, the Vice President of
25 the United States, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Majority and Minority

1 Leaders of the United States Senate, the Virgin Islands Delegate to Congress, and the Secretary
2 of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

3 **BILL SUMMARY**

4 This Resolution requests for the Congress of the United States to amend federal law to
5 include the Virgin Islands as full participants in the Affordable Care Act.

6 **BR25-0898/October 30, 2025/GC**