



| Committee on Budget, Appropriations, & Finance

Legislature USVI

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0:00:00 LILILALA LILILALA Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. ¶¶ Thank you. Thank you.

0:03:30 Li lo la la le lo te lo dai Li lo la la le lo te lo dai Thank you. Thank you.

0:05:00 Lilo la la, lilo lalo la, lilo lalo la, lilo lalo la, lilo lalo la, oye a mí. Thank you. I love you, I love you Let's pray. Thank you.

0:07:30 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

0:09:00 Thank you. Oh, my God.

0:10:00 Thank you. Oh, my God. [2 such phrases repeated 12 times · standby audio before the proceeding, transcribed by the recogniser as speech]

0:16:00 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Let's go. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. We'll be right back. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. We'll be right back. Thank you. We'll be right back. Thank you. It's the nature of mind, the earth mind, rastaman, I listen to this, I go first.

0:27:30 We'll be right back. Thank you. I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry [3 such phrases repeated 9 times · standby audio before the proceeding, transcribed by the recogniser as speech]

0:32:00 Let's go. We'll be right back. Thank you. Let's go. We'll be right back. I love you. Let's go. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. We'll see you next time. I'll see you next time. Thank you.

0:39:00 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Let's go Let's get started. Thank you. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. I love you We'll be right back. We'll be right back. Thank you. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. Z-Fox

- 0:50:30 Thank you. The Committee on Budget Appropriations and Finance meeting of me-we, me?
- 0:51:29 September 9th, 2023, is hereby call to order. September 6th. Listen, I read it with my staff. Give me today. But you have to excuse them because we've had a long run. Madam Clerk, can I have the roll call, please? Senator Marvin Abelighton. Senator Blyden, present. Senator Samuel Carrion. Senator Carrion, absent. Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff. Senator DeGraff, absent. Senator Ray Fonseca. Senator Fonseca, present.
- 0:52:19 Senator Donna A. Fred Gregory. Senator Fred Gregory, present. Senator Novel E. Francis, Jr. Senator Francis, Jr., present. Senator Javan E. James, Sr.? Present. Senator James, Sr., present. Senator Karayong, present. Madam Chair, you have six members present, one absent. Thank you, Madam Clerk. we have a quorum and we can proceed are there any correspondence to be read into the record no madam chair all right could you please read today's agenda into the record the committee on budget appropriation and finance has scheduled a meeting for wednesday september 6 2023 at 9 a.m. in the Earl B. Utley Legislative Chambers on St. Thomas to receive testimony on the proposed fiscal year 2024 executive budget for the Government of the Virgin Islands of the United States. Agenda Black 1, Appropriation Transfers. Appropriation transfer number 001-2023, V.I. Department of Planning and Natural Resources. Appropriation transfer number 003-2023, V.I. Department of Human Services. Appropriation transfer number 004-2023, V.I. Department of Health. Appropriation transfer number 005-2023, VI Office of Management and Budget. Appropriation transfer number 007-203, VI Department of Public Works. Appropriation transfer number 008-203, VI Department of Labor. Appropriation transfer number 009-2023 VI Department of Property and Procurement. Appropriation transfer number 010-2023 VI Department of Education. Appropriation transfer number zero one one dash two zero two three vi department of justice invited testifiers miss jennifer o'neill director vi office of management and budget mr john pair or real
- 0:55:05 commissioner the vi department of planning and natural resources miss kimberly casier Gomez, Commissioner, VI Department of Human Services. Ms. Eusta Tita Incognition, Commissioner, VI Department of Health. Mr. Derek Gabriel, Commissioner, Department of Public Works. Mr. Gary Molloy, Commissioner, VI Department of Labor. Mrs. Lisa Alejandro, Commissioner Designee, VI Department of Property and procurement, Dr. Dionne Wells Hendrington, Commissioner, the VI Department of Education, and Ms. Ariel Smith Esquire, Attorney General, VI Department of Justice. Block II, Bill number 35-0067, an act approving the lease agreement between the government of the Virgin Islands, acting true as Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement and Inter-Island Group, LLC, doing business as VIP Quick Lube for improved parcel number 70, Submarine Base, number 6A, Southside Quarter, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, to be used as a new and used car dealership repair shop, importer of goods, retail shop, store, and for other related purposes.
- 0:56:34 Proposed by Senator Novel E. Francis, Jr. Bill No. 35-0104, an act approving the lease agreement between the government of the Virgin Islands, acting through the Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement, and Rangan, Inc., doing business at Sandcastle on the Beach to lease plot number one two eight dash b two brothers smithfield and heselberg west end quarter and plot number one two nine two brothers smithfield and heselberg west end quarter st croix virgin islands proposed by senator novell e francis jr invited testifiers mrs lisa alejandro commissioner designee vi department of property and procurement mr pablo aids padro owner inter island auto group mr chris richardson stockholder rocan inc this concludes the reading of today's agenda madam chair thank you uh madam clerk and good morning to everyone good morning to the listening and viewing audience good morning to the testifiers of the gvi and good morning to everyone within the sound of my voice good morning as was shared with by the clerk today's agenda we will receive testimony and the approvals appropriation transfers for fiscal year 2024 executive fiscal year 2023 executive budget for the government of the virgin islands And we have two leases before us today, and we will hear those leases in the afternoon.
- 0:58:22 I'm going to ask the OMB director, I suspect Director O'Neill, and that we receive a number of testimonies, but I shared with you that we prefer to hear one uniform testimony. So you have the uniform testimony, correct? Yes, Senator. Okay. So I'm going to ask you to put your name and title on the record, and then I'm going to ask your other colleagues and staff to follow suit. You may proceed. Good morning Jennifer O'Neill Director Office of Management and Budget. Good morning Kimika Woods Associate Director of Budget Operations Office of Management and Budget. Good morning Maurice Wells Director of Business Administration Department of Labor. Good morning Kimo Smith Deputy Commissioner of Fiscal and Admin Services Department of Education. Good morning, Danelle Baptiste Assistant Commissioner Department of Human Services. Good morning, Jean-Pierre Oriel Commissioner Department of Planning and Natural Resources. Good morning to all Ariel M. Smith. Recognize the mics please. Good morning Ariel M. Smith Attorney General, Virgin Islands Department of Justice. Good morning. Lisa Alejandro, Commissioner-Designee, the Department of Property and Procurement. Good morning.

- 0:59:48 Nicole Craigwell-Simms, Assistant Commissioner, Department of Health. Good morning. Ruben Jennings, Deputy, I mean Assistant Commissioner, Department of Public Works. Thank you. Do you have anyone on teams? No, Senator. Okay. Senator, this is Commission Encarnacion. I am on, I'm also on Zoom. Good morning, everyone. Is there anyone else on Teams with us this morning? All right. Okay.
- 1:00:27 Director O'Neill, you may proceed with the testimony. Thank you, Senator. I will have Ms. Woods read the testimony this morning. Good morning Chairperson Donna Fred Gregory, members of the Committee on Budget, Appropriations and Finance, other Senators of the 35th Legislature of the U.S. Virgin Islands, and members of the listening and viewing audience. I am Kimika Woods, Associate Director of Budget Operations for the Office of Management and Budget. I appear before you with Jennifer O'Neill, Director of the Office of Management and Budget pursuant to your invitation to provide testimony on various appropriation transfer requests. The needs for the various appropriation transfers as follows. The Department of Planning and Natural Resources requests an appropriation transfer in the amount of \$560,000 from the personnel and fringe budget categories to the supplies and capital outlay budget categories. This request will help the Department address shortfalls in the procurement of vital operating supplies. This request will also assist the Department with the renovation of the Gustave Quetel Fish Market, also known as the French Town Fish Market, in the District of St. Thomas. Address much-needed repairs to the Mars Hills offices and will also assist the Department with the purchase of two vehicles to augment its aged fleet. The Department of Human Services requests an appropriation transfer from the personnel and fringe budget categories to the other services and charges budget category in a total of \$4,905,000 to address various areas of concerns within the department.
- 1:02:26 These areas of concern include but are not limited to deficits within the medical assistance claims and the supplemental nutrition assistance program contractual obligations. The appropriation transfer would also address the realignment of funds for the vocational rehabilitation program, local match, assist with the replacement of aged and failing air conditioning units within various locations, and with the build out and furnishing of a new location at Sunny Isle shopping center on St. Croix. The Department of Health requests an appropriation transfer from the personnel and fringe budget categories to the other services and charges budget category in the amount of eight hundred thousand dollars to meet the maintenance of effort for the maternal and children health program the request will help assist the department with addressing the cost for the facilities that cater to their off-island behavioral health patients and assist with covering the increased costs for leasing due to the need to relocate the St. Croix offices from the Charles Harwood complex. The Office of Management and Budget requests an appropriation transfer from the Other Services and Charges budget category to the Supplies and Utilities category in the amount of \$672,000. This request will cover the final cost for outfitting all of the agency's office locations. The initial plans for the annex at the Department of Finance in St. Thomas and a new office in the District of St. Croix included building separate office spaces for the staff. However, to ensure that the office remains efficient and effective, a change was made to utilize cubicles to ensure that adequate space is available to accommodate the growing staff. The main office has been modernized, however the air conditioning units are failing
- 1:04:35 and must be replaced also as there are now more as there are now more locations the utility cost has also increased as a result there is now a need to repurpose the funds as is as it's imperative that the requisite accommodations can accommodations be made to ensure that all expenses are covered. The Department of Public Works requests an appropriation transfer from the personnel and fringe budget categories to the other services and charges and the capital outlay budget categories in the amount of \$900,000. This request will assist the department with its efforts to update upgrade the damaged chain link fence with a masonry wall and signage at Western Cemetery number three to address repairs to concrete pavements and vaults in disrepair and the removal of tree stumps and dead trees throughout the entire Western Cemetery an ADA compliant ramp and aluminum gates at Western Cemetery number one and three will also be added the reprogrammed Some funds will also assist the department with the procurement of specialized equipment that is vital and unique to the department and aid the department with its beautification projects currently underway in both districts. The Department of Labor requests an appropriation transfer from the personnel and fringe budget category to the capital outlay budget category in the amount of \$461,113. This transfer will assist the department with the build out of the office in the St. Thomas district. Further, we request that the sum of \$1,076,635.71 be transferred to the Other Services and Charges, M21E1, Outstanding Workers' Compensation, to assist the Department in reducing the outstanding obligation to medical providers for workers' compensations claimed. The Department of Property and Procurement requests an appropriation transfer from the Supplies Budget Category
- 1:07:01 to the capital outlay budget category in the amount of \$300,000. In an effort for the department to remain ready to support the territory during emergency response efforts for all disasters, DPP must acquire three generators, one for the Division of Transportation, one for the St. Thomas main building, and one for the modular units located in the St. Croix district. these funds are necessary to procure these generators the department the Virgin Islands Department of Education requests an appropriation transfer from the personnel and fringe budget category to the other services and charges budget

category in the amount of \$1,666,000. This request will allow the department to pay outstanding and prior year obligations to vendors. The Department of Justice requests an appropriation transfer in amount of 394,858 dollars from the personnel budget category to the other services and charges budget category. This request will help the department cover other operational costs including the cost for transporting bodies throughout the territory in the absence of adequate staffing for medical examiners. OMB has reviewed and analyzed all appropriation transfer requests to ensure the availability of funds within the departments and agencies appropriated budgets. Because of this, our projections as of August 15 indicate that these requests are valid and can be accommodated within each agency's appropriation. To allow for processing and pull full payment to vendors, we ask that these appropriation transfers be made available until December 31st, 2023. We would like to thank, we would like to commend these departments for

1:09:11 identifying savings within the appropriated budgets, their willingness to address other areas of concerns with said savings, and most importantly, for their attempts to address outstanding obligation to vendors. We will continue to work closely with all department and agencies. Madam Chair, this concludes my testimony. We will remain available to answer any questions that the members of this body may have. Thank you, Ms. Woods, for your testimony. And we, I neglected to ask the individuals on St. Croix to put their names and title on the record. So I'm going to ask them to do that now so we could know who's in the room with us in St. Croix. I'm not sure I'm gonna start because we are seeing their back so if we could get media to turn it around please. Okay so let's start with Mr. Molloy. Good morning Ruben Molloy Department of Health Assistant Commissioner. Good morning, my name is Tatia Monella Hewitt, Chief Financial Officer for the Department of Health. Good morning, Redan Steele, Deputy Commissioner of Public Health. Good morning, Joan Jabaptiste, Deputy Commissioner of Human Resources and Labor Relations, Virgin Islands Department of Health. Hello, good morning, McKeesh Taylor-Jones, Chief Legal Counsel, Department of Health. Thank you, Department of Health. Director O'Neill, we're only doing an appropriation transfer today, you know.

1:11:00 I'm aware, Senator. We're a whole passy. All right, colleagues, we're going to go to a four-minute round regarding the appropriation transfer we do know that the OMB director brought some new updated numbers yesterday. I think the pool senator took my paper. He took my paper I need it please. So the 2023 projections are now looking like 954.2 million based on yesterday's projections and I took some time out to look at it last night and I see that it's exactly 26 million dollars difference which is the amount of the supplemental care so we go what we're doing now we are gonna compare our preliminary our appropriation numbers meaning are the numbers that we used to bill our 2023 budget to come and compare it with the income taxes the other taxes the other revenues the transfers in the transfers out and the revenues from anticipated projects and the other financing sources to determine whether or not we are able to accommodate what's in front of us today okay so i just want to make sure that i'm clear on that and the legislature in FY23 we appropriated an additional, so we did well, we appropriated additional 1.985 million dollars which was very conservative based on what usually would happen in institutions. So I want to definitely congratulate my colleagues for recognizing that we really have to manage these dollars so the overall amount is would take it to 927 million plus another 24.9

1:13:22 so we shall see based on what is in front of us we should be able to afford this but we have to chew up the revenues like I said all right so colleagues we We're going to go to a three, four-minute round, and we're going to start with Senator Noveli Francis Jr. Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Good morning to you. Good morning to the testifiers, and good morning to the people of the Virgin Islands, and thank you for your testimony, Ms. Woods, on behalf of the various agencies that's before us today in respect to the appropriations transfer. Just a couple of quick questions. DHS, in regards to your relocation, a new location at the Sunny Isles Shopping Center, where exactly is this? Is this the Caribou Home Center or the Sunny Isles Shopping Center?

1:14:19 Zanelle Baptiste, Assistant Commissioner, Department of Human Services. This is a new or a renovated building That's directly across from the WAPA area. So it's right on the main road, right next to Centeno's Restaurant. That's across the street. You're talking about the... Yes, the old dial to rent to own location.

1:14:47 Okay, the old dial to rent. Yeah. Okay, very well, very well. And DOE, in respect to your vendor's payment, \$1.6 million, will that make all of the vendors whole? Good morning, sir. Good morning, sir. Please recognize the mic, number one mic. Good morning, Kemal Smith, Department of Education. Yes, Senator, that will take care of all outstanding obligations to vendors. Very well. Thank you. department of labor in respect to your one million seven seventy six thousand and that's going towards the outstanding workers compensation is that make them whole is there any Delta any missing amount in respect to this transfer good morning director of business administration that would not make them whole this is just to pay down on the outstanding amount where also is there a a balance or it's, um, I guess a cumulative over a period of time.

1:15:53 So the total outstanding is 3.2 million. So there'll be a remaining roughly \$2 million. How do you intend to address that? Um, with this code, with this line item, um, each fiscal, we'll determine what available funds we have to pay down on the

outstanding amount, but this will clear our private providers. very well thank you uh department of property and procurement um the generator purchase does this include installation maintenance fuel thing yes uh yes senator it does uh it's all inclusive in the courts and this is for the hurricane season or what this is this is for general operations general operations okay one minute and there was no funding earmark for this before or this just became aware you just became aware that the need for generators so in the previous budget uh no senator there was no appropriation made for requests made for capital projects very well and the department of justice just real quickly in regards to your transporting of bodies between the territory now that we have the jfl north um open is there still a need for you to transport 30 seconds have there been any discussion with jfl north and being able to support and assist doj in those autopsies yes we have had uh discussions to please recognize the mic oh ariel smith attorney general we have had preliminary discussions with jfl north we are working on a memorandum of understanding with regard to having the autopsies for saint incroy deceased persons to occur at that morgue and we're in they have to since it's a temporary new facility time want to make sure everything is in order

1:17:45 before we can actually start having autopsies there well thank you for your responses my time have been called thank you madam chair for the time and Thank you, Senator Francis. So, Madam OMB Director. So basically, the transfers are all coming from personal fringe? Yes, Senator, actually it is from personnel and fringe.

1:18:31 And well, the division of personnel is in here, but of course, you know, we continue to be concerned with the fact that annually we move the appropriations for the respective departments and agencies with this significant amount of funding in the personnel category and those positions are not filled. Yeah, there are actually two, Senator, two of them that are not from personnel and fringe. Which ones are those?

1:19:10 Those OMB and Property and Procurement are, yes, are not from personnel. So OMB, where's your, what category, because you know we're looking at these object codes and we asked for the object code numbers, I just got them. So tell me, OMB, where's your transfers coming from, particularly? It will be coming from... Capital? No, it will be coming from other services and charges and going to supplies and utilities. And why is it, and how much is coming from other services and charges?

1:19:44 A total of \$672,000. 672. And why do you have 672,000 available in other services and charges? I think it was coded incorrectly. When we submitted it, it should have been under where we could pay for capital projects. This is what the cubicles are. Instead it was placed where it shouldn't have been. So it's just a reclassing. I think it was our era initially when we submitted the budget. We knew what we were doing. We just didn't put it in a right place. So you did not have capital outlay funding for FY23 in your budget?

1:20:22 It wasn't enough, but because we put it under the other category, what was the other supplies? The other services. Other services and charges. Other services. So it wasn't under capital, which is where it needs to be, because the cost of the cubicles makes it a capital purchase. And your total transfers is 672? 672. Yes, Senator. 2? Alright.

1:20:51 And then PMP? Yes. So, Senator, it was Lisa Alejandro. It was taken from our overall supplies, which was initially budgeted at 385,000, and it was moved from that account into our machinery, which is capital projects. in the amount of, for the \$300,000. That is a request. And why didn't you spend your \$385,000 in supplies? Presently we have, I think it's \$375,000 in expenditures and I believe we have \$119,000 in obligations in encumbrances. Yeah, but I'm trying to figure out when we, when the Department of Property and Procurement came before the legislature in the summer of 2022 they shared with us that they needed these funds for supplies and of course we obliged and the appropriation included these funds I'm trying to figure out what is it that you were to do with the supplies in FY23 that you didn't do the reason why I'm asking this question and the OMB director knows I'm asking this question because we find that as we well as we scrub the the the budget numbers that we're seeing well as we look at it 2024 there is a lot of fluff and we got to reduce them we have to so if it's if it's that you don't know because you were not there as the lead that's fine but I just want to make sure I put it on a record that when we see these types of transfers we have to pay attention to them okay all right yes Yes, Senator. Alright. Okay. So, and this is going to purchase... Three generators. Three generators.

1:22:42 Three generators. And these generators are for, you said, for where? For the main building in South Bay and for the motor pool and our St. Croix modular office. Alright. Very well. And then the rest is personnel. Correct, Senator. You know how we feel about that. Yes. Alright. Senator Blayden, you're recognised for your four minutes. thank you so much madam chair good morning to my colleagues you enlisting audiences staff central staff good morning to all of the testifiers thank you miss wood for the testimony and uh i look forward to uh us really getting it right let me speak to commissioner for dpnr your request it you guys are requesting 560 from the personal french budget category to supplies and capital outlays budget category um let me ask you because yesterday i spoke to the importance of your department when it comes to your staff and moving those permits etc to help um public work move many of those capital projects forward i know the the french down fish market is important they do need renovations on there and you say you have

vital operating supplies what are those supplies are we speaking to briefly jean-pierre orio dpnr senator what we're trying to do is um a few years ago we purchased a few years ago we redid our phone operating system we're trying to put the entire department on one intranet system and so this would allow us to now connect some of the satellite offices into that intranet system okay very well the five six to five hundred sixty thousand um in personal and fringe uh how many staff does that

1:24:28 represent it depends honestly but we've uh we have as of the august 4th the budget hearing we had 54 vacant positions but not all of those are general fund position your your the division in terms of permits are you fully staffed in that division uh no we have challenges in that division uh we do have vacancies we have a few federally funded vacancies as well um but the positions that we did post earlier in the year uh they went unfilled the two vehicles you're requesting which divisions are they it's actually it's actually a typo it's actually gonna be one initially our first draft we had we were going to move 80 000 to capital outlay for the vehicles we shrunk it down to 45. um so again we have uh our virgin islands council of the arts there's no vehicle in that district um you know we have a new uh division in territorial parks those types of things so it could go to either one of those okay and before i move on to public work so there would not be any negative impact despite um the transfer in terms of personal fringe when it comes to your your staff correct um not the existing no okay very well um let me go to the department of public work assistant commissioner jennings good morning good morning okay um you requested a nine hundred thousand dollar um transfer from personal and fringe to other services and charge and capital outlay. Of course, we've been speaking about the fence at the Western Cemetery and you're going to put up a wall, which is very good. We've been speaking about that for some time and also spoke to ADA compliance ramp. Western Cemetery 1 and 3 will be also added. And you

1:26:26 spoke to specialized equipment. What kind of specialized equipment are we speaking of for your department thank you senator ruben jennings assistant commissioner 30 seconds department of public works so the that equipment is specifically for the island of st croix it's a mac not a mac uh tractor head um equipment so the current uh equipment that they have on st croix is a 2007 tractor head and what type of beautification projects that you have um on the in both districts can you speak to that yes so we recently completed this in on St Thomas if you exiting from the Airport Road on Moravian time we recently completed that landscaping project on St. Croix we're working on with a vendor to landscape the area exiting on the East Airport Road so those four those four quadrants we plan to beautify we're waiting on irrigation to continue that project.

1:27:27 Appreciate that. Thank you so much for your responses, Madam Chair. Thank you for the time. Thank you, Senator Vilaiden. Senator Fonseca, you're recognized for your four minutes. Yes, thank you, Madam Chair, and a special welcome to all the distinguished testifiers before the body today. Sir Jennings, I wanted to start with you with Public Works. um first of all i have to say congratulations um arlem road in bovonía i pave um boy that's a big big thank you you know i know the senator from nada several of us were working hard congratulations so this nine hundred thousand dollars now um that you want to do is is any of the equipment um you know them thing that you to clean the sidewalk how how you guys had one of them is that working thank you thank you for the question senator we do have a suite we actually have four street sweepers two on st croix two on the symptom of st john district okay good and the current well as soon as you get a chance take one of them street sweepers out to bovoní because you know the kids them walk walk from border all down the dump the the whole sidewalk remember funny just full of dot a pile of dot and thank you very much okay i want to go to human services uh with the four million nine hundred and five thousand um uh transfer okay there's one um There's one appropriation here, it's 00720101, it's 2.5 million appropriation, you're transferring 2.3 million. What specifically was that targeted for originally, that 2.5 million? I'm talking about the 4,905,000.

1:29:31 One second, Senator. okay well while you're doing that let me ask you um the vice president and i yesterday we toured um queen louise home for the elderly and um i gotta say thank you very much for human services the place was clean clean clean they had new bed for the elderly electric bed and thing that's great. But I noticed you had a brand new generator too, but Herbert Grigg and St. Croix need that same generator that you have in Queen Louise and it's \$85,000. Why can't you get that Herbert grig generator in here in the 4.5 for 4 million nine hundred and five thousand because herbert grig is elderly just like queen louise and they need that same generator so i recommend that you put in that herbert grig generator because a big amount four million nine hundred five put a 85 000 hello yes thank you thank you manager um okay yes so put in the 85 000 dollars man for that generator in hobart greg them is the same lle we got to treat our lle's um good um okay so i wanted to go quick to um the lease is right across from pueblo for for the for the auto um madam commissioner that's right across from pueblo right um the lease is for that place right across from pueblo downtown for the auto place right down from an inspection lane that's what that's that's

1:31:32 It is, Senator, but it's on the next block. Yeah, yeah, I just wanted to make sure. Okay, so MAP as medical assistance payment. I'm getting some complaints about some people that's on the program, right? And there's this one specific guy,

right? He is on the list to get a kidney transplant, right? And this is a productive citizen in our community. We got to do something to help this guy We cannot let him die He's on this list to get a kidney transplant Please help this guy I ain't going to call his name He's from St. Croix He's an advocate for the people And let's get him to get his kidney Thank you very much Madam Chair for the time Thank you Senator Fonseca Medical assistance I need clarification on Since the Senator brought it up, I need clarification on the reason why we have outstanding contractual obligations on, this is human services, on the, I think it's medical assistance on the SNAP. I think that's what I saw.

1:32:51 So, share with us what we didn't do as to why we have outstanding obligations there. Thank you for the question, Senator. So, we have some gaps in our contractual obligations, not because we didn't budget correctly for those, but because those contracts were renegotiated throughout the year and we experienced some cost increases that were not budgeted for so just tell us tell us what that means what does that mean we have contractual obligations for SNAP you have contractual obligations for MEP what does that mean what is that contract what services are they providing to the Department of Human Services for those programs so we have four vendors that we are seeking to pay one is for Gainwell for a Medicaid program they are the ones who process our claims they charge us on a per claim basis so for one that is a case where we've had more claims this year than we've had in prior years and we've also seen a per claim increase in their rate we have our PSI vendor who process our snap benefits we also saw increase in their rates this year when we renegotiated their contract we have CSG they support both SNAP and Medicaid and again that contract was executed within the fiscal year so we saw an increase in that contract amount and finally we have the DSNAP program so this is the disaster food stamps and so

1:34:39 we had some issues in terms of compliance there were some issues that we had to bring our system up to par as you let it to the federal government okay and those funds all come from the general fund or those are usually paid with federal dollars and we just need the general fund this year to fill the gap I'm asking the question because you spoke about contractual increases and are actually working on our 24 budget so I need to understand if we're going to experience the same situation next year. So this is the match portion. We do anticipate that we could see some of these increases in FY24 particularly when it comes to like Gainwell when it comes to the claims because it is a hard thing for us to estimate. Okay so what we're going to need to get from you and this is going to this is actually tied to the 24 budget so we can make sure that we're doing due diligence because of this contractual conversation and this is your match we need to get from you a update on all of your other services and charges category for human services as far as your obligations your your right your commitments okay okay all right thank you um senator carry on you're recognized for your four minutes thank you madam chair good morning uh director of omb can you please tell us what's the total amount that is before us uh today for appropriation transfer uh thank you for the question senator um we will get that number for you shortly okay and uh department planning and natural resources um you mentioned some shortfalls well the testimony was mentioned some shortfalls for procurement of vital operating supplies.

1:36:34 Why and what are your shortfalls? What happened? So, Senator Jean-Pierre Oriel, Commissioner at DPNR. So, last year, actually, during budget markup, DPNR actually experienced a reduction in our supply category by \$46,500. So, we made up as much as we could during the year through other means. however um again we're we're trying to do this one project with our phone system and we're just looking understood what repairs are you making to the marshal office um so senator we're looking to you know repair dents in the wall replace uh sort of stained ceiling tiles um fresh coat of paint i mean the the office staff in saint croix moved into that building in 2000 and there's never really been any kind of uh capital improvement on there very well you budget that uh for this fy 24 you to make sure you have maintenance for those type of situations for the amount that we are are looking for here right now this will take care of most of it very well uh department of human services uh the appropriation transfer will also address the realignment of funds for the vocational rehabilitation program local match can you please expound on that sure so we are reappropriating 54,000 just about for the vocational rehab local match because they had some vacancy savings they were not meet their match this year so we have to put it into a different category so that they are able to meet there much understood understood um department of public work i think you mentioned i was curious

1:38:25 to see what specialized equipment uh you'll be reprogramming to use these funds for yeah mic check yes so it's a tractor head it's almost like a semi tractor head that we use to transport our buckles and heavy equipment so the one that we currently have is a 2007 which we have been expending a lot to maintain this will be in which district the St. Croix district very well and um the virgin's department of education uh you're requesting the transfer to be able to pay outstanding one minute uh prior year obligations to vendors uh would this satisfy all your vendors outstanding obligations good morning chemo smith department of education yes Yes, Senator. This would take care of all outstanding obligations to vendors.

- 1:39:17 Okay, so once you do this, then you would fall into what cycle? Every 60 days, outstanding vendors? What's your current process? The current process is to pay vendors within 30 days. Within 30 days. 30 seconds. This would put you then... Correct, Senator. Very well. OMB director? You still adding numbers or are you? What's the number? Very well.
- 1:39:55 So you mentioned OMB director, I guess, in your transfers, you are requesting for utilities. If you could just share a little bit about that while you finish up. It's utilities and being able to pay for the cubicles that we have. So utilities, because we've added our St. Croix location as well as the secondary location on St. Thomas, which is down at the Department of Finance, our utility expenses have gone up because we added new locations. So we just needed to move a little bit more to utilities to make sure we were covered. You have the number? Good. Thank you, Madam Chair.
- 1:40:36 The overall total of the appropriation transfers before us is \$11,729,757.71. Wow. No, that's it, Madam Chair. Thank you. Thank you, Senator Carrion. Department of Education.
- 1:41:04 Hi, Kimo. Hey, Kimo. Hey, good morning. How are you today? Good. Good. So, of course, we are concerned that the Department of Education, year-on-year, comes before this committee and asks for appropriation transfers for outstanding obligations. I think last year or the year before last, one was like \$3 million. I need to understand exactly what's the challenge with education processing their their requisitions to avert avoid eliminate these outstanding obligations and how old are these outstanding obligations and for what divisions because I have a feeling I know what divisions they're for and for What divisions are they for?
- 1:42:03 Good morning, Kimo Smith, Department of Education. So Senator, yes, we, the outstanding obligations go back to 2012, and in some cases, and while we have been before the Senate to request funding to pay for these outstanding obligations, we have not had the funding to be able to do so. So once we are able to pay the vendors, I am sure that we will be able to process payments timely so we're not in this position again. Now there are a lot of vendors that are owed. Like I said, they go back to 2012 and they're for various activity centers.
- 1:42:53 Okay, so this is what we're going to have to do with this particular one, Director O'Neill. We're going to have to, we know that the Department of Education deals with their own procurement, but for these transfers, we're going to have to put something in this whole discussion, legislation, whatever it is, to have property and procurement review them. You know why?
- 1:43:21 Because there are a lot of vendors that claim they do work for the Department of Education. They come years after and say they did work and they were not authorised to do the work. And there's no true evidence that the work was done. This is the GVI's money. We have to manage this money better. We can't have outstanding obligations from 2012 and I'm gonna tell you why. Because when I came here as a senator in 2019, y'all bring five million. When I came, when I went in 2022 or 2021, there was 3 million. How we still have outstanding obligations?
- 1:44:00 The outstanding obligations are tied to, do you have outstanding obligations tied to maintenance? Yes, Senator. Is the oldest one tied to maintenance? Yes, Senator. Yes. I know. We ain't trying to participate in a bubble in here, you know. I'm telling you, we know what's going on. So those are going to have to go through the Department of Property and Procurement. The vendors are going to have to show and prove that they provided those services. Are they also related to the Child Nutrition Program?
- 1:44:32 Yes, Senator. Same thing. What else? I know I'm trying to clean up the books, but we can't just be saying yes to people because they claim they did work for us. Primarily maintenance and child nutrition. Yes. Colleagues, this one, I'm going to have a little hard time with me on this one. We want to do the right thing for education, but these outstanding obligations, they have to show and prove on these one, on these. Senator Francis Jr., you recognize your point of information. Senator Francis Jr.: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I think equally as part of this discussion though, we have to bear in mind that a lot times we call on contractors to perform the work on an emergency basis and these individuals perform the work and never compensated or they continue to drag them along because this wasn't in place that wasn't in place you know I think it's important that at least there we continue to request and demand that there's some accountability for whatever work may have been performed that I agree with you that you know going back to 2012 and all these years but I'm also mindful where individuals are called in and these are our local contractors calling to fill in the gap make things happen on a moment's notice broken pipe or or you know all kind of emergency need however they never compensated year in year out so we have to have a balanced discussion in respect to this thank you very much thank you Senator Francis precisely why I said that the transactions approval need to go through the Department of Property and procurement for these appropriations, for these particular requests for payment, because something is, I mean, Mr. Smith?
- 1:46:20 Yeah, just to what DeSantis just said, I totally wanted to agree. You know, we do have situations in many cases where there are emergencies and, you know, we have a school that needs to remain open and so we have to call people to come

out to fix things. We do have, you know, we have vetted this in-house, and so it'll be no problem to be able to provide support if that is what's necessary. Very well.

1:46:47 And could you, is there any way you could provide a listing to this committee before this meeting is over with all of those outstanding obligations? I don't believe that we receive, did we receive that information? I believe it was sent. Okay, so I'll get it from my staff. Okay, will do. Senator, there's a separate item on the request. While it is an outstanding obligation, it's not on our outstanding obligation list, and it's a vendor that's owed for some work that was provided, and so I just want to make sure we have it separate and apart. Was that discussed with the OMB director?

1:47:28 It's not in there. Yes, yes, yes, it was. He's saying it's not on the list that he did. So we didn't say separate and apart? It's not on the transfer request? No, no. It's on the request. Okay. So what is it? So clarification. Please? So, Senator, it's included or should be included in the appropriation transfer request. What I think Mr. Smith is saying is that he sent a list of outstanding obligations that did not include that payment for AECOM that is owed. The ACAM payment is for the, what is it for, the kitchen supplies or something? Correct, kitchen equipment.

1:48:09 So how much money that is? That is \$943,830.06. And the federal government has refused to pay that? That is correct, Senator. Why? Well, we actually had encumbered the full amount of the task order, and the balance which was on the purchase order was cancelled and so we did not have their funding available to be able to make that final payment to AECOM. So repeat that for me. So we we we had a purchase order for the full amount of the task order. We did receive some of the items we made payments for those items. However, the remaining balance that was tied to the kitchen equipment, the purchase order was closed. Okay. Okay. And so we don't have the funding. We didn't have the funding.

1:49:07 So the purchase order was closed and the funding is no longer available? Correct. On that house order? That is correct. And where's the kitchen equipment now? In St. Croix, in the schools. So they're installed? Some of it is installed. Some of it is still not installed. so who's responsible for installing them let me get that information okay so so do you know who installed those that were installed no I get we need to get our information I went when when was was those kitchen equipment ordered because I think it's been a long-standing conversation if I memory so yeah it's been several years I have mission in Calwood with me and I miss color yeah Yeah, let me bring in Ms. Colby.

1:49:53 Sure. Should be able to answer those questions. Those are the arms? Ms. Fleming, take out the nameplate. Thank you. Okay. Morning. Put your name and title on the record.

1:50:34 Good morning, Senator. My name is Shaneel Callwood, architect for Department of Education. Good morning, everyone. Morning. So regarding the AECOM task order 13, it was, with that task order, AECOM, was requested to provide uh classroom furniture and kitchen equipment and golf carts they prove they have provided all the items they were paid uh from that purchase order that mr smith talked about for all of the golf carts that we received all of the furniture that we received and a portion of the kitchen equipment. The purchase order was closed before we were able to make the final payment and that final payment is included in this budget transfer request.

1:51:28 So when you say it was closed, it was closed due to unavailability of funds or it was closed in error? It was closed by the Department of Finance so I do not know why it was closed. We did ask for it to be reopened but it was not. Okay, and the items that were installed, who's responsible for installing them? The staff installed what they could, and we have contracts, three contracts in place to do the other installations. And how long have we received these equipment?

1:52:00 We received the equipment in 2021. And we have not installed them to date? Correct. We just started a new school year? Many of the kitchens did not have the electrical and gas lines to support the installations, So, that is what the contractors are currently working on. All right. Thank you, Senator. All right. Thank you. Senator James, Jerome James, you're recognized for your... Well, before I do that, let me please recognize the presence of Senator DeGraf. Please mark Senator DeGraf as present. Senator DeGraf is always here on time, so I didn't realize that he was absent this morning. Good morning, Senator DeGraf.

1:52:41 Senator James, you're recognized for your four minutes. Senator James James, Greetings to the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Thank you, Madam Chair, for the time, and I'm hoping and praying with the weather that we are about to experience that the Virgin Islands will be safe in our sister islands. I'm about to say is not to be construed as me not supporting these transfers but it's a reminder to every single one of us who serve the people of the Virgin Islands the importance of serving people. And I saw a pattern, Department of Human Services, they're going to utilize the transfer money, appropriation transfer to repair various damaged AC units and to build out and furnish a new location at Sonia's. Cool. Department of Labor to continue the build-outs in the St. Thomas District.

1:53:56 Cool. Department of Health reallocation of St. Croix offices. Cool. Then we have here OMB, utilizing the fund for utility costs for the new locations and to repair or replace the failing HVAC system. Cool, but when you hear what's happening with our schools and you hear what's happening at the Department of Human Services how we treat our elderly people I

understand you have to take care of yourself to take care of others but I'm really hoping I'm praying that we place a strong focus on our students and our elderly's it hurts my heart when I go on the radio and I hear that the school year just start and people complain about AC but guess what every single one of us with these transfers, based on what I'm seeing, retrofitting the buildings, getting our new ACs, and nobody's not saying to not get the ACs. But while we are in these AC rooms, let us not get too cold and comfortable, and according to the governor, and in touch with the needs of the people of the Virgin Islands. Let us solve. Our people are crying. So once again it's not to be construed as me not supporting these appropriation transfer. We understand that there is a need but it's

1:55:47 a need for us to solve our people. So to my question, Department of Human Services if anyone can speak to this. We're saying that we need to repair various damaged AC units. Is that for like Herbert Grigg and other areas or is it specifically for the main area in which the staff is located? Anyone? good morning senator the AC units are for various places in our buildings but it's mostly for the staff and as far as a new location as that's sunny as how soon will you be in that building we're whole time we're hoping to be in that building before the end of this calendar year. And just for the public the new building that we speak of is that the one right there where the old car wash used to be? Where is it? The location of the new building is the old dial rent to own location. Okay so I don't want to abuse my time. My time was called. I must submit that is a good location. It's strategic. Our individuals are very aware of where Sunny Isles is and I'm hoping and praying with this new location that we'll be able to help our people. Of course there were many other questions but I just want to remind everyone as we sit in our offices and our ACs to not get comfortable and let us lead and solve our people of these

1:57:42 beautiful US Virgin Islands thank you madam chair for the time thank you senator so mr. Smith I got an opportunity to see the the you know what I'm gonna go to the next senator and then I'll come back because I need to look at St. Croix Senator DeGraff you're recognized for your Thank you, Madam Chair. Good morning, colleagues. Good morning, testifiers of viewing and listening and present. I do apologize for being late today. Basically, I had questions regarding Department of Education and the length of time for the vendors, but it was basically explained. Now, I think it's Department of Labor, where they spoke of... Your ask is for what you're gonna tell us that again more resource department of labor so we asking for one million seventy six six thirty five point seven one to be used to hit on an outstanding debt to the workers compensation providers and then we ask him for an additional four hundred sixty one thousand to assist with the billed out in the St. Thomas district. And you say you had a still a \$2 million deficit as owed? Yeah, because the total outstanding for the workers can provide us is 3.2 million.

1:59:16 So with those that you go pay down on, how do you determine who get paid and who gets held? Well, it was through discussions between the various divisions, we determined that the private providers would be paid in full, and then the balance would be paid between the hospitals. Boy, I guess that's either a turn you back and throw a pebble in the ocean and wherever it lands.

1:59:59 So, OMB Director, in these appropriations, do they have where they could accomplish that total amount, or is it not? No, Senator, thank you for the question, Jennifer O'Neill, OMB Director, no, based on what we've seen, they do not have enough remaining within their budget or their appropriation to be able to pay the full 3.2. It is our intent, I will say, that as we revise some of the things we've done from yesterday and send the schedules back to the finance chair to include, to find a way to include the 2 million that is still outstanding just because we all know the problems that the hospitals have, and all the providers are complaining, every single provider. So we would like to try to address all of the providers as quickly as possible.

2:01:02 So we will work to include that in the revised schedules that we're sending to the body. Oh, okay. I'm very happy to hear that. One minute. Again, you know, I don't think nobody should be owed and keep amounted. Madam A.G., what was your ask again? Senator, our ask is for \$300,000, I can't remember, it's \$385,894, something like that, but less than \$400,000, sir.

2:01:39 30 seconds. And it was to cover? And that is basically to cover the cost that we have outstanding to our on-call medical examiners uh the cost for the transporting of the bodies from st thomas to st croix that's outstanding we've we're working on an mou with jfl north so that the cost will not be part of fiscal 2024 and finally we have because of our increase in rents at the gers building we've been paying partial rents and we need to bring all of our rental obligations time up to date okay and And finally, Madam Chair, in regards to the bodies being transferred back and forth, the total that you're asking for would cover all payments?

2:02:25 It would bring everything to zero balance? That is correct. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Senator DeGraff. Attorney General. Yes, sir. Yes, ma'am. The, I forgot, yeah, I was going to ask you about, so you say you have increase in rents. I'm sorry? The increase in the rent, oh, I know what it is, so the increase in the rents, did you include that in your FY24 budget?

- 2:03:00 Yes, it was not in our 23, but it is in our 24. So that's accommodated in 24, so if we were to process this appropriation transfer, this amount covers any outstanding amount you owe to GRS? Through the end of fiscal year 23, yes. Right, because GRS did come before the institution and said that you owe the money. Yes. All right. And then as it relates to the transporting of the bodies, did you say that you're working with JFL to... We've had.
- 2:03:32 To alleviate or eliminate you having to do that in 24? We've had initial conversations. We expect a memorandum of understanding within the coming weeks, which will eliminate the transfer cost moving forward. Okay, so you do not anticipate seeing a transfer cost in FY24? Unless there's some issue with JFL North. Is there a cost, though? Not for the transporting of the bodies. there'll still be a cost for the autopsies but not the transfer of the bodies because they'll be done on St. Croix that's right and you are responsible for paying for the autopsies that is correct and do you have that budgeted in FY24 we have it under well the problem is we used to have a full-time medical examiner who's now moved to our other expenses as a contractor which is what created some of the problems that we're experiencing now okay so let me ask you so now that you no longer have an ME that is correct so it means that you're going to have to use the service of the hospital no we're going to have to have an independent contract okay or the ME until we hire one full time or probably do a purchase order for them to be contract employees so you have moved the other services you have moved that personal to other services to accommodate those expenses and that's accommodated in your budget in FY 24 um yes I believe so please check I will okay all right a check and let us know all right so back to the the Department of Education. So we know that the
- 2:05:26 transactions for let's use St. Croix as an example as one. Let's me start with St. Croix. So apparently there is you pay to pick up the trash in St. Croix. Correct Senator. And is there reason why the department don't have a relationship, a purchase order, an obligation, whatever you want to call it, with these trucking companies? Because the majority of the stuff that I'm seeing here is tied to trucking companies not being paid for picking up trash on the island district of St. Croix.
- 2:06:02 That's correct, Senator. Speak into the mic. Yeah. Kimmel Smith, Department of Education. So yeah, that is correct, Senator. And what happened is we realized last year the vendors had to start charging for tipping fees, I believe. And so those were not a part of what we had budgeted. So in most cases, we're paying the invoices, but there's a difference there that we owe the vendor.
- 2:06:29 So in FY 2023, you would have covered these expenses, not the expenses that you're asking for prior year, the current year. So next year you ain't going to come back and say we didn't pay these vendors for 23. That is correct, Sandra. All right. And then you have a, I think it's on St. Thomas, first choice, okay, okay. So that's the trucking.
- 2:07:11 Virtual instruction for Houghton Mifflin FY22, why didn't we utilize our federal dollars to pay for virtual instruction? That transaction actually was slated to be utilized with federal funds. federal funds expired and we were unable to get that payment in um using the federal funds so the federal money went back um i wouldn't yeah did how much money did you send back in FY22 we sent i don't have the exact figure what we sent back but we did send back federal funds in FY 2020. So that's a concern. Okay. And then I see a lot of stuff for the school lunch program. Similarly, so a federal program. And then St. Thomas, St. John.
- 2:08:17 VALAC Ventures, why are we not paying for the boat transportation? For VALAC Ventures, and I think I see one for, I guess this one is for school lunch transportation, but VALAC Ventures. Senator, I'm not sure why these were not paid, however, I would say that in some cases and we reach out to the vendors but we need our vendors to be able to submit the invoices and submit the invoices timely um what we find sometimes is that you know we get invoices after you know a vendor was all of a sudden sending a bunch of invoices to you for payment and if we can we can but if the year is already closed then it puts us in a position where we're not able to pay so are you saying that these don't have purchase orders didn't have purchase orders um in some cases some of them may have may have not had purchase orders all right um so do we have systems in place now to right correct those challenges yes um senator we gotta make this the last one man this is it's just been on very ongoing every time you look around is the same thing and it continues is every time every time the department comes they say this is the last set and then you'll bring more okay um so the k-pop okay so another k-pop you recognize for your four minutes Thank you Madam Chair good morning colleagues good morning testifiers good morning to the people of Virgin Islands who are listening and viewing I just have a few questions for Department of Human Services under your summary for reason for transfer I notice it says additional
- 2:10:23 funding for MAP contractual obligations I wanted to inquire as to one of those providers with that are you up to date with the payments for your local travel agencies that deal with the inter-island travel and mainland travel for the Medicaid recipients thank you for the question senator that is not one of the vendors that we are seeking funding for we are mostly up-to-date with our travel agent of course we have travel every day but we are reconciling those accounts and making sure that those are taken care of okay so are these providers the medical providers that you have additional that you're

requesting additional funding for?

- 2:11:15 The four vendors are professional service providers, consultants. So it's four vendors. We have Gainwell who processes our Medicaid claims. We have CSG which provides project management services to both our SNAP and Medicaid divisions. We have PSI that processes our SNAP claims. we have Red Main which manages our D-SNAP system. Well thank you for saying that because I was just going to ask what about Red Main okay let's see thank you Department of Public Works under your summer summary funds needed for operations crusher yard heavy equipment I understand that you have shortage of side arm equipment is that to include heavy equipment under the heavy equipment? Gabriel? Commissioner Gabriel are you there? Ruben Jennings Assistant Commissioner Department of Public Works. No that's that's the purchase for the St. Croix District a tractor head to transport our heavy equipment. Okay so no plans for no side arm cutters? So we normally contract with contractors to provide our service for the territory. Okay thank you. Department of Labor I just wanted some clarification. In your summary you said reduce our outstanding obligations to our medical providers. Can you... One minute.
- 2:13:08 Department of Labor. I didn't hear the end of the question. Under your summary it says and reduce our outstanding obligation to our medical providers. Can Can you explain medical providers? Those are the providers, Maurice Wells, Department of Labor. 30 seconds. Those are the providers dealing with the workers' comp patients.
- 2:13:39 Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Senator Capehart. you for being here as a noncommittee member. Outstanding obligations to medical providers as per the question that the senator asked. Is that tied to, what fund does those monies go into? You're laughing?
- 2:14:08 I'm laughing because I was hoping it didn't come up. Normally they are paid for the government insurance fund in this instance obviously we proposing to pay utilizing our savings on the general fund director i know i gonna catch it no just tell me no i don't know why he he thought we it would be hidden but we you know we know we know what it is we've done this and we've had to do this before for the same reason we spoke of yesterday where the government insurance fund just doesn't have the funding to pay the providers and as i i stated to uh senator de graaf all of the providers are complaining they've owed for years and we gotta get them paid so we have to address the government insurance fund to your point from yesterday as we spoke of and we have to find ways to make sure they pay they're paid now so we'll use what we have um while we continue to address the issue within the gif okay so the issue within the gif is tied to the fact that do we have government agencies that did not have not paid has not paid their um workman's comp payment Over the years, over the years, you should have a system in place now, so there's no outstanding amounts. No, not to my knowledge. We have to pay an amount, right? Part of our associated fringe benefits, we get a bill.
- 2:15:40 So there was a time when the Department of Labor were not sending the bills, so the payments were not being made. So the question is, how are we going to fill that \$49 million gap? Because that's what it is. I remembered. How? that that's a great question that we have to look into so we work uh finance commissioner and uh department of labor commissioner i know there was a proposal to increase um rates um i know that needs to be sent as legislation they've been having conversations uh with the chief legal counsel at the office of the governor i'm not sure where we are in the process okay so so let me just understand this a little better um mr wales so do you have a running spreadsheet report aging report of individual departments companies businesses if you will that has outstanding amounts owed to the that fund the government insurance fund I don't but I'll get the appeal to get that information for you so you don't know I have to check with a director of Rockins compensation yeah director or name you know no senator I do not yeah we have in this conversation over and over and the the number is getting higher and you guys actually budgeted three million dollars against it for FY23. So Director Anil you know that that's another three million dollars we have to find because we're not using
- 2:17:25 this fund to budget operating costs. We can't do it because you you were very clear in your testimony yesterday and I agree with you wholeheartedly that we do a lot of available until expended and we have these funds that don't have funds and we're budgeting against them and it's creating the issue with the structural deficit and that's why we're having a conversation and we have two days of cash. So this is something we really need to look at.
- 2:17:59 Department of Health, the maintenance of effort for the Maternal and Child Health Program. How did we see a reduction in the maintenance of effort? Is it maintenance of effort tied to your annual budgets? Was your budget reduced? How do you throw up maintenance of effort for your Maternal and Child Health Program?
- 2:18:29 The budget was, was it, we just shifted some funds, but I'll have Tatia, our CFO, speak to the maintenance of effort. Hi, good morning everyone. So the maintenance of effort is part of our fund, which was, one second, one second, put your name on the record just for the sake of the reporter, please. Thanks. My name Tatia Monell-Hewitt, Chief Financial Officer.

- 2:18:59 Okay. So the maintenance of effort was in our general fund budget under, part of it was under salary and fringe. And we had a few vacancies under the MCH program, which is part of the maintenance of effort. Those positions are still pending to be filled. It's still going through the process. D.C. Jean Baptiste can elaborate more on that but in order to meet the maintenance of effort we had to we're asking for the funds to be shifted from salary and fringe to other services and and that fund will be used to help with their new leasing in St. Croix and also the build-out. So is that maintenance of effort or is that a matching requirement is a match is a match sorry because yeah so yeah maintenance of effort the responsibility of maintenance of effort for the GVI is to ensure that we do not reduce your budget significantly the matching requirement is something different so what's the ask the ask is for maintenance of effort or the ask is for the matching requirement because I don't think it's the matching requirement that was an error on the appropriation transfer document so y'all should tell us because you have to educate us right that's the only way we gonna know as well because yeah you know senators don't necessarily know what these terminologies mean so because when I saw it I was maintenance of effort okay so So you are trying to meet your match.
- 2:20:49 Correct, Senator. All right. And then, um, so labor, public works, health. You have a point of information, Senator Fonseca, you recognize? Yes. Thank you, um, Madam Chair. And I agree you got to educate us a little bit cause you know, I, I don't have a PhD, and I was looking at your book here is about 868 pages, and I got to question it, and I don't really have too much book with 800 and so, but the Bible have about 900, the King James Robert. I trust everything in that. But this one I got the question. So on page, with human services starting on page 696 to 765, right?
- 2:21:46 I want to get to that 2.5 million appropriation and \$1,949.97. So I look at your activity code on page 707, and it's 7200, 708, 72001. can't find the activity code here that you're saying is 72101 for the 2.5 million so help me where is it in this book here because I can't find that 2.5 million nor can I find the 1 million 9 so educate me there madam budget OMB jennifer o'neill um senator in the budget book the activity centers are there by a five digit code um assuming that you are referencing the appropriation transfer yes requests and that is actually the org code that we use for accounting purposes in the financial system is not here correct you will not see that's where that's why i trust the other book the bible card i got all good information okay thank you very much uh madam chair for the question thank you thank you uh senator fonseca and i think the last one i think we have public uh dpnr so dpnr uh you indicated that you are needing to transfer \$560,000 to the supplies and capital outlet, outlay budget categories. And I understand the capital outlay requests, but tell us about your supplies, your supplies needs, please. Yes, Senator. So really what we're trying to do is, is we have a few satellite offices
- 2:23:47 that we're trying to bring under our one intranet system that we signed up with with smartnet and so this would allow us to now purchase like the additional phones those types of things um and then also put in the um the the specific wide area network or or one system through um smartnet so it's really to we're we've been going systematically through our buildings trying to get us so that now you can dial 774-3320 because it's a the we have a contract in place for the service already but now in terms of now purchasing the phones additionally because we're expanding the network those are supply items small tools and minor equipment to elaborate computer equipment phones they are small tools and minor equipment and that falls under the supply category and what's the total of that category that you're asking the transfer for so that the supplies is just ten thousand. Ten thousand, okay. And the difference is five five fifty? Yes. And the five fifty is for the cattle fish market in Frenchtown and the the you need two vehicles? Those vehicles are for what division? It's gonna be one vehicle, Senator? I don't know. We initially we had requested more but that's a typo in there. So it'll be one electric vehicle they're around 45,000 okay and what what where is this
- 2:25:38 vehicle what island most likely St. Croix St. Croix okay and then the the much-needed repairs of the Mars Hill office yes that's how much right now we We have it, I'm sorry, about \$200,000 estimated at... Okay.
- 2:26:05 How about \$200,000 here? A little bit more. I think it's \$2,000, sorry. Okay. About \$215,000 is what I have. All right. And then Public Works. So you're asking for \$900,000, and that ask is to do some upgrading of the chain, the damage chain link fence at Western Cemetery No. 3? Yes, Senator. Thank you for the question.
- 2:26:38 One second. And the removal of tree stumps throughout the cemetery, correct? Yes. And you need an ADA compliant ramp. That's what you ask is? Yes. Okay, and then, so what are your categories? Because you're asking, okay, so everything is going into other services and charges and capital outlay. Yes.
- 2:27:09 So your beautification projects, did you say that, so you don't have sufficient funding to cover your beautification projects up to September, that's what you're saying? It's to continue the project. So on St. Croix we plan to, the intersection to Emancipation Drive, we also plan to continue in the project on St. Thomas, the Lucene Millen intersection as well as some signage. OK.

- 2:27:44 Did you all include the signage for the, what's the name of the place, Senator Blayden, that we've been battling with? The signage to, for content. I can't believe I can't remember, because we've at this yeah the the place where the facility that is derelict what it is a derelict government building michelle michelle motel is the signage yeah is the signage that we discussed over and over and over with regards to michelle motel is that included in this no yeah i ain't studying else. Are we paying attention? That signage needs to go up. People live in that area.
- 2:28:33 The place is filthy. And is there any, you know, one of the issues that we have at Michel Motel is we need some folks to go down in some hazmat suits to clean up that area. Is that included in this? Is that priority? No? No? Not in this funding, but we work with Department of Property and Procurement. Oh yeah, that's right. Don't forget. You know what? You're correct. You're correct. Commissioner. You're correct.
- 2:29:04 I hear giving everybody good friend Ruben trouble. Commissioner. The situation with property and procurement, I see your Deputy Commissioner in the back. We've been working with him very closely with regards to Michelle Motel. We know that we can't necessarily put the people out because we don't have any place to place them. We have human services here. I don't know if the wraparound services are being provided, but we talked about the signage. We talked about different things. Where are we with those things regarding Michel Motel? What's the collaboration between yourself, Public Works, licensing with the removal of those cars?
- 2:29:47 Yes, Senator, basically Deputy Commissioner Richards has been working very closely with the teams and collaborating on the clean-up efforts as well. I know the last we had some vehicles, those vehicles removed that were in that area, and I know it continues, but I know he can provide more information on that. Commissioner, I'm going to ask you to take a visit down there yourself, because you need to see that situation. It is really bad. We have a number of elderly people that live in the back. They call my office every day. I just send somebody down there once a week.
- 2:30:32 We got to deal with this thing. The building belongs to the GVI. We're talking about blighted buildings we got to go to we can't ignore it please all right I think we've exhausted public works Department of Labor Department of Health OMB DPNR human services education justice all right colleagues any burning question before we wrap up this appropriation transfer discussion none all right well Well, Director O'Neill, we're going to allow you a closing, a close and then we will take a recess. You may proceed.
- 2:31:33 Thank you very much, Senator Fred Gregory. Once again, you and the committee for your indulgence in reviewing the request for appropriation transfers. We know we will have continued conversations relative to funding and some other transfers that we will be making. So that letter will be coming shortly. But to the committee and the members of the 35th legislature here today, we want to thank you for your consideration and hope that you will go ahead and approve these transfers. And if you do, again, to please make them available only through December 31st, 2023. Thank you very much. Thank you, Director O'Neill, and I'm glad that you said that because I forgot, I neglected to ask the departments that's here before us today whether or not they are clear on the fact that your ask is through December 2023 because we got to get moving on this.
- 2:32:39 So these appropriation transfers are not going to be available until expended. The OMB director, I've been talking about it. My colleagues have been talking about it. We can't continue to do what we're doing because that's why we're seeing the shortage of cash. So some of these are capital projects that require work, so it means that if we say yes to these today, it means that you have to get to work. So the ones that are outstanding obligations is a little different. You could get those paid, but those that are tied to work you got.
- 2:33:17 So you have a what what obligation, what were you, how long, how, how quick you want a liquidated director? And I'm dead serious. So you have three months to obligate and how long to liquidate? Three months. And typically once they have a purchase order, they'll be still be able to use. But the key is we can't ask for an appropriation transfer and expect that it's going to be be available to you for an entire year. You got to get moving. And that's also going to help us when you pay your, your contractors, it'll help us to get the money back. I need the money back. So you need to move quicker and that's just where we are.
- 2:33:51 All right. Well, thank you. And, um, the committee stands in recess for 10 minutes. We'll be right back. Let's go. Let's go. Let's go. Let's go. Let's go. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. Let's go. Let's go. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. We'll be right back. Let's go. Thank you. We'll be right back. Thank you. We'll be right back. Thank you. I love you
- 2:48:08 Let's go. Let's go. Let's go. Let's go. Thank you. Yeah, yeah, yeah Thank you. We'll be right back. We'll be right back. the committee is back on the record madam clerk can you please read the

- 2:52:59 items in block number 2. Block 2, bill number 35-0067. An act approving and the lease agreement between the government of the Virgin Islands acting through its Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement and the Inter-Island Acting Auto Group LLC doing business at VIP Quick Loom for improve parcel number 70 submarine base number 6a south side quarter st thomas virgin islands to be used as a new and used car dealership repair shop importer of goods retail shops store and for the related purposes proposed by senator novel e francis jr bill number 35-0104 An act approving the lease agreement between the government of the Virgin Islands, acting through the Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement, and Roncan Inc. doing business as Sandcastle on the Beach to lease plot number 128-B, Two Brothers, Smithfield and Hizzleburg, West End Quarter, and plot number 129, Two Brothers, Smithfield and Hizzleburg, West End Quarter, St. Croix, Virgin Islands, proposed by Novel E. Francis Jr. Invited testifiers, Mrs. Lisa Alejandro, Commissioner-Designy, V.I. Department of Property and Procurement, Mr. Pablo H. Padro, owner, Inter Island Auto Group, Mr. Chris Richardson, Stockholder, Rokan Inc. This concludes the reading and the end of the agenda, Madam
- 2:54:54 chair thank you madam Clark so we have two leases before us this morning they're still in the morning and I'm gonna ask the sponsor to please speak to the two leases that's before us senator Novelli Francis jr. you're recognized thank you very much madam chair madam chair and colleagues The two measures before us today is a lease that was sent down from the governor's office through the Commissioner of Property and Procurement and I'm the sponsor at the request of the governor as per the rules of the legislature. The first measure, Bill number 35-0067, an act approving the lease agreement between the government of the Verizales acting to the Commissioner of Property and Procurement and Inter-Island Auto Group LLC doing business as VIP quick lube for a parcel number 70 submarine base St. Thomas and again in this measure this bill approved the lease between the government of the Virgin Islands and the inter island auto group llc and um the owner of of this uh mr pablo padro is here uh to present on this measure additionally bill number 35 that's zero zero zero zero one zero four um an act approving the lease agreement between the government of the versions acting through the commissioner of department of property and procurement and roncon inc doing business as Sun Castle on the Beach to lease plot number 128-B, Two Brothers, Smithfield, and Project Stead as well as plot number 129, Two Brothers, Smithfield, St. Croix, West End, Quarter St. Croix, Virgin Islands 2, and this approved a 20-year lease between the government of
- 2:57:00 version and rank on ink consistent of approximately 852 square feet and 630 square feet respectively of combined land on the island of st. Croix this has a provision which allow for three hundred three thousand six hundred dollar payable a monthly installment of three hundred hours for the tavern for a term of 20 years and it also provides for an additional renew option for an additional 10-year term for the purpose again of operating a tavern a restaurant hotel a guest house and a retail shop and for another related purpose and on the island of St. Croix we have the representative there that will be speaking to these measures and I asked for my colleagues approval on these two lease again to allow for economic development as well as to allow for government properties to be used and bring in additional funding to the government coffers. Thank you very much Madam Chair for the time and opportunity.
- 2:58:07 Thank you Senator Francis and this afternoon we have before us Mr. Vincent Richards of the Department of Property and Procurement Deputy Commissioner and Mr. Pablo Padro, owner of Inter Island, and Chris Richardson, owner of St. Croix Sandcastle on the Beach, and Rhea Abramson of Sandcastle on the Beach. So we're going to hear from these testifiers regarding these two bills that's before us. Colleagues, we're going to go to another four-minute round. Mr. Richards, I'm going to ask you to put your name and title on the record and the others will follow suit. You may proceed, Mr. Richards.
- 2:59:03 Mr. Good morning, Vincent Richards, Deputy Commissioner of the Property and Printing Division of the Department of Property and Procurement. Good morning. Ms. Thank you. Mr. Pedro? Yes. Good morning, Madam Chair. My name is Pablo Hector Padro, and I'm appearing to this committee as managing partner of Inter-Island Auto Group, LLC. Okay. And I see that we have our Mr. Richardson on St. Croix and Ms. Abramson. Please put your name and title on the record.
- 2:59:43 Could start with Mr. Richardson. Yes. Go ahead. I'm sorry. My name is Chris Richardson with Sandcastle on the Beach. I'm the president and owner, co-owner. Okay. Next person. Hi. I'm Rhea Abramson with Sandcastle on the Beach. I'm a consultant and real estate agent. Okay. Very well. All right. So we're going to start with the testimony of the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement. You may proceed. Mr. Richards. Good morning, Chair Donna, Fred Gregory, Vice Chair Novelli Francis Jr., Committee Members, Honourable Senators Marvin Blyden, Samuel Carrion, Duane DeGraff, Ray Fonseca and Jovan James Sr., Non-Committee Members, Staff, Testifiers, Visitors and Members of the Viewing and Listening audience. I am Vincent Richards, Deputy Commissioner of the Property and Printing Divisions of the Virgin Islands Department of Property and Procurement. I'm testifying today on behalf of Commissioner-designee Lisa M. Alejandro to offer testimony on the proposed lease agreements for

the St. Thomas and St. Croix District, which are before the Committee for Consideration.

- 3:01:08 Today, DPP requests this committee and ultimately the full Senate's approval of the lease agreements between the Government of the Virgin Islands and Inter-Island Auto Group, LLC, that does business as VI Quick Lube, and Ron Kahn, incorporating that does business as Sandcastles on the Beach. These agreements require legislative approval in accordance with 31 VI Code subsection 205. Their terms all commence on the first day of the month following the approval of the Governor and the Legislature of the Virgin Islands. The rent payable under the leases will, after their individual grace periods, be adjusted annually, including any renewal term in accordance with the Consumer Price Index, increases established by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- 3:02:10 These lease agreements all require a minimum of \$1 million of limits of general liability insurance coverage. As a premises owner, the Department of Property and Procurement will be required to execute all permits and licenses required for the premises. These three potential lessees or these two potential lessees have provided the required documentation to support the processing of their respective lease agreements with the government, including but not limited to their respective business license and certificate of good standing. The lease agreement between VIP, Quick Lube and the GVI is for improved parcel number 70, Submarine Base No. 6A South Side Quarter, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, consisting of approximately 21,462 square feet or .04927 U.S. acres of land, more or less, with a mixed material structure consisting of approximately 7,920 square feet. The property will be used to operate a vehicle dealership, repair shop, importer of goods, retail shop, store, and other related purposes. The term of the agreement is for 20 years, and the lease agreement provides for an optional renewal of two consecutive periods of 10 years each. The annual rent for the above referent parcel will be \$72,000.00 annually, payable in monthly installments of \$6,000.00 during the term of the lease.
- 3:04:11 The lease agreement between Sandcastle and the GVI is for a portion of the road plot number 124-B, two brothers, Smithfield and Hesselberg, West End Quarter, St. Croix, Virgin Islands, consisting of 200, I'm sorry, 582 square feet, 4.02 U.S. acres of land, and portion of road plot number 129 two brothers smithfield and hesselberg west end quarter st croix consisting of approximately 630 u.s square feet or point zero one four five u.s acres of land more or less for a total of fourteen hundred eighty two u.s square feet or point three three, four U.S. acres of improved land, more or less.
- 3:05:13 The property will be used to operate a tavern, restaurant, hotel, guest house, and retail shop, and for no other purposes. The term of this agreement is for 20 years, and the lease agreement provides an optional extension of four additional 10 years. The annual rent for the above-referent parcels will be \$3,600 annually payable in installments of \$3,000 monthly for the term of lease.
- 3:05:49 These lease agreements will allow the prospective tenants to either repurpose and or significantly rehabilitate. These proposed lease agreements will allow for the prospective tenants to repurpose and or significantly rehabilitate these properties in the respective districts of the US Virgin Islands. The properties will be returned to GVI at the end of the terms in an improved condition. DPP and the commissioner-designee Alejandro seeks tenants committed to establishing long-term tenancy and returning the properties in improved conditions.
- 3:06:35 DPP respectfully request that the Committee on Budget Appropriation and Finance vote in favour of these proposed lease agreements. If approved, these leases will assist these locally owned businesses in expanding and improving their operations. They will also continue to contribute to the ongoing growth and long-term stability and expansion of the local VIA economy. This concludes my testimony. I am prepared to answer any questions the committee may have on the reference lease agreements. Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Thank you, Mr. Richards.
- 3:07:12 Mr. Padro, do you have testimony? Yes, ma'am. You proceed. Good morning, Madam Chair, Donor Alfred, Gregory, and all of the distinguished members of the Virgin Island Legislature's Committee on Budget Appropriation and Finance. My name is Pablo Hector Padro, and I appear before this committee as a managing member of Inter-Island Auto Group, LLC, parent company of VIP Quick Loop and Kia USB-I. In October 2014, Inter-Island Auto Group began operations in St. Thomas, establishing the first express service center for oil and filter changes for all types of gasoline powered vehicles recognizing such a need for vehicles owners on the island given the rise of our offer we grew and added other automotive services such as mechanic service to private and public fleets body shop among others all these predicated on fast quality service and reasonable prices In 2015, we became Hyundai Service Center, and in 2016, Kia Service Center.
- 3:08:17 For both brands, we offer guaranteed services and original parts for vehicle owners. Given the growth of our company, we were forced to explore new facility with more space and better exposure since we were operating in a two-bay building located in the Tutu area. Fortunately, and with the collaboration of the Department of Property and Procurement, were able to rent a property that is subject of the contract before you simultaneously and in response to the good management and service provided to both brands in 2021 they offer us to become dealers for car sales after multiple

considerations we opted for Kia as part of our agreement with the government of the Virgin Islands we will make capital investments for improvement in to the property in no less than \$500,000 so that we can operate with the greatest efficiency and with the physical appearance pleasing to all and in harmony with the design guidelines of Kia, which of which I shared a preliminary image.

3:09:26 Also in symphony with the USVI's green policy, we would like to lead and help the government in the transition from gas vehicles to electric vehicles. I'm confident that Kia will be committed to help the government to achieve such objective in the short term by providing enough inventory of EV cars to the public and to the government agencies as well. We are committed to continuing to provide the highest quality, most affordable automotive services to all our St. Thomas and St. John customers. We also have the commitment to generate direct and indirect jobs and to contribute to the noble causes of the territory and gratitude for the great acceptance of our company.

3:10:12 That will be my testimony for this committee. Thank you, Ms. Madam Chair, for the opportunity to appear before this committee this morning and I'm open to answer any questions that members of this committee might have. You for your testimony and who's providing a testimony for Sandcastle on the Beach Mr. Richardson yes ma'am you may proceed good morning Senator good morning Senator Francis and members of the committee my name is Chris Richardson and I'm the co-owner and president of Ron Cannon Incorporated doing business as Sandcastle on the Beach in St. Croix in the Virgin Islands. Sandcastle on the Beach is a beloved hotel and resort situated in Frederickstead. I truly appreciate the opportunity to speak before you regarding the importance of obtaining a multi-year lease in the continued success and operation of the Sandcastle Resort as a destination for many travelers and the local community. In 1998 and quite by accident my partner Ted and I visited first visited the Sandcastle on the Beach Hotel due to a mix-up in our travel plans we immediately fell in love with the hotel its amenities and of course the location and local culture it became a frequent destination of ours for many years following this trip our love for the resort only continued to grow during our many trips to the island so much so that we made arrangements to purchase Sandcastle and make it our own in 2017 we became owners of the Sandcastle on the Beach since then we have continued to operate the resort to much success making modernized renovations and remodeling the rooms expanding the featured amenities and altogether creating a serene and treasured destination for tourists and local

3:11:58 community alike. In addition to providing a distinctive and prized destination Sandcastle also provides a great value to the local economy. Sandcastle employs over 60 people and creates tourism generated revenue to local businesses. It is important to us to support the small business community. Some examples but not limited include the following. Our shampoos and conditioners we use in the hotel are from a locally owned and operated small business cultured naturals. Our baked goods for our continental breakfasts are from the local Frederickstead Bakery Nachos Bakery. Most of the artwork we have purchased for our rooms is from Barbara Gilardi. She's a longtime resident and small business owner as well. Ted and I also feel it is important to be involved in and support our community. We have planted roots here in part by sitting on Department of Labor Commissioner Malloy's State Apprenticeship Council the Frederickstead Economic Development Association and the St. Croix Hotel and Tourism Association St. Croix is currently a beneficiary of the Virgin Islands Economic Development Commission and has earned participation in the EDC's tax incentive program by among other things investing in the local community supporting education in the territory and supporting island-based charities It has been our goal to exceed the requirements of the EDC by supporting local organizations such as Stanley and the Ten Sleepless Nights Annual Scholarship Fund, the local chapter of SkillsUSA, the St. Croix Animal Welfare Center, Community First Outreach Center, My Brother's Table and local high school internship programs among other local causes. A large portion of Sandcastle's success is due to the unique amenities on location we offer in addition to more traditional

3:13:46 hotel rooms Sandcastle offers luxurious villas to customers who wish to have a fuller suite of amenities including access to a beautiful deck overlooking the beach and ocean in 2022 Sandcastle pursued and secured a refinance to its mortgage using Bank of St. Croix as part of this process surveys were conducted by the St. Croix survey and engineering in order to obtain an updated and correct title search to the property these surveys revealed that unbeknownst to me a small portion of our beachfront villas building fence and deck as well as a short stone wall on the side of road plot 129 was encroaching on land owned by the government of the Virgin Islands a true and correct copy of the surveyor's notes and map regarding the encroachment is attached as exhibit a and exhibit b in order to finalize the refinance Sandcastle was required to obtain a one-year lease from the department of property and procurement for the encroached property which was executed on June 3rd 2022 a true and correct copy of the June 3rd 2022 lease is also attached as exhibit c the continued operation and success of Sandcastle hinges on the approval of a multi-year lease which would give Sandcastle the right to occupy the encroachment. To my knowledge, the encroachment began as early as 1990, long before we began operating Sandcastle. At that time, a former owner-operator of the hotel erected a covered deck furnished with a hot tub on the same footprint as the current Beachfront Villas building. Around 1993, the hot tub was removed and walls were erected to create a shed

on the same footprint. Sometime around 2003 2004 the shed was converted into a hotel room again on the same footprint the building now contains three beachfront villas and a shared patio if approved the bill currently under

3:15:43 consideration would allow us to continue our uninterrupted operation of a highly valued and beneficial resort in st croix i respectfully request that the committee recommend approval for this bill for several reasons first the size of the encroachment is minor as indicated on the surveyors notes the total encroached area is 1482 square feet the building actually encroaches only 362 square feet and the fence behind it uh encroaching 490 square feet and then again the stone wall that encroaches 630 square feet onto road plot 129.

3:16:23 second considering that the encroachment has existed for over 30 years without notice or harm It is clear that the value of approving this bill vastly outweighs any disadvantage to the government or the public. The beachfront villa building contains three of Sandcastle's most desired rooms. If not permitted to continue occupying the small portion of government land, Sandcastle would have to spend valuable time and resources in demolishing, remodeling, and renovating some of its most attractive features. This would substantially hinder Sandcastle's ability to provide quality and competitive amenities to travelers and the community third sandcastle has already been and continues to be subject to the lease executed on june 3rd 2022. sandcastle has conformed to all requirements contained in the lease and if permitted would continue to abide by the terms contained therein while the current yearly lease term has expired and has been converted to a month-to-month lease sandcastle is eager to execute a multi-year lease for the peace of mind that successful operation of the resort will remain uninterrupted i hope this information was helpful for the committee's consideration and i would be glad to answer any further inquiries this committee might have thank you thank you uh mr richardson colleagues we're going to go to a four minute round we'll start with senator malvin bladen since of later you may proceed with your four minutes thank you thank you so much madam chair and good afternoon to mr patro and mr which is saying and thank you so much for both of your testimonies let me start hand saying how much been mr patro in respect to your lease approval and let me ask you how many how many um you say you've been in business since 2013 You said you have been bid in business since 2013? 2014. 2014? Mm-hmm. Okay. How many employees do you have?

3:18:22 Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't say my name. For the record, Pablo Hector Padro. Sorry about that, Senator. Okay. We actually have like six, around six employees. Six employees. And you are basically trying to expand your business in respect to a used car dealership, repair shop, import of goods, retail shops, stores. What type of retail shops do you plan on?

3:18:54 Well, the business license established that used because we sell parts, being the Kia and Hyundai service centers. so that's the reason for that type of use in the in our business license okay and you plan to invest no less than 500 half a million dollars into the property to basically expand on your investment correct yes uh i don't know if you have the chance to see the image that i sent yesterday i have seen it i have seen it okay well that's that's a That's a preliminary rendering of what should be the image of the Kia dealer.

3:19:40 As I explained in my testimony, we became a Kia what it's called 3S dealer, service, spare parts, and sales. We have been service and spare parts since 2016 now. Back in 2022, we became sales dealer. So we have to improve the building as per KIA's design guidelines. And that will request quite an investment in the improvement of the facilities. And are there any apprenticeship opportunities with your dealership in terms of our young men who go to a skills centre, et cetera?

3:20:19 Do you have any opportunities for our young people to do apprenticeship within your facility? For training, you mean? Yes, training. Actually, since we were in the Tutu area, I had like four or six, four or five students from Charlotte Amelie High School. They used to have a program that in 12th grade, they send some students to work as part-times in different industries. So I had four of them, four or five, and two of them became my permanent employees. Very well, I'm happy.

3:21:00 Yeah, we're open to that. Okay, very well. I'm happy to hear that, and definitely I will be supporting this adventure, okay? Thank you so much. I'm Mr. Richardson. Good afternoon to you also. And you spoke, you started out by saying it was a mistake in 1988. When you first arrived, it was a mistake. 30 seconds. And you ended up buying it in 2018. It was not a mistake, it was your destiny. Honestly, it was. That's why you ended up buying a property and we appreciate what you're doing in terms of the community relations and what you have been doing on the island of St. Croix and the relationship you have formed with those different individuals. I know my time has been called but I just wanted to say I too will be supporting this adventure and I thank you so much for your investment in the community and I want to thank both of you for adding to our economic development here in the beautiful Virgin Islands. Thank you so much Madam Chair for the time. Thank you Senator Blyden. So Mr. Richardson, I have to be a little nosy.

3:22:07 Where were you going before you ended up in the Virgin Islands, in St. Croix in particular? so I was actually in Ted as a flight attendant so we got to go several places and when we came here that night on in 1998 it was Christmas Eve and we were supposed to stay at what is now called the Palms and we arrived and they had no they did not have our reservation and they were sold out so we started looking around the island it was absolutely by accident and we were really grateful

They had one room available at Sandcastle on Christmas Eve in 1998.

- 3:22:47 Oh, okay. Okay. That's a nice story. Okay. So that was not by... So I believe that nothing happens by happenstance. So absolutely, it was meant to be. It was definitely meant to be. All right. So I'm going to go to the next senator. Senator Fonseca, you're recognised for your four minutes. Yes, pleasant good afternoon to the listening audience and you know Sandcastle Hotel on the beach there, you know I actually stayed in that hotel for three months after the hurricane, I went to St. Croix, you know I was a project manager, we did the Sunny Isles, Kmart, West, the Otto. So I loved it. You know, you were right there on the beach. You could have seen they had a big, they had a cruise ship there with the people from FEMA and thing. It was lovely. So definitely I'm in favor of that. Um, um, Pablo Hector, um, Kia Service Center, Cardila, um, so you, you're interested in gas to electric, um, how, how, when do you imagine we can have electric charging stations in the Virgin Islands? What's your projections for that?
- 3:24:10 Thank you, Senator Fonseca, and good morning. EV cars has been starting to have the attention of public in Puerto Rico and obviously here, too. St. Thomas, and I was telling that to Senator Gregory Fred, But St. Thomas is a, it is more, how should I say this, it's better to have an EV car here than even in the States or Puerto Rico because of the short distances. It would make sense to have one here. And as a dealer, as recent as two weeks ago, I was in Puerto Rico talking to the principals of my distributor which is the motor amber and we we already arranged a plan to start training and selling the cars here as we speak i have one of my technicians training today having a train so we can start selling them i have an idea of how to establish a charging station network in the island which is it will be needed uh and i was thinking also that those charging stations could be even solar powered so we don't need the the the necessity to be plugged into the grid so that is something that we can maybe elaborate uh very soon to see how can we can start the the transition from gas to to electric okay in the island so um you know um how much does an electric car cost right now the average one not like a tesla
- 3:26:07 one minute a kia um electric vehicle how much would one car well i must tell you that they're not cheap not cheap yeah that's out of my price right but but wait is that 20 000 i guess they will have a landed cost of around maybe between 52 and 55 000. as any as any new technology they start very high and eventually they will start to you know yeah 30 seconds a lot for me to be able to afford one but i want to go to um the assistant commissioner um victor you know um you know i am in favor of all of these i know that you are impeccable man of a lot of credibility and you review the stuff but i want to ask you one big favor because remember we still in this kidney dialysis thing and then we need to get um caribbean kidney center so i know you got a whole lot on your time but let's please just try to um get the caribbean kidney center because you know i getting some calls saying that the legislature had appropriated 700 000 to continue the kidney service and we don't ever want to fall back into a kidney emergency so so please um property and procurement let's get um whatever you can to get those appraisals done so that the the government can move forward with whatever we're going to do with the Caribbean Kidney Center.
- 3:27:41 And thank you very much Madam Chair for the time. Thank you Senator Fonseca. So you know I spoke to my good colleague from St. Croix who is the real Espanol man and I asked him a few weeks ago to teach me some Spanish, because when I went to Spanish class when I was in high school, I only remember one thing, esta Susana en casa. I'm serious, that's what I remember. And interestingly enough, my stepmother, who's a Crucian, she spoke Spanish, but none of us in housing on it interestingly enough but uh never too late so i did have that conversation with senator carrion recently uh let me just ask a quick question of you mr richards you know we what we do here in the legislature is we approve these leases and of course in approving the leases we have that budget cycle and um we always want to see that as we approve the leases that our are our tenants are in fact making their payments so on average what would you say of your hundred percent leases what percentage of your leases are in arrays if you have either a number or percentage and and what are you doing about how are you addressing those tenants that are in fact not um paying their leases based on what has been approved
- 3:29:27 by this institution well sender let me answer this way number one i i can't give you a specific percentage right now i can tell you that i have been given a mandate by uh lisa alejandro uh to commissioner commissioner lisa alejandro i know it's hard but it's a girl but No it's not. No it's not. Our team has been given a mandate to bring our collections in line and bring them as close to zero as possible. We have some initiatives that we want to and we will get done in the coming year and it's incumbent of us and of the department to get the collections under control so you know I've been giving my marching orders and we're working on that.
- 3:30:19 Yeah, so we're going to ask to, because again, as we have these conversations, we are working on our 2024 budget, and we need to see from your department your listing of outstanding leases that's in arrears, so your aging report. We would like to see that as we contemplate the budget, because as we looked at our fund balances for your, what is the name of that fund? Business and commercial.

- 3:30:45 Yeah, business and commercial. I think it's in the red by \$2.3 million if my memory serves me correct. So it could be a number of things. It could be that they're not updating the entries. It could be a number of things, but we would like to see what you have to compare it to determine whether or not it's something that we can in fact do for FY23. So on average, monthly, how much do you collect in rent? Monthly, it's supposed to be at least \$340,000 to \$350,000 monthly.
- 3:31:23 It's supposed to be. No. So based on your 100%, you should be collecting \$350,000, or is it... What are you collecting, though? \$340,000. That's my guesstimate. Now, I don't have the numbers in front of me, but I'd be happy to provide the information for you if you ask that of the department. Okay. so we're asking usually it sits through the chair so i'm the chair so we want you to send back to us your current um monthly and annual uh collections for f let's just say fy 22 and 23. so we could have an idea so what you're truly collecting and what's being uploaded on the um erp system okay duly noted senator all right thank you and it's just important because we make these approvals and then we want to know that our um the folks that come before us are making good on these leases okay uh senator carrion you're recognized for your four minutes thank you madam chair and um good after it's still morning right no good afternoon to testifiers and if you enlist in the audience uh so i was trying i'm looking here at the exhibit presented um exhibit b by mr richardson and i was trying to understand uh the area so is it is it a road and i don't know if if assistant commissioner could maybe try to clarify the area that's encroached and the questions from me or from mr. Richardson yeah any any of you i'll let miss i'll yield to mr. Richardson to answer first mr. Richardson yes i'm happy to answer yes
- 3:33:16 so senator carry on if you look at road plot 128 b if you're looking at the the little map I provided with the Caribbean Sea you can see that road plot it's actually sand it is not it's not a hard surface road it's just a road plot that's actually it's it's grown up with trees and and shrubs and so forth and you can see the line the building encroaches over as I mentioned 632 square feet and then behind the building we have a chain link fence that just goes in line with with the with the building directly off the corner of the building that's also encroaching that was apologies that is 490 square feet and then if you will look on the in front of the um main hotel on the actual road that's actually road plot 129 the stone fence is been that has been there forever uh that i recall and it's just simply a short maybe two foot tall boundary fence between the road and our act and the actual grass okay i see it answers your question is that uh assistant commissioner richardson does that affect the traffic or any area the road any type of impediment of any sort vincent richards absolutely not senator not very well uh i would i would note if if if we had more time i would explore either selling or transferring this small encroachment to the resort to make it much easier but we were
- 3:35:05 kind of pressed for time so we went this avenue um mr richardson do you have any other apart from this any other lease agreement with the government no sir i do not okay so this is the one you were referring to that it's on a month-to-month basis one minute correct okay very well i want to commend you for staying and investing and also not only investing but also contributing giving back to to our community through the many organizations that I see that you have been part of and been given back to so thank you for connecting to our community so we appreciate that I will be voting in support of this measure and also with Mr. Pablo Padro 30 seconds great so in your testimony I didn't see the number I know I heard you saying about the investment but I didn't see it in the testimony. So what's the minimum amount you're saying you're going to invest in the renovations of the property?
- 3:36:09 Good afternoon, Senator. Pablo Padro for Interisland Auto Group. We're expecting to make investments of no less than 500K because as I was explaining to Senator Layden, Kia has very stringent guidelines for design and that asks for a big investment to have the building to have the image that the rent represented. So that would be the minimum investment, not including other areas in the land and in the building itself.
- 3:36:46 Thank you. And just last thing, Madam Chair, if I may, if Assistant Commissioner could tell us what's there now and the condition of what you have there on the property. Vincent Richards. Senator, on section 4.01 also dictates the amount of estimated amount of money to invest in improvement of the property, and it lists out what is expected to be part of the improvement. What's there right now is a warehouse building and a shed for maintenance. The property previously was operated under, I believe, CalPet Auto and Jay's Jeep Rental. And I think historically, it went back to the 1970s, it was John's Auto, which was a Mazda, Honda, Acura dealership.
- 3:37:40 Thank you. Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Thank you, Senator Carrion. So let me just follow up and ask. The improvements are to be no less than \$500,000. That's what this says? Senator, to be honest with you, I'd be surprised if he spends, if he doesn't spend north of \$500,000 with the way cost, building costs and building materials. No, no, I'm asking the lease, is it clear in the lease that, it's just an estimated in the lease then?
- 3:38:08 Yes. Okay. In section 4.01, it does, it does specify an investment of an estimated \$500,000 and it goes on to list the improvements that has to be done on the property as well. And Mr. Padro, when do you anticipate beginning the improvements to this property if this lease was to be approved? Okay. Madam Chair, Pablo Padro for Inter-Island. We're expecting to start those improvements half of 2024.

- 3:38:48 you mean the big improvements in the building following the the bright the brand guidelines and the vehicles that you're bringing are you do you are you required to bring them to the territory after you've done the improvements or you know have them on the same no actually we started already to sell cars on special orders but now we we have the ability to bring inventory that we will start this month we'll start bringing cars by the numbers to make them available to the public and what about the charging stations what's the discussion and conversation around charging stations for these vehicles well we're gonna start with the gas vehicles since we are in the process of training our personnel our technical personnel because we're not we're not allowed to sell EV cars until our technical personnel is trained so we're expecting to have them train fully maybe by October or November then we will be able to bring EV cars but as following your question that is something that I would like to maybe discuss with the Virgin Island Energy Office because I saw that they have a plan and they already have a map of charging stations across the island and that is something that we can give our you know feedback in terms of the uh the equipment that could be uh suitable for those purposes i have suppliers in puerto rico that could bring their expertise to help the that office to establish those charging stations and as I was telling
- 3:40:41 you previously I guess I will have to check the numbers but maybe government could consider charge solar power charging stations so they don't they you don't have to spend money on on the power grid. I see. So the charging stations we currently have no Mr Richards are solar powered or electrical? The Department of property and procurement has two vehicle charging stations on both islands. On St. Croix one of them is solar and one is hardwired into our building. On St. Thomas we have three on our property and they're all hardwired. One is in the motor pool and also at the main building as well.
- 3:41:26 So as we purchase new vehicles because we did have one department that came before us this morning for an appropriation transfer to purchase a much-needed vehicle for the St. Croix District. Have you changed your policy? How are you encouraging or ensuring that we move to these new energy vehicles? I believe the policy is a little bit still in its development stage, but I'm proud to The Department of Property and Becurement has at least two vehicles that has DPP plates on them that are electric and that we use. I think the Commissioner probably drove here this morning and left here in an electric vehicle today.
- 3:42:11 Okay. All right. Very well. And then, Mr. Richardson, to you again, Deputy Commissioner. So the parcel of land that we speak of is how much square footage? It's approximately 21,462 square feet, about roughly half an acre. Oh, so it's about a half acre? Yes, Senator. And is there other property that belongs to the GVI that's joining that property?
- 3:42:42 Yes, Senator. This property is adjacent to the BMV, the Bureau of Motor Vehicles on one side, And it's next to also Pueblo Supermarket across the street. And right next door to it is, on the west side is, I believe, Central Air. And then to the south is the Port Authority dock, the commercial dock for Port Authority. So the Sandcastle folks are using the entire \$21,000?
- 3:43:20 Are we talking about Sandcastle or are we talking about this? Yeah, because I was like a half acre, that's where I got from. No, Sandcastle lease is for basically 852 square feet. It's a very small area. It's just an encroachment. Good. Is there adjoining government property to that space? Honestly, just the road.
- 3:43:51 And I ask the question because, so we're talking about 800 square feet. They are paying, what, \$300, \$3,000 per year. Correct. And how long this is a renewal? At first, we did a one-year lease because we wanted to engage with them. We wanted to let them know we were willing to give them rights or use of the property. And now it's before you for a more long term. Is there any conversation or discussions, I think you kind of alluded to it earlier, about the outright purchase of that small, just because it's of the amount that if they are good stewards of the community, these are things that we have to consider to outright purchase. I mean, I know that government should truly not be in the business of selling off their property, especially if it's a asset that's in use, because this is not an underperforming asset. It happens to be a performing asset. So, and I'm not suggesting that in any way. I just want to know, are there any conversations around it?
- 3:45:00 I don't set policy, but I would step out and say that if I was asked I would be open to pursuing a sale of the of the encroached property to to to the individuals okay and have you done any appraisals on that property no we have none as yet senator okay all right very well senator James Thank you Madam Chair for the time, greetings testifiers, greetings to the people of the U.S. Ferdinand Islands and thank you Mr. Richardson for all that you do as a business owner in the territory. I see here that you are a member of the Frederick Stead Economic Development Association, so that's great stuff. And you as a hotel owner now looking to enter into this leasing agreement. Just quickly, the benefits of you being a member of the Frederickstead Economic Development Association and helping with the transition to get more economics into Frederickstead, how is that coming along? Well unfortunately, I am not in charge of that board. However I'm happy to sit on it and make recommendations. It has been probably at least eight months since that board has met. Okay eight months. Okay thank you for your honesty. Eight months is a short period of time so I can't really hold you accountable. But I hope here at a later time we can have a discussion because I really I'm happy to see when individuals are in

investing in Frederick said. I was just down there this weekend for Labor Day and I must

3:46:52 I made for the second do a lot more so we are encouraging you to stay so I would not do anything to hinder the progress of Sandcastle but as we speak about this 20 year lease it is a no-brainer for me when I first saw the dollar amount I was a bit concerned I was like that's a little bit but based on the exhibits and what I have seen here it's a very small piece of property so it's a no brain I'm gonna support it thank you so much but obviously I have a lot of times I will continue to use my time but as far as room for improvement and to expand sandcastle what was what's in your vision or your mission or objectives to to have that yes actually we are in discussions with we own as you can see on the survey there's a couple of areas that are not developed yet that we own with the hotel property and so our hope is to expand with more hotel rooms to be offered. And I know you don't want to speak too too fast but as far as expanding your accommodations or your hotel accommodation or occupancy how much by how much you plan to expand that by? So currently we have 26 rooms and also the restaurant we would love to build two more 12 unit rooms on the property so an additional 24 rooms and that's over a period of how many years I realistically think that's probably over a period of three years or three is awesome stuff because I see where you mentioned somewhere here in your

3:48:41 testimony that you also have your EDC beneficiary. That is correct. So I'm assuming that you're up to par, you're doing everything. Yes sir. You're meeting all the guidelines and meeting all those mandates. In fact we're going through a compliance review currently for 2019 to 20 through 2022. so i've just submitted all of that but we of course in order to maintain good standing i have to do annual reports as well so i am current awesome you mentioned local high school internship programs as far as some of the the mandates for edc or what are some of those local high school internship well there's internship programs so we we reach out to the high schools to ask for students that are interested in hospitality and fortunately so far we have been able to accommodate three or no actually four students in the over the time that we've had it where they will come in and work at the front desk or shadow someone one of our front desk agents also working out with beach attendants and also in the restaurant good news my time was called so I don't want to abuse it but hopefully at a later time I would get to meet you too and anything to expand or improve on economic development of Frederic Stead is definitely a win-win for the territory so thank you once again and I will be supporting your your lease thank you madam chair for the time thank you senator James let me just ask the business license for these two businesses are they up to date I'm looking in the file and I'm not seeing I'm seeing just a 2022 license for one and just share with us.

3:50:34 VINCENT RICHARDSON VINCENT RICHARDSON VINCENT RICHARDSON VINCENT RICHARDSON VINCENT RICHARDSON Yes, Senator. They're up to date and we will get you updated business license and or anything else you need by the end of business day today. VINCENT RICHARDSON VINCENT RICHARDSON VINCENT RICHARDSON Yes, please. Please forward them because we need them for the historical files that we did not approve anything that was not up but the business license we're not up to date so please have those sent to our office as soon as possible all right senator de graff you're recognized for your four minutes thank you madam chair good afternoon colleagues good afternoon testifiers all of you listening and present. I stand in support of both of these leases for sure. One thing I was trying to figure out on the St. Croix end is the properties encroach on other government properties. So if the government properties that they encroach on, well I think one is a road, but is the other one other side a lot so does it take away from the square footage of that lot and what would be the impacts of that if any? Vincent Richards for our property impairment procurement. Senator I don't have the map in front of me but we did we did do a tour of the of the of the where the subject encroachment is and we have absolutely no concern about it either you know being detrimental to the road and or the other part of the encroachment as well okay i i i'll be satisfied with that also uh mr padro in regards to uh you um deputy richards he has the old john prevos building john john's auto john prevos yeah i i remember i i started working in 70s down there so i know way it is. Is it just the specific building or is it, there's a, it looks like an abandoned building right next to it. Is both lots combined into one?

3:52:44 No, Senator, just the building. Just the building. Okay. For Mazda, we're going to Kia. Okay, so good. So again, now with, you have also the mechanic shop, and there's an existing mechanic shop there already. I'm always concerned about environmental issues in terms of oil storage, and you have been here from 2014. What is your process for getting rid of old oil, old batteries that you take out of vehicles? What are you doing presently, and what would you continue to be doing going forward? Thank you, Senator.

3:53:23 Pablo Padro for Inter-Island. uh since we started uh we we have uh we have the appropriate uh uh containers to receive the used oil and then we use an authorized carrier to dispose every time we we're full that the company name is adcon environmental they're based in st croix so they come to st thomas they pick my all my oil they provided a manifest and then they take care of it properly I'm guessing in the States okay so no and as for the batteries we don't we don't storage them because once I need to buy a battery I basically exchange it that core to the to the seller minute and most

importantly uh used tires uh once tires are removed no no we don't do the tires no okay only mechanics and the parts shop and now the dealer okay good and also in in regards to what you spoke of the solar facilities for evs um would they have a battery storage or direct it has a solar it is on a station imagine a charging station with a small roof which is the solar panel right to provide energy to that station so it could be transferred to the vehicle right but it would have a battery system or it would go directly so only day time I guess it comes with a battery this is something that we are exploring now to bring more details to the to the to the government so you can have the full picture of what we believe is a good idea to implement in the island I think it is thank you thank you thank you thank you for the time what I'm sure

3:55:10 thank you I'm Saturday graph senator Capehart you recognize for your four minutes. Thank You Madam Chair. Good afternoon to the testifiers who are here before us today. Senator DeGraff I swear you just tick all my environmental questions. But I'm glad to hear that Mr. Padro has provisions in place to dispose of use oil any hazardous waste you generate but would you consider yourself to be a good environmental steward from where you are we look relocating from to seeking a new home good afternoon senator Pablo powder for inter island I I beg your pardon, can you please repeat that question for me?

3:56:10 So you are moving from one facility into the new facility, which is the sub base area, submarine base area. Is that correct? That is correct. And I'm asking, do you consider yourself to be a good environmental steward? You're moving from one area to the next. you ever had any environmental infractions where you've been fined for disposal of waste removal of waste no never we handle it uh in accordance with the uh with the regulations of dpnr and as i explained to senator degraf we use and authorize uh oil disposal company which is based in st Croy and once the times comes to collect he comes and he do his recollection in his trucks and he provide the proper manifest to establish that he's following the rules and the and the regulations to carry out the the collection and the transfer of the used oil to the vessels that eventually take the oil out of the territory. So you have a used oil hauler from St. Croix? No, no, not me. The carrier, the company who takes the used oil and dispose it out of the territory. Okay. Okay. Mr.

3:57:40 Richardson, Sandcastles, one of my favorite little places to be on the island. Can you, I don't know this question would be for you or for mr richardson from uh pmp um sam castles is for sale presently is that correct that is correct um if this lease was to be granted what would that mean of the sale of the property i would assume that that would be uh granted uh with the property it it would be uh assumable i'm not sure if that's the correct word if you if so mr one minute pmp if you could clarify if we were supposed to grant this uh lease to sand castles and after granting the the property um and the sale is made what does that mean does that new owner continue the lease what would happen good afternoon Senator Vincent Richards property procurement 30 seconds um it depends how the sale is is transacted I mean if they purchased a company and the property it's it's a moot issue yes the purchasing company will assume the lease but there is a provision in the agreement that if if they if Sandcastles wants to assign the lease that property and procurement has to be requested to or has to permit the assignment and time we would have no reason not to approve such requests you're saying there's a clause in this agreement that would state what would happen okay section section

3:59:39 nine zero four nine zero four speaks to a consent of assignment should not be withheld for any unreasonable should not be withheld unreasonably so you know again if if the property was sold there and or the lease was transferred and someone requests for it to be assigned it you know there's no reason why you know them assuming the lease agreement will be a problem okay thank you mr. Richards thank you madam chair thank you senator Capehart senator Francis jr. bill sponsor you may you're Thank you very much, Madam Chair, and thank you to my colleagues for their support in this measure. Again that was sent down by the administration through the Commission of Property and Procurement for the purpose of allowing for economic development, employment, improved property and infrastructure. have have been a long issue throughout the territory and is something that present opportunities as well as present some challenges so I'm happy to hear that this situation have allowed for at least some amicable resolution in being able to address this particular situation and it not been the government if that was a private sector that costs could have really been astronomical and present some challenges so I'm glad that the government was able to step in and

4:01:24 assist in this endeavor I heard the conversation regarding the charging stations and and those things and I know that the energy office is very poised to do embarked on a deployment of a number of charging stations throughout the territory they already received the grant funding and now looking at specific locations throughout the territory the establishments of these charging stations and we have a number of EV vehicle EV transportation right now and certainly will be the beneficiary to this and so I'm happy to hear at least there's some some competition or some other Avenue that may be out available for them to assist in that I wanted to ask you mr. deputy commissioner riches are you definitely commercial assistant commissioner we doing what are you these days currently i'm deputy commissioner senator okay very well um so you know there's this big conversation right now in regards to abandoned and derelict buildings uh as well as there's always a finger pointing that if there's anyone that that should really get the house in order is the

government and um you know tell me tell me what's being done in that space to to really encourage market or have discussion where you know there is opportunities for government buildings or a property could be available for the purpose of economic development and expansion Vincent Richards senator I guess a strategy would be you know similar to So how do you eat an elephant, one bite at a time?

4:03:12 If you walk outside the legislature right now, and you look a little bit to the west, there's a bright brand new building, or it looks brand new, it's a renovated blue restroom that the administration transformed it from being derelict and- Is that the place that the legislature provided the funding for you're referring to? The place that- The legislature provided the funding for? Yes, Senator. Yes, Senator. Oh, let's be clear. Okay, go ahead. Yes.

4:03:40 So we transformed that building into a restroom, a public restroom, and a visitor's center. The building right next to it, we covered it in the fabric, but we're about to put the cross the T's and dot the I's on a lease agreement with a non-profit that's about to... 30 seconds. ...fully transform that building as well. I can go on and on about all the different facilities that we've identified that we're starting to put programs in place to reuse, repurpose these buildings and to either get them into private hands and or to get government agencies back into them.

4:04:25 Well, I just thought that this was a good opportunity to really have that discussion about what's being done in that space. So thank you. Time. time wrap up again I ask for my colleagues support in this very these two leads that have come before us and the property procurement have done their part as well as the you know the investors the property owners and those seeking to expand have done their part so I'm asking for your support in moving these forward and again I want to thank both Mr. Padro, as well as Mr. Richardson and Ms. Rhea Abramson, as well for the work that they have done to bring these leases before us today. Thank you very much, Madam Chair, for the time.

4:05:12 Thank you, Senator Francis, and I too have to remind our departments from time to time that the legislature, we do have innovation in the institution of the legislation. We did recognize that that particular facility downtown needed to be converted into a bathroom. We got lots of complaints, lots of concerns. And that funding was, a bill was passed in the 33rd legislature to in fact cause that bathroom to be stood up for the people who traverse and for the people at the Virgin House who also, and you know what? And you're right.

4:06:09 And you know, I'm glad that we, institutional knowledge is so important. is so important. You know, when we cut the ribbon that day for that particular bathroom, you know, the senators were standing on the side. You know, we were standing on the side. Executive branch was standing in the middle. But what came to mind that day was the fact that that particular bathroom bill was vetoed, and we had to override it.

4:06:43 Yes. We have to, we have to, our job is to remind our community that we don't just sit here. A lot of times we are in a fight. We just don't talk about it enough. There was something else that Senator Fonseca said today about one of the measures, one of the, I can't remember what it is, one of the departments talked about, oh, the Bovoni. Yes, the Bovoni Road. to because yeah that's why institutional knowledge is so important so and of course senator a good colleague from savannah bovoni i enjoy it right he talked about you know giving praise to the administration for the bovoni road and yeah they got it done but the work work to move the funding to ensure that the Bovoni Road came from this body.

4:07:39 We sat and we cross each other in the back, we lick our child and we come out and we vote in the affirmative to ensure those roads are fixed. So in for both districts, for St. Croix and St. Thomas. So now we are happy to, and that happened in 2021. So we're now in 23 and a lot of those roads still need to be repaired. So there's more money, there's more funding that was appropriated. I think at the time we were like 19 million, if I have a good memory. It was about 19 million now. So we need to see those roads moving. So I always remember when we see things, new things here, if in federal money, the legislature is appropriating those funds to make it a reality.

4:08:23 So I thought that was very important that we, I put on the record. Alright, so I want, I too want to rise in support of these two particular measures. I think economic development in the U.S. Virgin Islands is so important, but economic development in the Island District of St. Croix and particularly in Frederick Stead is so important and, you know, we have these individuals, Mr. Richardson and his partner who have, you know, come to the territory and really put themselves up to serve not only from a business perspective but they're also now an integral part of the community. And that's why I shared with him earlier that nothing really happens by happenstance they were to be here. So I am definitely in support of economic development and Mr. Pedro, Pedro, yes that's what it is, right?

4:09:21 You know, economic development is important to us here in this district as well. And for certain, we know that we are moving towards a more energy efficient world and the Virgin Islands should not be left behind. So I'm happy that we are seeing that we actually have a auto group that's coming here to ensure that we do, we are able to purchase energy efficient vehicles. And usually, when these new things come out, they are so costly. So we are expecting to see that the price points decline in the next couple of years. I was just sharing with my colleague, the Senate President, that, you know

those, the robots that sweep your house, the vacuum robots, they used to be like a thousand and change.

4:10:12 I just bought one for \$169. So that's what we're expecting to see with these electronic, electric EV vehicles. So I am definitely in support of the two leases that's before us. So I'm going to allow the commissioner... Oh, there's a point of information, Senator Carrion. You may proceed with your point of information. Recognize the mic of Senator Carrion, please.

4:10:41 Thank you. I just, looking at the map, I just have a question. So the property that is next to 128B is not owned by Sandcastle. Senator, unfortunately, I don't have a map in front of me. Mr. Richardson? Yes, sir. Yeah, the property that is next to 128B. Do you know who it belongs to?

4:11:15 George Beach, that property that connects to, just on the opposite side of 128B is owned by Claire Roker. Okay, that's on the north side. Are there any opposition from Ms. Roker, the owner of that property? Was she contacted? Mr. Richards. Yes. Deputy Commissioner? a road that divides sandcastle and her property can you repeat the question senator what is she contacted is there any opposition from her end with the lease agreement you're having because that's a road that divides both property and gives access to both properties an easement senator um no i had no reason um well we didn't identify any reason that we need to contact that property owner um the the road belongs to the gvi um i can't speak specifically now right now how we got access to the road or the ownership of the road but the road belongs to gvi uh sandcastle encroached they approached us we are open and was open to uh remedying the encroachment and here we are okay senator kerryman chris richardson if i may also add that claire roker is a great ally and friend of ours and has supported everything that we have done we are in constant contact with her and in fact try to help her with beach cleanup and so forth for Dorch Beach because it's an important part of our community too.

4:13:01 Okay very well thank you. Senator Carrion this is Freya Abramson hi I represent Claire Roker on that particular parcel of land and she would have no objection to the lease going to Roncan Inc or the encroachment. Thank you. Thank you for that. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Senator Carrion. So I'm glad that we were able to clear that up. So thank you for the question. So we don't have any issues or challenges moving forward. And I suspect that if the landowner had any issues, the more than likely would have contacted the Department of Property and Procurement. So thank you for the question. All right. We're going to allow our testifiers to close.

4:13:47 And we're going to start with Mr. Padro. You could give us a quick 30-second close. Thank you, Madam Chair. As I was explaining to the committee, we're in the process of starting the selling of vehicles And one of the things that I didn't mention before is that we as a fifth dealer in the island, and recognizing that the other dealers' prices are very, very high, we are committing to bring another option at reasonable prices with good service and parts availability, not to mention So I think we're going to do a little bit more about the electric vehicles availability, not to mention now the electric vehicles availability, which I'm pushing that now, because as I was telling you, we were focused on the gas. But now that I became aware of the interest of the government in the EV transition, we will push that team with my the energy office to develop that much needed charging station network so it could be suitable for the EV cars that already exist in the island to get charged because if this is like having a gas car and have no gas stations right so it has to go hand to hand so we're willing and with

4:15:41 pleasure to help the government of the Virgin Islands in developing that that area of the of the green the green policy thank you are you finished yes and again I appreciate to all of the members of the committee your time and your support to our commitment on this island which it's my home now I'm from Puerto Rico but I have been living here for the last 10 years and I'm pleased to call St. Thomas my home even though I still love my my big island but this is home now and we are planning to stay here for a long time all right thank you for that thank you all right mr richardson 30 second close yes ma'am thank you senator freck gregory and senator francis and also the committee i do appreciate uh your time in looking at this i really want to say how grateful on behalf of ted and myself uh every every senator had something so nice to say about the property that we have and i'm very grateful for that and we are uh even though our property is for sale we're we are still you know we want to be good stewards of the property but also the community as I mentioned we came for 18 years prior to purchasing sandcastle just because we just love st. Croix so much so I'm very grateful that you will that you've taken the time to to look at and discuss this lease thank you and before I ask mr. Richards to close

4:17:31 something came to mind so mr. Richards very quickly I know that you have leases that are in arrears do you have a process by which you use utilize a small small claims court process after a certain amount of months or you try to battle it out on your own the legal the legal the legal avenue is a tool in our toolbox in my eight years we haven't been able we haven't choose to use it hasn't gotten that far but it's there and we'll use it we have to there's a There's a new push to have the issues resolved in terms of arrearages and it's bearing fruit and I expect that between now and the next time that we're back before you, we'll have put a significant dent in the collections because it's been mandated and we don't have a choice.

- 4:18:36 So we're meeting with our tenants that are in arrears and we're working it out. Well, thank you for that. It's important to us because we have to make sure that we are managing the resources, the financial resources of the government appropriately. We have to provide services to our community, and we can't provide services without receiving our revenues. That's a major part of how government functions. All right. I'll allow you to be dismissed, and the committee will stand in recess for four minutes, and We will come back to vote on all that we've discussed today. Committee stands at recess. Thank you.
- 4:19:41 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. We'll be right back. Thank you. Thank you. We'll be right back. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. We'll see you next time. It's the nature of mine, the earth mine, Rastaman, and the celestial of first. What is a Rastaman? The man where set the plan. The man where country streets. Love and bless up everyone.
- 4:28:11 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. the committee is back on the record Do I hear a motion?
- 4:31:14 Senator Fonseca, you're recognized for your motion. Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that appropriation transfer number 001-2023 for the Department of Plant and Natural Resources to address deficits in the supplies and the capital outlay categories for projected renovations, repairs and maintenance, small tools, mine equipment and machinery be favourably Senator Fonseca, can you restage your motion?
- 4:31:48 Oh yes, thank you. Madam Chair, I move that appropriation transfer number 001-2023 for the Department of Planning and Natural Resources be favourably approved by the Committee on budget appropriations and finances pursuant to title 2 virgin ounce code section 28 b with the transfer funds be available for use through december 31 2023 i so move thank you appropriation motion for appropriation transfer number 001-23 for the department of planning and natural resources has been properly moved by senator fonsaca and seconded by senator Francis, Senator Blyden and Senator DeGraff. Are there any objections?
- 4:32:39 Roll call, please. Hearing no objections, roll call, please. Senator Marvin A. Blyden? Yes. Senator Blyden, yes. Senator Samuel Caryong? Yes. Senator Caryong, yes. Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff? Yes. Senator DeGraff, yes. Senator Ray Fonseca? Yes. Senator Fonseca, Yes. Senator Donna A. Fred Gregory. Yes. Senator Fred Gregory. Yes. Senator Nobel E. Francis Jr. Yes. Senator Francis Jr. Yes. Senator Jevin E. James Sr. Yes. Senator James Sr. Yes. Madam Chair, we have seven yays. Thank you, Madam Clerk. Appropriation transfer Number 001-23 in favor of the Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources has been favorably approved by the Committee on Finance.
- 4:33:41 Motion. Motion. You recognize your motion, Senator Fonseca. Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that appropriation transfer number 003-2023 for the Department of Human Services be favorably approved by the Committee on Budget Appropriations and Finances Pursuit to Title II, Virgin Islands Code, Section 28B. Would the transfer funds be available for use through December 31, 2023? I so move. Second.
- 4:34:18 Appropriation transfer number 003-23 in favor of the Virgin Islands Department of Human Services has been properly moved by Senator Fonseca, seconded by Senator Blyden, Senator DeGraff. Hearing no objections, roll call please. Senator Marvin A. Blyden? Yes. Senator Blyden, yes. Senator Samuel Cadyung? Yes. Senator Cadyung, yes. Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff? Yes. Senator DeGraff, yes. Senator Ray Fonseca? Yes. Senator Fonseca, yes. Senator Donna A. Fred Gregory? Yes. Senator Fred Gregory, yes. Senator Novel E. Francis Jr.? Yes. Senator Francis Jr., yes. Senator Javan E. James Sr.? Yes.
- 4:35:10 Senator James Senior, yes. Madam Chair, we have seven yays. Thank you. Madam Clerk, Appropriation Transfer Number 003-23 has been favorably approved by this committee for the Virgin Islands Department of Human Services. Motion. Okay, let me restate my approval here. Appropriation transfer number 003-23, 003-23 in favour of the Virgin Islands Department of Human Services has appropriation transfer number 003-2023 in favour of the Virgin Islands Department of Human Services has been favourably approved by this committee. Do I hear a motion?
- 4:36:12 Motion. You recognize your motion, Senator Fonseca. Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that appropriation transfer number 004-2023 for the Department of Health be favorably approved by the Committee on Budget, Appropriations and Finance, pursuant to Title II, Virgin Islands Code, Section 28B, with the transfer funds be available for use through December 31-20-23. I so move.
- 4:36:45 Second. Appropriation transfer number 004-2023 in favour of the Department of Health has been properly moved by Senator Fonseca, seconded by Senator Francis, Senator Blyton, Senator DeGraff. Hearing no objections, rule call please. Senator Marvin A. Blyton? Yes. Senator Blyton? Yes. Senator Samuel Carrion? Yes. Senator Carrion? Yes. Senator Duane M. DeGraff? Yes. Senator DeGraff? Senator Degraaff, yes. Senator Ray Fonseca, yes. Senator Fonseca, yes. Senator Donna A. Fred Gregory, yes. Senator Fred Gregory, yes. Senator Novel E. Francis, Jr. Senator Francis, Jr., yes. Senator Jevan E. James, Sr. Yes. Senator James, Sr., yes. Madam Chair, you have seven yays. Thank you, Madam Clerk.

- 4:37:42 Appropriation transfer number 004-2023 in favour of the Virgin Islands Department of Health has been favourably approved by this committee. Do I hear a motion? Motion. Senator Carrione, you recognise your motion. I move that appropriation transfer number 005-2023 for the VI Office of Management and budget be favorably approved by the committee on budget appropriation and finance pursuant to title two the virgin islands code section 28b with transfer funds be available for use through december 31st 2023 iso move appropriation transfer number zero zero five dash two zero two three in favor of the virgin islands office of management and budget has been properly moved by senator Samuel Carrion, seconded by Senator Blyton and Senator DeGraff. Hearing objections, roll call please. Senator Marvin A. Blyton. Senator Blyton, yes. Senator Samuel Carrion. Senator Carrion, yes. Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff. Senator Graff, yes. Senator Ray Fonseca. Senator Fonseca, yes. Senator Donna A. Fred Yes. Senator Fred Gregory, yes. Senator Nobel E. Francis, Jr. Yes. Senator Francis, Jr., yes.
- 4:39:10 Senator Javan E. James, Sr. Yes. Senator James, Sr., yes. Madam Chair, you have seven yays. Thank you, Madam Clerk. Appropriation transfer number 005-2023 in favor of the, am I on the right one, Virgin Allen's Office of Management and Budget has been favorably approved by this committee.
- 4:39:41 Do I hear a motion? Motion. I move that Appropriation Transfer Number 007-2023 for the Virgin Islands Public Works be favorably approved by this Committee on Budget, Appropriations, and Finance pursuant to Title II of the Virgin Islands Code, Section 28B, with the transfer funds to be available for the use through December 31, 2023. I so move.
- 4:40:11 Second. Second. Appropriation transfer number 007-2023 in favor of the Virgin Islands Department of Public Works has been properly moved by Senator Samuel Carrion, seconded by Senator Blyton and Senator Fonseca. Hearing no objections, roll call please. Senator Marvin A. Blyton? Senator Blyton, yes. Senator Samuel L. Caryone. Yes. Senator Caryone. Yes. Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff. Yes. Senator DeGraff. Yes. Senator Ray Fonseca. Yes. Senator Fonseca. Yes. Senator Donna A. Fred Gregory. Yes. Senator Fred Gregory. Yes. Senator Novel E. Francis Jr. Yes. Senator Francis Jr. Yes. Senator Jevon E. James Sr. Yes. Senator James Sr., yes. Madam Chair, I have seven years.
- 4:41:07 Thank you, Madam Clerk. Appropriation transfer number 007-23 has been favorably in favor of 007-2023 in favor of the Virgin Islands Department of Public Works has been favorably approved by this committee. Next. Motion. You're recognized for your motion, Senator Carrion. i move that appropriation transfer number 008-2023 for the virgin islands department of labor be favorably approved by this committee on budget appropriations and finance pursuant to title two of the virgin islands code section 28b with the transfer funds be available for the use through december 31st 2023 iso move second appropriation transfer number zero zero eight dash two zero two three in favor of the virginal's department of labor has been properly moved by senator samuel carillon seconded by senator blyton and senator de graff hearing no objections roll call please Senator Marvin A. Blyden? Yes. Senator Blyden, yes. Senator Samuel Caryung? Yes. Senator Caryung, yes. Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff? Yes. Senator DeGraff, yes. Senator Ray Fonseca? Yes. Senator Fonseca, yes. Senator Donna A. Fred Gregory? Yes. Senator Fred Gregory, yes. Senator Nobel E. Francis Jr.? Yes. Senator Francis Jr., yes.
- 4:42:40 Senator Jevan E. James Sr.? Yes. Senator James Sr., yes. Madam Chair, you have seven yays. Thank you, Madam Clerk. Appropriation transfer number 008-2023 in favor of the Virgin Islands Department of Labor has been favorably approved by this committee. Motion.
- 4:43:07 I move that appropriation transfer number 009-2023 for the Department of Property and Procurement be favorably approved by the Committee on Budget, Appropriations, and Finance pursuant the Title II Virgin Islands Code, Section 28B, will the transfer funds be available for the use through December 31st, 2023. I so move.
- 4:43:40 Second, F.O. Appropriation Transfer No. 009-2023 in favor of the Virgin Islands Department of Property and Procurement has been properly moved by Senator Marvin Blyden, seconded by Senator Fonseca and Senator DeGraff. Hearing no objections, roll call, please. Senator Marvin A. Blyden. Yes. Senator Blyden, yes. Senator Samuel Caryung. Yes. Senator Caryung, yes. Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff. Yes. Senator DeGraff, yes. Senator Ray Fonseca. Yes. Senator Fonseca, yes. Senator Donna A. Fred Gregory. Yes. Senator Fred Gregory, yes. Senator Novel E. Francis Jr. Yes. Senator Francis Jr. Yes. Senator Javan E. James Sr. Senator James Sr. Yes. Madam Chair, you have seven years. Thank you, Madam Clerk. Appropriation transfer number 009-2023 in favor of the Virgin Islands Department of Property and Procurement has been favorably approved by this committee. Senator Blaney, you recognize your motion.
- 4:44:50 I move that appropriation transfer number 010-2023 for the Department of Education be favorably approved by the Committee on Budget, Appropriations, and Finance pursuant to Title II Virgin Islands Code, Section 28B, will the transfer funds be available for the use through December 31st, 2023? I so move. Appropriation transfer number 010-2023 in favor of the Virgin Islands Department of Education has been favorably, has been properly, properly moved by Senator Marvin Blyden, seconded by Senator Carrione and Senator DeGraff. Hearing no objections, roll call, please.

- 4:45:34 Senator Marvin A. Blyden? Yes. Senator Blyden, yes. Senator Samuel Carrione? Yes. Senator Carrione, yes. Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff? Yes. Senator DeGraf, yes. Senator Ray Fonseca, yes. Senator Fonseca, yes. Senator Donna A. Fred Gregory, yes. Senator Fred Gregory, yes. Senator Noveli Francis Jr., yes. Senator Francis Jr., yes. Senator Jevan E. James Sr., yes. Senator James Sr., yes. Madam Chair, you have seven years.
- 4:46:09 Thank you, Madam Clerk. Appropriation transfer number 010-2023 in favor of the Virgin Islands Department of Education has been favorably approved by this committee. Motion. Senator Blyden, you recognize your motion. I move that appropriation transfer number 011-2023 for the Virgin Islands Department of Justice be favorably approved by the Committee on Budget, Appropriations, and Finance pursuant to Title II, Virgin Islands Code, Section 28B. Will the transfer funds be available for use through December 31st, 2023? I so move.
- 4:46:52 Appropriation transfer number 011-2023 in favor of the Virgin Islands Department of Justice has been properly moved by Senator Marvin Blyden, seconded by Sen. Fonseca and Sen. DeGraff. Hearing no objections, rule call please. Sen. Marvin A. Blyden. Sen. Blyden, yes. Sen. Samuel Alcariung. Sen. Dwayne M. DeGraff. Sen. DeGraff, yes. Sen. Ray Fonseca. Sen. Fonseca, yes. Sen. Donna A. Fred Gregory. Sen. Fred Gregory, yes. Yes. Senator Novel E. Francis, Jr. Yes. Senator Francis, Jr. Yes. Senator Javan E. James, Sr.
- 4:47:37 Yes. Senator James, Sr. Yes. Madam Chair, you have seven years. Thank you, Madam Clerk. Appropriation transfer number 011-2023 in favor of the Virgin House Department of Justice has been favorably approved by this committee. All right. So let me just say that we have approved all of these appropriation transfers and we do not take this vote that we just made lightly.
- 4:48:18 We've properly vetted the respective departments and agencies and we have also vetted the available resources in order to make this decision. But we will continue to ask the departments and agencies to obligate the funds that are appropriated to them on an annual basis. Again, we are looking a lot deeper into the FY24 budget to make a determination as it relates to the resources that we are making available to these departments. Do I hear a motion?
- 4:48:52 Thank you very much Madam Chair, Madam Chair and colleagues, I move that bill number 35-0067 an act approving and the lease agreement between the government of the Virgin Islands acting through its Commission of Property and Procurement and Inter Island Auto Group LLC doing business as vip quick loop for improved parcels number 70 submarine base number 6a southside quarters in thomas virgin islands b to be used as a new and used car dealership repair shop import of goods retail shop store and for other related purposes be approved by this committee and sent forward to the rules committee for further consideration i so move bill number 34 bill number 35 that's 0067, an act approving the lease agreement between the government of the Virgin Islands, acting through its commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement and Inter-Island Auto Group, LLC, doing business as VIP Quick, Louvre for improved parcel number 7, submarine base number 6A, Southside Quarter, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, to be used as a new and used car dealership, repair shop, importer of goods, retail shop, store, and for other related purposes has been properly moved by Senator Novali Francis Jr. seconded by Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff and Senator Samuel Carrion and Senator Marvin Blyden. Hearing no objections, rule call please. Senator Marvin A. Blyden? Yes. Senator Blyden, yes. Senator Samuel Carrion? Yes. Senator Carrion, yes. Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff? Yes. Senator DeGraff, yes. Senator Senator Ray Fonseca? Yes. Senator Fonseca? Yes. Senator Donna A. Fred Gregory? Yes. Senator Fred Gregory? Yes. Senator Noble E. Francis Jr.? Yes. Senator Francis Jr.
- 4:50:55 Yes. Senator Jevan E. James Sr.? Yes. Senator James Sr. Yes. Madam Chair, you have seven years. Thank you, Madam Clerk. Bill number 35-0067, an act approving the lease agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands, acting through its commission of the Department of Property and Procurement and Inter-Island Auto Group, LLC, doing business as VIP Quick Louvre for improved parcel number 7T, submarine base number 6A, Southside Quarter, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, to be used as a new and used car dealership, repair shop, importer of goods, retail shop, store, and for other related purposes, has been favorably approved by this committee and will be forwarded to the Rules Committee for further consideration and action. Do I have a motion?
- 4:51:46 Motion. Do you recognize your motion, Senator Francis Drew? Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair and colleagues, I move that Bill No. 35-0104, an act approving the lease agreement between the government of the Virgin Islands, acting through the Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement and Roncan Inc., doing business at Sandcastle on the Beach to lease plat number 128B, Two Brothers, Smithfield and Hasselberg, West End Quarter, and number plat 129, Two Brothers, Smithfield and Hasselberg, West End Quarter, St. Croix, Virgin Islands, be approved by the Committee of Budget Appropriations and Finance and sent forward to the Rules and Judiciary Committee for further vetted. I so move.

- 4:52:29 Bill number 35, that's 0104, an act approving the lease agreement between the government of the Virgin Islands, acting through the Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement, Anne Roncan, Inc., doing business as Sandcastle on the beach to lease plot number 128-B, two brothers, Smithfield and Hasselberg, West End Quarter, and plot number 129, two brothers, Smithfield and Hasselberg, West End Quarter, St. Croix, Virgin Islands, has been properly moved by Senator Nouvelle Francis, Jr., seconded by Senator Marvin Blyden, Senator Samuel Carrion, Senator Ray Fonseca, Senator Dwayne DeGraff.
- 4:53:12 Hearing no objections, roll call please. Senator Marvin A. Blyden? Yes. Senator Blyden, yes. Senator Samuel Carrion? Yes. Senator Carrion, yes. Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff? Yes. Senator DeGraff, yes. Senator Ray Fonseca? Yes. Senator Fonseca, yes. Senator Donna A. Fred Gregory? Yes. Senator Fred Gregory, yes. Senator Novel E. Francis Jr., yes. Senator Jevon E. James Sr., yes. Senator James Sr., yes. Madam Chair, we have seven years. Thank you, Madam Clerk. Bill 35-0104, an act approving the lease agreement between the government of the Virgin Islands, acting through the commission of the Department of of Property and Procurement and Ronkorn, Inc. doing business at Sandcastle on the Beach to lease plot number 128 B, Two Brothers, Smithfield and Hasselberg, West End Quarter and plot number 129, Two Brothers, Smithfield and Hasselberg, West End Quarter, St. Croix, Virgin Islands has been properly favorably approved by this committee and will be forwarded to the Rules Committee for further action and vetting.
- 4:54:33 All right, colleagues. We've completed today's agenda and we will continue the budget process. I believe that we have another meeting coming up sometime in the next few, sometime around September 11th to continue the discussions of the bills that we have before this committee. I want to thank the central staff employees for continuing to ensure that we are able to do this work, and most definitely the post-added division, and my staff, and definitely my colleagues that are non-committee members, as well as committee members. The Committee on Budget Appropriations and Finance meeting for today is hereby adjourned.
- 4:55:24 Thank you. You

People named in this transcript

SUSPECTED, and a finding aid only. Names were matched by machine against the spellings used across all 426 of our transcripts, and the title is the one used in the room. Being named here is NOT evidence that a person attended or spoke - only that the name was said. Speech recognition mishears names, so a spelling may be wrong even where no alternative is offered.

- 39x **Senator Dwayne DeGraff**
heard in this transcript as: DeGraf, DeGraff, Degraaff, Duane M. DeGraff, Dwayne M. DeGraff, Graff
- 38x **Senator Ray Fonseca**
heard in this transcript as: Fonseca
- 36x **Senator Marvin Blyden**
heard in this transcript as: Blayden, Blyden, Blyton, Marvin A. Blyden, Marvin A. Blyton
- 35x **Senator Novelle Francis**
heard in this transcript as: Francis, Francis Jr, Francis Jr., Nobel E. Francis Jr, Nobel E. Francis Jr., Noble E. Francis Jr
- 25x **Senator Samuel Carrion**
heard in this transcript as: Carrion, Carrione, Samuel Carrione
- 14x **Senator Javan James**
heard in this transcript as: James James, Javan E. James Sr, Javan E. James Sr., Jevan E. James Sr, Jevan E. James Sr., Jevin E. James Sr
- 14x **Senator Marise C. James**
the surname alone also matches: Javan James; Giovanni James Sr
heard in this transcript as: James, James Sr, James Sr.
- 13x **Senator Fred Gregory**
the surname alone also matches: Donna A. Frett-Gregory; Donna Frett-Gregory
- 10x **Senator Donna A. Frett-Gregory**
heard in this transcript as: Donna A. Fred Gregory
- 9x **Senator Samuel Caryong**
heard in this transcript as: Caryone, Caryong, Caryung, Samuel Caryung, Samuel L. Caryone
- 4x **Commissioner Virgin Islands Department**
heard in this transcript as: Department

- 2x **Commissioner Derrick Gabriel**
heard in this transcript as: Gabriel
- 2x **Senator Diane T. Capeheart**
heard in this transcript as: Capehart
- 2x **Senator James Senior**
- 1x **Senator Donna Frett-Gregory**
heard in this transcript as: Donna A. Frett-Gregory

Bills and acts referred to

Matched by number against our own acts corpus. The number is what the recognition heard, so it may be wrong; where it resolved, the title is the one the Legislature gave the act.

Referred to but not found in our acts corpus: Bill 35-0067, Bill 35-0104