



Government of the Virgin Islands of the United States

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Commissioner

U.S. Virgin Islands
Department Of Human
Services 3011 Golden Rock
Christiansted, St. Croix,
00820

October 27, 2025

The Honorable Senator Angel Bolques

Chairman, Committee on Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports and Parks
Legislature of the Virgin Islands
Capitol Building
P.O. Box 1690
St. Thomas, VI 00804

Dear Senator Bolques,

I am writing regarding the Committee on Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks hearing scheduled for October 31, 2025, at the Fritz E. Lawaetz Legislative Conference Room on St. Croix.

Please allow me to clarify that the Department of Human Services' inability to participate on this date is in no way a reflection of the importance we place on the Committee's agenda or the critical issues outlined in your memorandum regarding "Healing and Empowering Our Youth: Confronting Violence, Mental Health, and Opportunity Gaps in the Virgin Islands." The Department remains deeply committed to supporting youth-focused initiatives, addressing systemic inequities, and collaborating with partners to advance public health, education, and community development objectives.

Unfortunately, due to multiple pressing obligations on that day involving our senior leadership team—including the preparation and distribution of local relief paper checks for SNAP clients due to the federal shutdown, coordination with federal partners, and other time-sensitive internal initiatives—the timing of this hearing conflicts with these essential responsibilities. As a result, neither I nor a designated representative will be able to attend on October 31.

Please know that we at DHS fully recognize the importance of the work you are leading, and we remain committed to partnering with the Committee as we make progress in these areas, especially for our youth. I hope our absence will not be discouraging, it is simply a matter of timing. We have too much at stake on that day and cannot afford any errors in executing some critical initiatives during that time.

Thank you for your attention and understanding.

Averil E. George
Commissioner
Virgin Islands Department of Human Services