

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND
AGRICULTURE

08/10/2026-HELD IN COMMITTEE

BILL NO. 36-0285

Thirty-Sixth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

May 8, 2026

An act amending title 3, Virgin Islands Code, chapter 19, to establish the Virgin Islands Hall of Fame Registry within the Department of Tourism

PROPOSED BY: Senator Hubert L. Frederick

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

SECTION 1. Title 3, Virgin Islands Code, chapter 19 is amended by adding a new section to read as follows:

“§ 342. Virgin Islands Hall of Fame Registry

(a) The Department of Tourism shall establish and maintain a Virgin Islands Hall of Fame Registry (“Registry”) to recognize individuals whose lifetime achievements or distinguished service have made extraordinary and lasting contributions to the Virgin Islands.

(b) Administration

(1) The Department of Tourism shall administer the Registry.

(2) The Department shall:

(a) maintain and update official records of the Registry;

(b) make Registry information available to the public, except for information that is confidential or otherwise protected from disclosure by law;

(c) verify and document information included in the Registry; and

(d) promulgate regulations in accordance with Title 3, chapter 35 of the Virgin Islands Code to implement this section, including procedures governing nominations, evaluation criteria, and induction.

(c) Advisory Committee

(1) There is established within the Department of Tourism a Virgin Islands Hall of Fame Advisory Committee ("Committee") to review nominations and recommend individuals for inclusion in the Registry.

(2) The Committee shall consist of:

(a) the Commissioner of Tourism, or designee, who shall serve as chair;

(b) the Commissioner of Education, or designee;

(c) the Director of the Office of Libraries and Archives, or designee;

(d) one member appointed by the Governor with expertise in Virgin Islands history or culture;

(e) one member appointed by the Governor with experience in education, research, or historical documentation; and

(f) one member appointed by the President of the Legislature with demonstrated knowledge of, or experience in, Virgin Islands history, culture, or public service.

(3) Members appointed under paragraph (2)(d), (e), and (f) shall serve staggered terms of three years, as determined by the appointing authority.

(4) A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum. The affirmative vote of a majority of members present shall be required for any action of the Committee. In the event of a tie vote, the chair shall cast the deciding vote.

(5) Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment for the remainder of the unexpired term.

(6) The Committee shall operate in a nonpartisan manner and shall conduct its review based solely on the criteria established in this section.

(7) Members of the Committee shall serve without compensation.

(d) Eligibility

(1) An individual is eligible for inclusion in the Registry upon a determination that the individual has made sustained and extraordinary contributions of territorial significance which have resulted in a measurable and enduring impact on the Virgin Islands and has demonstrated conduct consistent with the dignity and integrity of the Registry.

(2) Eligibility shall be determined based on verifiable documentation and supporting records sufficient to establish the individual's qualifications.

(3) Posthumous recognition is permitted for individuals who meet the eligibility criteria set forth in this subsection.

(4) Inclusion in the Registry does not confer any legal status, right, privilege, or entitlement, and shall not be construed to create any cause of action or claim against the Government of the Virgin Islands, or any of its officers or employees.

(e) Nomination and Selection

(1) Nominations shall be submitted to the Department of Tourism in accordance with regulations promulgated pursuant to this section.

(2) The Committee shall:

- (a) review all nominations received;
- (b) verify qualifications and supporting documentation;
- (c) evaluate candidates using objective, merit-based criteria; and
- (d) recommend qualified nominees for inclusion in the Registry.

(3) The Commissioner of Tourism shall make final determinations for inclusion in the Registry based on the recommendations of the Committee and in accordance with the criteria established in this section.

(4) No nomination or selection shall be made based on political affiliation, commercial interest, or partisan consideration.

(5) All records and materials submitted pursuant to this section shall be maintained in accordance with applicable public records laws.

(f) Individuals approved for inclusion in the Registry shall be inducted on an annual basis, except that the number of individuals inducted in any year may be limited by regulation to preserve the integrity and distinction of the Registry.”

SECTION 2. (a) The sum of \$15,000 is appropriated from the Tourism Advertising Fund of the Treasury of the Virgin Islands to the Department of Tourism for the purpose of implementing the Virgin Islands Hall of Fame Registry established under this Act.

(b) The funds appropriated under subsection (a) shall remain available until expended.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect 30 days after enactment.

BILL SUMMARY

This bill amends title 3, Virgin Islands Code, chapter 19 by adding a new section 342 to establish the Virgin Islands Hall of Fame Registry within the Department of Tourism to recognize individuals whose lifetime achievements or distinguished service have made extraordinary and lasting contributions to the Virgin Islands. The bill designates the Department of Tourism as the administering entity, establishes an advisory committee to

- 1 review nominations and recommends individuals for inclusion, sets eligibility standards based
- 2 on documented and significant contributions, and provides for an annual induction process.

3 **BR26-1003/April 14, 2026/KEH**