

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY, JUSTICE AND
PUBLIC SAFETY

06/04/2026-HELD IN COMMITTEE
02/13/2026-HELD IN COMMITTEE

BILL NO. 36-0139

Thirty-Sixth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

August 26, 2025

An act amending title 31 Virgin Islands Code to assess civil liability for destruction or damage to government property through wilful or negligent acts

PROPOSED BY: Senator Avery L. Lewis

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

SECTION 1. Title 31 Virgin Islands Code is amended as follows:

(a) In chapter 20, the following new section 169a is added:

(1) §169a Defacing or damaging government vehicles

Any person found negligent in the operation of a government vehicle or any person that willfully or negligently damages a government vehicle or any person entrusted with the custody and care of a government vehicle who allows the vehicle to be stolen or damaged in any manner shall be civilly liable for the cost of the repair to the vehicle including the cost of the material and the labor to complete such repairs or for the cost of the vehicle at book value.

(2) In chapter 21, the following section 205a is added:

§205a Damage to government property

(a) Any person found negligent of damaging government property, including fencing, lighting, and other non-permanent structures or any person that willfully or wantonly damages real property owned by the government or any person entrusted with the custody and care of real property owned by the government who allows the property to be stolen or damaged in any manner shall be civilly liable for the cost of the repair to the structure including the cost of the material and the labor to complete such repairs or for the cost of the replaced property or the cost of the stolen property.

(b) In cases where the liable person is covered by insurance, he may be given an opportunity to negotiate a reasonable amount to cover the cost of damages with the insurance company.

BILL SUMMARY

This bill amends title 31 Virgin Islands Code to assess civil liability to persons that damage government property.

BR25-0600/July 21, 2025/AA