



Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, and Consumer Protection

Legislature USVI

May 7, 2026 · 4.7 hours · gov

Source recording	https://youtu.be/3p4ffFyBx-I
Status	This is a working transcript produced by machine from a recording of a public proceeding. It is a finding aid, not an official record of the Legislature.
Transcribed by	VI Update, using OpenAI Whisper large-v3-turbo, run locally. Not reviewed by a person.
Reliability	Automatic transcription, UNVERIFIED. Verify every quotation against the recording before relying on it. Speech recognition splits spoken digits and wraps figures mid-number, so a dollar amount, a vote count or a bill number can be wrong in a way that reads as correct. Speakers are not identified: automatic speaker labelling was measured unusable and removed.
Public record	The underlying proceeding is a public record of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands. 3 V.I.C. § 881(a) defines public records to include all records and documents of or belonging to this Territory or any branch of government, or any "department, board, council or committee of any branch of government" · which names legislative committees by category. § 881(b) gives every citizen the right to examine and copy such records, and the news media the right to publish them. (The open-meetings chapter, 1 V.I.C. § 254, does NOT reach the Legislature: § 253(b) expressly excludes it and its Standing and Special Committees. § 881 does, and it is § 881 that confers the right to copy and publish.) The Legislature broadcast this proceeding publicly itself. The source recording is not ours, is not hosted here, and remains with its publisher at the link above.
Rights	To what we added · the transcription, its arrangement and its description · we assert nothing. A verbatim transcript is mechanical rather than authored, so there is likely nothing in it to own; to the extent any copyright is nonetheless found to subsist, it is dedicated to the public domain under CC0 1.0. Please copy it, quote it, index it, train on it, republish it, mirror it, sell it. Redistribution is the point: a public record with one copy is one fire from gone. No permission is needed, and none is ours to grant or withhold.

0:00:00 . ¶¶ so ¶¶ ¶¶

0:02:30 so so Thank you. Thank you.

0:04:30 Oh Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Oh, my God. Thank you. Thank you. The Committee of Government Operation Veterans Affairs and Consumer Protection is back on

0:08:27 the record and I guess in the first half of Block 1, the committee voted favorably to honor and commend Ms. Dilsa Captaville for her many contributions to the Virgin Islands community through her roles in various areas of social services and advocacy for abused women and children and to rename the Boulongo Bay Head Start facility the Dilsa Captaville Head Start facility that was voted upon favorably in this committee and will be forwarded to the Committee of Rules and Judiciary for further consideration and vetting. I'm a firm believer in giving people their flowers while they're alive so they could smell the fragrance and this is one that's fitting she's getting a brand new building in her name state-of-the-art Head Start, some little pitter-patter around the place, children, and hopefully the road could stay paved, but anyhow.

0:09:30 And then this afternoon, we have a family in front of us that's no stranger to me and my family, and no stranger to the VIPD. Bill No. 36.0191, and honoring and commending Detective Delbert Phipps, Jr., for his service with the Virgin Islands Police Department and to the entire Virgin Islands community by renaming the portion of Hospital Garda, where it intersects with Veterans Drive, at the Alexander Farrelly Criminal Justice Complex, to the beginning of the Mard Proudfoot Drive. the Delbert Phipps Jr. Street I had a nickname but anyhow who speaks to this bill Senator Angel Bocas Jr.

- 0:10:26 Bill Sponsor you're recognized Thank you Mr. Chair Good morning Mr. Chair Good morning colleagues Good morning to the listening and viewing audience Good morning central staff Good morning to the Phipps family and friends and supporters Good morning to the Virgin Islands Police Department and all those listening today. Today I rise both with humility and a deep sense of respect to introduce Bill number 36-0191, an act honoring and commending Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. By renaming a portion of Hospital Garda in his memory, Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. was not simply an officer who wore a badge.
- 0:11:11 He was a mentor, he was a protector, a father, a son, a brother, a friend, an avid motorcycle rider, I'll tell you about that later, and a public servant who dedicated himself fully the people of this territory those who knew him consistently characterize him as a calm dependable compassionate and deeply committed to helping others whether he is training young was training young officers or assisting families in crisis or simply just extending kindness to someone in need and even while of duty he also answered the call of service in in so many different ways on July 4th 2023 three years ago Detective Phipps made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty while responding to protect our community on a day when families across the Islands and more so on Saint John are celebrating our freedom and our togetherness and our culture we had the unfortunate event but we must never forget Detective Phipps service his sacrifice and his dedication to protecting the people of this territory his legacy is not just that that he passed away, but it is really in fact how he lived, with courage, with compassion and an unwavering commitment to others. And to the Phipps family, please note that the legislature of the Virgin Islands recognizes your sacrifice as well. We understand that behind every falling officer is a family that carries the pain along after the headlines
- 0:13:14 I would also like to recognize the men and women of law enforcement our first responders and every public servant who willingly places themselves in harm's way so other people may live in safety and peace these are the individuals who leave their homes each and every day not knowing what dangers await them yet they still answer the call because service to others is larger than self and far too often we only recognize these sacrifices after tragedy strikes but the truth is the burden carried by our first responders is felt every single day in the long hours away from family in the risks that they take and in the emotional weight of protecting a community that they love before I close before I close I would like to respectfully ask our community who's listening to continue showing grace and appreciation and respect the men of women and women of this service our first responders behind each and every uniform is a human being someone's mother someone's father someone's son someone's daughter a wife a husband a friend carrying responsibilities and pressures that many of us may never really fully understand every day they answer those difficult calls face dangerous situations and make personal sacrifices I asked a simple act of kindness patience gratitude or respect can go a very long way in reminding them that this community stands with them and values the work that they do. They really do deserve it. Colleagues, I respectfully ask for your support of Bill
- 0:15:11 number 36-0191 so that the legacy of Detective Delbert Phipps Jr., a man who exemplified the essence of service in our territory, can continue to exist for generations come thank you Mr. Chair thank you Senator Workers Testifiers good afternoon good afternoon good afternoon we can get it together now Detective Phipps couple trips yes sir been a long time yes Senator good good good good um we're gonna do a mic check um starting with Chief Hodge place your name and position on the record good afternoon Deborah Hard Chief of Police St. Thomas in John Wildland District nothing Vivian Newton you need my title as well Senator you don't want the wall no right I am the Director of the Internal Affairs and Applicant Screening Bureau for the Virgin Islands Police Department good you see who I must bring a complaint to next afternoon I'm Delbert Phipps right oh tight uh son student good you're good yeah good afternoon Delbert I Phipps senior former uh retired police corporal good and father of Delbert Phipps junior yes Good afternoon, Jerry Ennis, I am the Director of Special Investigations for the Virgin Islands Department of Justice.
- 0:17:01 Good afternoon everyone, my name is Maria Colon, Police Captain, Virgin Islands Police Department. I'm the Officer in Charge of the Training Bureau. Good morning, Vernon Carr, Deputy Director, Office of Cannabis Regulation. Thank you. Testifiers, Mr. Phipps Sr., you may begin. Once again, good afternoon, Senator Avery L. Lewis, Chairman of the Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs and Consumer Protection, as well as other committee members, of the 36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands listening and viewing audience.
- 0:17:50 I am Delbert I. Phipps, Sr., father and retired Virgin Islands police officer. Joining me is my wife, Denise Phipps, sitting in the back, experience of our son, Detective Delbert I. Phipps, Jr. We are pleased to be present here today with other friends, colleagues and family members to support this bill I would like to thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony on bill number three six dash zero one nine one pertaining to an act honoring and commending Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. for his service with the Virgin Islands Police Department and to the Virgin Islands community by renaming the portion of Hospital Garden which intersects with Veterans Drive at the Alexander-Fowley Criminal Justice Complex to the beginning of the Maud 12-foot drive, the Delbert I-50 Jr. Street. Delbert Ian Phipps Jr. was born in St. Thomas,

Virgin Islands, in June 17, 1981.

- 0:19:04 He was the second of five children. He was also a product of the public school system and a graduate of the Shartemar High School. In his early years, he began to express his interest in becoming a police officer. His interests intensified during the year 2015. Sometime early in 2016, the topic of becoming a police officer arose again. This was after I had retired from the police department.
- 0:19:42 After much discussion, he was encouraged to follow his dream, and if law enforcement was his career choice of interest, then he should pursue it. In 2016, after preparing and applying with the Department of Personnel, he was selected as a police recruit. Several months after satisfying all his requirements in the police academy, it was a very proud moment for us to see our son graduating and becoming a full-fledged member of the police force.
- 0:20:24 As a recruit, he began to show his professional leadership qualities and his ability to carry out his assignment. I saw his growth as he was assigned to various units throughout the department. His work ethics was seen by his peers and documented by various supervisors, which created a path for a young officer to become an instructor in the police academy while assigned to the patrol division and other assignments in various special units. Within six years of his career, Delbert Jr. was assigned to the Criminal Investigation Bureau.
- 0:21:16 Once again, his performance was realized, and shortly the day after, he was reassigned to the Homicide Task Force Major Crime Unit, the highest assigned position of policing. This was an overwhelming proud moment, especially for me, as this reassignment was moving him into the very same office position that I was assigned to for some 18 years. Delbert took his profession very seriously.
- 0:21:53 Whether on or off duty, he acted as if he was always on duty. On numerous occasions, I can recall saying to him, Junie, give the radio a break, as transmission from 911 dispatchers can be heard all hours around the clock. I would also hear him on the phone giving other officers both new and seasoned officers' advice on certain issues as if he were their supervisors.
- 0:22:25 He was a believer of officers responding to backup fellow officers and that was something he would always encourage his co-workers to do. He practiced what he preached. Many times he would have to be reminded that he was of duty. He would radio into Central Dispatch notifying them that he was traveling from his home location even though he was not on the clock reflecting on July 4 2023 the day started out wonderful it was a wonderful day where my wife Denise and I were making plans just shortly after Delbert Jr. open and close our front door for the last time approximately 30 minutes after leaving our home, I received that dreaded telephone call. Suddenly, there was nothing unusual seeing a registered name on my phone from a fellow officer. However, what was said after a positive greeting was met with words that struck like a sledgehammer, as the caller mentioned, Corporal Fripps, come quick, Junior was shot. July 4th, Independence Day, St. John's Parade Day, whichever way we find to describe this day, it would never be the same for my family and I. On that dreadful day, Delbert Junior did exactly what he consistently instructed other officers to do in backing up each other.
- 0:24:14 He answered a call to help other officers who were requesting assistance to bring a situation under control. His attempt to render assistance to two of his fellow officers resulted in the loss of his life. Should we be asking ourselves what would have been the outcome on that day when an individual who was heavily armed, done with heavy duty body armor, and in possession of over 200 rounds of ammunition, had taken a position against our law enforcement family. Could we then imagine how many more families would have been mourning today? Delbert's action on July 4th, 2023 was the ultimate sacrifice to the people of the United States Virgin Islands and his fellow officers. He stood by the motto to protect and to serve with his life on that dreadful day.
- 0:25:18 During Detective Phipps' junior short career, he has touched so many lives as he carried out his assignment in a professional manner with everyone he encountered. My wife and I are constantly reminded of the respect, kindness, and professionalism that our son displayed while performing his duties as a police officer in the community. In recent times, I was made aware of a young elementary school student named Bless M. Prosper who chose to honor Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. during Courier Day and by doing his school community project to emulate Detective Delbert I. Phipps Jr. for his assignment. Senators and committee members, my family and I, thank you so much for this prestigious honor of our son, Delbert Phipps Jr.
- 0:26:19 And I would certainly like to say thank you to Honorable Senator Angel Bolquez to propose this bill, to bring this bill forward in honoring of our son. I would like to also say thank you to all of the members of the Virgin Islands Police Department and friends and family who are here today in support of our son. Thank you, Senator.

- 0:26:46 Thank you. Mr. Phipps, Senior. Chief, I'll let the sun go. You had a testimony? Yeah, go right ahead. Afternoon, Senator Lewis and everybody else that's here, part of the legislature. This is my testimony in support of bill number 360191. on July 4th, 2023, the worst thing in the world happened to me. In a fleeting moment, I lost one of the largest pillars of my childhood journey. My mother lost her greatest partner, and my grandparents lost another son. The weeks that followed were a bitter pill to swallow. Not only was there a sudden tsunami of attention shadowing me, but there were a lot of expectations that had taken root as well. Expectations that I never had to go through or process before. Subconsciously, I always knew that it'd be impossible to prepare for such a thing, no matter how much time you spend thinking about it. But that concept can only really be appreciated and understood once it happens. And that was one of many lessons that I had to learn the hard way. When my family came to me and asked to testify for the potential changing of Hospital Gata's street name, I wasn't sure what to do.
- 0:28:22 Writing has been my passion for as long as I could remember myself, yet for some reason I was stuck. Not because I had nothing to say, but because there was so much that I could say that could speak as to why such a decision should be considered, nevertheless fulfilled. Since he's been gone, my grasp on just how much my father meant to the people that he came across has never been firmer and clearer. There's a feeling hard to describe when you're walking down the street one day and somebody recognizes you without even having to say anything. Of course, St. Thomas is a small island. With only 32 square miles, everybody's bound to know somebody. This feeling isn't like that, though. Whenever someone hails you up on the street, usually it's not to pay condolences. In spite of the quiet giant my dad may have been known to by others, to me, my dad also stood everything that a virgin elder should.
- 0:29:18 From young, he taught me respect and how to talk to my elders. He instilled in me the importance of proper greetings. If I didn't say good morning or good night to someone and he found out about it, I'd be in for a lecture when I got home. For as long as I knew him, he was also a man of service. service he was always working to help somebody from his time as a chef cooking and serving food for hungry people to eat his days as a tsa officer ensuring that every plane that took off from the cyril e king airport was safe for its passengers and his most formidable service as a police officer in which he followed in his father's footsteps and was well on his way to becoming even greater but i also remember my dad as a friend behind his shield my father was in involved in everything I did, and he always included me in everything he did, his love of motorcycles and travel, the lazy days of playing video games or working in the garage, us hanging out on our Sunday family days, which usually meant a meal somewhere and a movie, preferably a scary one, as we also had that in common. The fondest memories were of our driving lessons and going out to fish. Admittedly, wish we had done the former way often since he's been gone I felt that I've had impossible shoes to fill my dad pushed me and with him gone I can physically feel the void on my back that's just how deep his impact was my father was a man who could even treat violators of the law with decency and kindness so much so that they even attended his viewing to pay their respects there's not many people who can achieve that level of recognition the The respect that comes from a silent integrity that outlives you, that to present day people unanimously verbalize, that man was a good man. Which is why, when it comes to the decision of honoring a legacy left behind, to erect a symbol that stands for a person's influence on this island and community, my father's name qualifies to be among the greats to be memorialized. When people look up at the brand new sign of a new street, they'll understand what took place for it to get there, as well as the importance of that person for which it has been named. More so, to commemorate his sacrifice, forever etched for those that come after. To hopefully inspire others to do the right thing, no matter what situations they might find themselves in, and with no hesitancy or consideration to personal sacrifice for standing firm. For my father and the love he had for his islands, I can think of no
- 0:31:53 other person who deserves it more. Thank you. Young Phipps, well articulate and to the point. Thank you very much. Thank you. Chief Hajj. Good morning to the Honorable Senator. One second Chief Hajj and just for the public record Chief Hajj is filling in for retired detective Cherise Thomas. Yes sir. Thank you. Proceed. Good Good morning to the Honorable Senator Avery Lewis, Chairman on the Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, and Consumer Protection. All other committee members, members of the 36th Legislature, listening and viewing audience, and everyone present here today. On behalf of the Virgin Islands Police Department, with emphasis on those officers that are assigned to the Major Crime Unit, I am here to testify on Bill number 360191, an act honoring and commending Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. for his service with the Virgin Islands Police Department and to the Virgin Islands community by renaming the portion of Hospital Agada where it intersects with Veterans Drive at the Alexander Farrelly Criminal Justice Complex to the beginning of Maud Proudfoot Drive, the Delbert Phipps Jr. Street.
- 0:33:28 July 4th is a time when our country commemorates and celebrates our Declaration of Independence. Coupled with picnics, parades, backyard barbecues. However, on July 4th, 2023, this particular Independence Day, we mourned. We mourned the tragic loss and senseless killing of our colleague, brother, son, father, and friend. A day that started off as any other day, a call for service, man with a gun, an officer requesting backup, Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. heard the call, and without hesitation, he sprung into action to assist his fellow officers. Without regard for his own safety,

Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. could only think of two things assisting a fellow officer in need of backup and apprehending a dangerous individual detective delbert phipps jr did what he had done time and time again he answered the call that day will be etched in the memory of all of us that knew detective delbert phipps jr Worked with him, bonded with him, and loved him. Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. was a people's person.

0:35:05 Very personable, friendly, and always willing to go the extra mile to assist anyone in need and a true ambassador of these Virgin Islands. Many of us veteran police officers knew Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. as a little boy, then as a young man, then witnessing him walk in his father, Corporal Delbert Phipps Sr.'s footsteps to become a Virgin Islands police officer on December 19, 2016. Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. was then transferred to the Criminal Investigation Bureau on May 17, 2020. On January 6, 2021, after proving himself, he was recommended for the position of police detective. Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. filled a spot in the Major Crimes Unit on October 17, 2021, an area where his father before him served so diligently. Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. at times doubted his abilities because his father, Corporal Delbert Phipps Sr., was legendary in these streets.

0:36:14 And those were some big shoes to fill and enormous steps to follow. Detective Delbert Phipps, Jr. made up his mind that he was not only going to walk the path of his father before him, but blaze a trail all his own. He would often provide words of encouragement and advice to young patrol officers. He was passionate about training new recruits and seasoned officers in his areas of expertise. In the area of investigating some of our territory's most heinous crimes, Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. was efficient and thorough and eager to bring those that violated the law to justice. Ironically, the individual that so viciously dimmed Detective Delbert Phipps Jr.'s light on July 4, 2023, was arrested by Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. on February 24, 2023 for killing another human being.

0:37:22 This community should never forget Detective Delbert Phipps Jr.'s willingness to go the distance when called upon to serve. Detective Phipps' actions on that dreadful day should serve as a reminder that we are gatekeepers, protectors, and peacemakers of this community. We pray that Detective Delbert Phipps Jr.'s legacy and dedication to not only Virginia's Police Department but to this territory is never ever forgotten. We humbly request that the the street currently known as Hospital Lane, or Garda, directly in front of the Alexander Farrelly Justice Complex be renamed in honor of Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. so that when locals and visitors alike see his name, it will be a constant reminder of the ultimate sacrifice that Detective Delbert Ian Boudou Phipps Jr. made to defend his community he so loved. I want you to remember how many times I said Detective Delbert Phipps Jr.

0:38:46 It was intentional. Remember his name. Thank you. Thank you. And before I got to Miss Newton, I just have to say, I didn't know when Buju is sleeping there. I had no FIPs, so FIPs. I didn't know when Buju is sleeping there, so when Captain Snyder called, I said, I didn't want to do anything for Buju. is he coming? You know, we're doing something for Buju. Yeah, I tell you a journey of Buju. I said for three comments in St. Dabbas. Oh my God, Avery. No, FAPS, Delbert FAPS. I said, oh, he knew he had a nickname, sorry, sorry. But anyhow, Ms. Newton, go ahead.

0:39:39 Good day, Honorable Senator Avery Lewis, Chairman of Committee of the Government Operation, Veterans Affairs and Consumer Protection, Senator At-Large Angel Bulkers Jr., and your fellow Honorable Senators. It is an absolute honor and a blessing to be here today to provide testimony in support of Bill 36-0191 and act honoring and commending Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. for his service with the Virgin Islands Police Department and to the Virgin Islands community by renaming the portion of Hospital Garda where it intersects with Veterans Drive at the Alexander Farrelly Criminal Justice Complex to the beginning of Maud Proudfoot Drive, the Delbert Phipps Jr. Street. I know that first I have to speak about Delbert Ian Phipps Jr. a.k.a. Junie Del Buju or Old Man, which were some of the names he would be called by me depending on the mood I was in or if he had gotten me upset. Delbert was not only a colleague, a classmate or a friend. He was my big brother.

0:40:55 He was also my protector, my car guru, my personal chef, my comedian, and my savior, many of times, from frogs, flats on the side of the road, food delivery man, et cetera. Delva was a son of St. Thomas, whose life left a quiet but powerful mark on all who knew him. He was a simple kind of guy who liked nice things, but took pride in working for them. He was in every sense a family man, a gentle giant, loving, peaceful, and grounded in a humility that never sought recognition, yet owned it effortlessly.

0:41:35 He carried himself with a calm strength, the kind that made people feel safe and respected in his presence. I cannot tell you the number of times that I have called him freaking out about my car making some kind of noise, a flat, being hungry, but undecided as to what I want to eat, or even about something my kids did that made me mad. His response would always be, that's what you're carrying on about? And he would fix whatever the issue was and talk about a frustrating situation with the kids, but would always take their side of course. I would always think to myself, how this boy to stay so calm?

- 0:42:18 Delbert was always trying to get me on a motorcycle with him, whether here, Florida, or wherever the crew was going, to be for the bike fest, as I call them. My response every single time would be, not me, not me. You're deaf? I afraid them things. We, I use the word loosely, because it was always me arguing with him about him and these motorcycles. I would always agree that they were beautiful, but they are dangerous. They don't have four wheels and four doors. He would always say calmly, you always were the same story. However, he knew that was because of the love I had for him and did not want anything to happen to him ever.
- 0:43:02 Hence why he would hide his few, but one too many to me. files from me because he didn't want me to hear, he didn't want to hear my mouth. Motorcycles, my cousin Melody, and him quote-unquote retiring from the kitchen were our biggest arguments. Oh, and when he gave little sis Denisha my black Honda SI, it was okay. Little sis, I had gotten one, and he used to love driving it on the roadway when he got the chance. I won't speak too much about that. My biggest fear for him would be that he was involved in a bad accident on his motorcycle and didn't make it. I remember there were many times he used to cook at home or be by Big Brother Delano's restaurant at Noragata. He would call and say, I got something for you. Me. Tis food? I come in right now. Plenty times I would cook and call him asking if he ate yet and tell him swing by the house for food. Once he ate, he would always call or text say, what? Mamiko, cook man. Full well knowing I cook the food. I always look forward to those Thanksgiving plates of food or special occasion plates of food. I would ask him, who cook? And he would always suck his teeth and say, me, meaning him, and Denise, his mother. I would immediately respond and say, one day I'm going to knock you right in your teeth for Carolina by her first name. We would laugh so hard, then he would say, stop. As before, you're going to eat it anyway. You always do. All the time. That thing was rude when he was ready. The last time I harassed him to make harm for the office, he said, you know you're the only person to get me back in the kitchen. I remember the day he told me he was getting a baby. I asked him, with who? He says, Melody. I asked him, Melody who? He say, you's a owl? What with all
- 0:45:05 these who's? I then told him, not for real. Who's she for? He said, looked in here again. Delbert then starts to explain who Melody was and I stopped him in his tracks and said, you know that's my cousin, right? He immediately says, you're lying. You can't be serious. So now I have to deal with two of you. I laughed so hard that day and in his face, but he was truly not well. But he was okay afterwards. Many times throughout the years, he would call or say to me in person, me no wrong with your cousin. I would shut him down and say one thing, your lover, right? Silence instantaneously because he did. And I would always take her side no matter what, he knew this. I remember when I was going into the police academy in 2006 to become a police officer 20 years ago as of February. He was so encouraging and supportive. He would say, I should be in a class with you, but daddy, meaning Delbert Senior, ain't want me to be a police officer. I would tell him my mom either, but they know why. Talk to daddy some more and see if he would eventually change his mind and give his blessing. I I found out today that he gave the blessing, right daddy?
- 0:46:26 Oh yes. So he joined a police academy class in 2016. During his time in the academy class, I was one of his instructors and we had to act like we did not know each other and not call each other by our nicknames. talk about restraint and professionalism, but after class he would call and talk about his day, sometimes question the decision to join based on what occurred that day, and so forth, but would never give up. I was so proud of him when he graduated because he worked hard for it, and plus he had daddy's shoes to fill and his legacy to live up to, better yet, surpass. As an officer and detective, a variety of trainings and certifications. He upheld the law with integrity, always treating others with dignity, no matter the circumstance. He was no nonsense when it came to doing what was right, but his heart was always rooted in service. I cannot count the number of times that I would say to Delbert, choose your battles wisely. You have a son, a family, and you don't have to go run into everything and especially when you are off and done home let the officers do their jobs july 4 2023 is a day that will be forever etched in my mind heart body and soul when i got that call that my brother was shot not knowing how serious his condition was or anything I dropped to the floor on my knees, crying, screaming, wondering what happened,
- 0:48:14 and praying to God, please let Delbert make it. I never would have imagined this would be the call I would be getting. Rushing to the hospital to see my brother in the condition that he was broke me. I know that this bill is based on his law enforcement legacy, but I cannot reiterate enough that beyond the badge he was full of life. He had a stubborn streak that made him determined in everything he pursued. A sense of humor that could lighten any moment and a deep love for the simple joys, especially his motorcycles, which brought him peace and freedom. A proud graduate of Charlotte Amarley High School, class of 1999. Also he's my preschool classmates so that's how far we go back yes he embodied the resilience and spirit of this island we call home he was more than all his titles he was family he was someone who showed love to the meals he prepared his actions and the laughter we shared i'll always smile thinking about how he would tease and quarrel over melody who i insisted was the love of his life and the pride he carried for his son. Those moments reveal the depth of his love and the kind of man he truly was. Delbert never asked for recognition but he lived a life that deserves it. Naming a roadway in front of the Alexander Farrelly Justice Complex is in his honor is more than

fitting. It is a lasting tribute to a man who dedicated his life to justice, service, community and who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the performance of his duties. This recognition ensures that his legacy will continue to guide and inspire all who pass that way. Delbert Ian Phipps Jr. may have walked quietly among us but his impact speaks loudly and today we honor not just his service but the heart of a man who gave so much of himself to others.

- 0:50:24 I support Bill 36-0191, an act honoring and commending Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. for his service with the Virgin Islands Police Department and the Virgin Islands community by renaming a portion of Hospital Garda where it intersects with Veterans Drive at the Alexander Farrelly Criminal Justice Complex to the beginning of Mad Profoot Drive, the Delbert, Phipps, Jr. Street. Thank you.
- 0:50:52 Thank you, Miss Noten. Director Ennis. Honorable Senator Avery Lewis, Chairperson of the Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs and Consumer Protection. Members of this committee, Senator Ray Fonseca, Senator Alma Francis Heiliger, Senator Novelli Francis, Jr., Senator Kenneth L. Gittins, Senator Franklin D. Johnson, Senator Carla J. Joseph, Bill Sponsor Senator Angel Bulkes, and other members of the 36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands not present, and the viewing and listening audience, good afternoon. My name is Gerry Innes, and I serve as the Director of Special Investigations for the Virgin Islands Department of Justice, and I am honored to appear before you today in in strong support of Bill Number 36, that's 0191, an act honoring and commending Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. for his service with the Virgin Islands Police Department and to the Virgin Islands community by renaming the portion of Hospital Gata where it intersects with Veterans Drive at the Alexander Farrelly Criminal Justice Complex to the beginning of Maud Proudfoot Drive, the Delbert Phipps Jr. Street. Before I begin, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to the Honorable Senator Angel L. Bulkes Jr. for sponsoring this timely and meaningful bill. Your leadership in recognizing the life and sacrifice of Detective Phipps Jr. reflects a deep commitment to honoring those who have given so much in service to our community.
- 0:52:33 I stand before you not only in my professional capacity, but more importantly as someone who has known Detective Phipps Jr. from childhood. Both Detective Phipps and I grew up in the streets of Canton, playing Little League, learning life's lessons and navigating the same environment that helped to shape our character. From those early days to later years when we crossed paths again through law enforcement and instruction at the Virgin Islands Police Training Academy, I've had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the discipline, resilience, and commitment that defined him.
- 0:53:13 As was reflected in everyone's testimony today, Detective Phipps was more than an officer. He was a mentor, he was a leader, and he was a brother to many. His passion for training and developing others was unmatched. He did not simply wear the badge, he embodied what it meant to serve. Detective Delbert I. Phipps Jr. made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty that that sacrifice is not just a moment in time, it is a permanent mark on the history of our Virgin Islands and the hearts of those who knew and served alongside him. This legacy is one of courage, selflessness, and unwavering dedication to protecting our community. When I received the initial invitation to testify, I reflected deeply on how best to offer testimony that would be both meaningful and worthy of this moment. The challenge was not finding the words, but ensuring that we adequately capture the depth of Delbert's service, his character, and his lasting impacts.
- 0:54:23 Although the original date was set in March during Virgin Islands History Month, a time when we intentionally reflect on those who have shaped our collective identity, it is no less fitting that we gather here today. In truth, the significance of honoring a life of service such as his is not confined to a single month or date. It transcends time. Our history is not only written in books, but in the lives of those who have given of themselves for the greater good. And Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. stands firmly among those individuals, those whose legacy is not simply remembered, but felt, carried forward, and honored through our continued service. He is what we proudly call a true Virgin Islander, one who rose from his community, gave back to it, and in the highest expression of duty and sacrifice, laid his life down in its service.
- 0:55:21 By supporting this bill, we are not only honoring a fallen hero, we are ensuring that future generations will know his name, understand his sacrifice, and be inspired by his example. To the Phipps family, I extend my deepest respect and gratitude. son's legacy will forever live on in the fabric of this community. In closing, I fully support bill number 36-0191 and respectfully urge this body to pass this measure as a lasting tribute to a man who gave everything in service to others. Thank you for your opportunity to testify. Thank you, Mr. Ennis. Mr. Carr?
- 0:56:07 see if the best will last or just didn't want you to feel bad good morning senator this protocol absorb I would like to first thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony this morning on this matter I also want to express my sincere gratitude that the honorable body for bringing forward a bill that recognizes and honors a great man one who gave his life in service to protect our community. Long before any of us ever thought about joining the police department, Delbert Phipps, Jr and I were best friends. We were the kind of who did everything together from working on cars, building sound systems, and most of all riding motorcycles. To know Delbert, or as we called him, Buju, was a true honor.

- 0:56:52 Buju was the glue that kept all of us connected. Now that he is gone, I can truly see how strong he was. Not just as an officer, but as a friend and as a person he made it a priority to check on you and your family and I was ensuring that everyone was doing well and I guarantee if you say mommy was sick he was following up with you the next day and the next day until mommy got better would you more than that made sure people found joy even during difficult times he had a way of calming every situation before they escalated even if that mean picking up the phone and sending out a text letting everybody meet for lunch to calm that situation that just occurred he was the kind of person that could call at any hour or you could call at any hour without hesitation and all he would do is make that phone call to me right after we got work to do without thinking we would be there together doing what we had to do sadly that same dedication led to the tragic day July 4 2023 while many were heading to St John for Carnival Delbert heard a call for service and chose to respond so did I leaving his breakfast behind in subway and telling me that he's going ahead to travel asking me if I wanted something to eat the calls that were heard on the radio that morning forever he etched in my heart there are many days I find myself questioning why it had to be him why not even me but without that sacrifice a lot more and a lot more innocent people would have died all right that day I didn't lose a co-worker or friends I lost a brother the road being designated in his honor carries a sacrifice far greater than what's got ever expressed. It's a road that leads to the Alexander Farrelly Justice complex, which also carries, or houses the Richard Coward Command,
- 0:58:59 a place where he walked in his father's footsteps, wanting to make a difference within this community. Delbert Boudjou Jr. Delbert Boudjou Phibbs Jr. will always be a hero in my eyes, not because of how he died, but about how he lived. Thank you. Thank you. You weren't supposed to get a motion of? Captain Cologne.
- 0:59:25 Yes, sir. Good afternoon, everyone. Honorable, and I say that with pride, Honorable Senator Avery Lewis and other members of the 36th Legislature. Good afternoon. My name is Maria Cologne. I'm a police captain with the Virgin Islands Police Department. Currently, I'm assigned to the training bureau as the officer in charge. I'm both honored and deeply saddened to provide testimony today. This moment is emotional and challenging. Thank you, Carbo. I don't need it. You need it and I gave you mine. While I understand and respect the honorable intent of bill number 36-0191, the reality is that Detective Delbert I. Phibbs Jr. is no longer with us in physical form.
- 1:00:10 For those of us who had the privilege of knowing and working alongside with him, we could almost hear him humbly saying, Captain, Captain, Captain, I'm good. I don't need all of this. I love my job and I like to train. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to retired Detective Corporal Delbert Phibbs, Sr., who I love him to death, and we worked so long together, so I don't call him Mahawa. He does have a nickname, too, Mahawa. And Ms. Denise Phibbs for allowing us the privilege of knowing and working with your son. He became family to us. The members of the Training Bureau will forever be grateful for countless hours.
- 1:01:01 he devoted day and night to training mentoring and uplifting others I would also like to thank senator Bolquez thank you very much and all those who support this measure respectfully I must give a suggestion and those are no Maria I will give suggestions when I'm not even asked but I will give a suggestion I'm hearing the bill keep saying portion of the hospital gotta road It is my opinion that it should change to see the entire hospital Gardner Road.
- 1:01:39 So I just wanted to put that on the record, like you said, Senator Lewis, earlier. This is history, so I want to put that on the record. It needs to be renamed in his honor as a lasting tribute to his service and sacrifice. Detective Phibbs deserves the entire roadway and not just a portion of it. Naming the entire roadway in his name is meaningful. It is a meaningful contribution to his legacy and the sacrifice he made. Detective Phibbs is a fallen hero of the Virgin Islands Police Department, who gave his life in the line of duty on July 4, 2023.
- 1:02:17 This street will forever bear his name, not merely as a marker on a map, but as a powerful symbol of courage, dedication, and selfless service. Each time someone travels this road, they will be reminded of a man who devoted his life to protecting others and strengthening the foundation of law enforcement in our territory. Detective Phipp served with an end distinction. He was a certified instructor in firearms, OC spray, impact weapons, taser, and use of force. He helped share the professionalism, discipline, and sound judgment of countless officers.
- 1:02:56 His influence extends far beyond the classroom and continues to live on through the officers he trained and the lives they now protect. To his colleagues, he was a trusted professional and a brother in blue. To the police training academy, he was a mentor and a leader. To his loved ones, he was a cherished son, a father, a family member, and a friend, affectionately known as Bujo. While his loss is deeply felt, his legacy is enduring. By naming this street in the honor of Detective I. Phipps Jr., we ensure that his service and sacrifice will never be forgotten. This dedication stands as a public promise that his commitment to duty, integrity, and community will continue to guide us. To the Phipps family, please accept our deepest respect and gratitude. Know that his name, his service, and his sacrifice will forever remain woven in the fabric of this community and the history of the Virgin Islands Police Department. May this street serve as a constant reminder that heroes walk among us and that some give everything so that others may live in safety. On behalf of the

entire Training Bureau of the Virgin Islands Police Department, We thank you for this opportunity, and we support bill number 36-0191, and we are hopeful that it is met favorable by everyone.

1:04:24 Thank you. Thank you, Captain Culloch. Before I go to my colleagues, I have one quick question. I hope you officers are there to get it correct. We're renaming the portion of Hospital Garda where it intersects with Veteran Drive at the Alexander Farrelly Justice Complex to the beginning of Mard Pro Foot Drive, the Delbert Phipps Junior Street. Up in Cologne, illustrate to us in the community, where is that?

1:04:56 Does the roadway in front of the, it's between the parking lot, the police station, the criminal justice. Fort Christian parking lot. Fort Christian parking lot is when you're traveling and Veterans Drive after you pass the legislature, you're traveling east, you turn left, and that roadway, it takes you all the way past Zora Corner, all the way Roosevelt Park, you've passed that area, and to Marfo Drive is the road that takes you up to Marfoley. So we stop in exactly where we call, where would be the whole Lincoln School? Yes.

1:05:29 Yes. That's where we stop in? The ending of Lincoln School, yes. Yes. You do so? Yeah, well, because you're going to go up, well, I'm facing this way here. So you're going to go up the hill, you're stopping right there, the end of Lincoln School, because up that roadway there is Marlboro Drive. So I don't know, the bill keeps saying portion, but it's the whole roadway. I want to say we stop in a little short after where Junior have his records, his flatbed.

1:06:03 It's past that. Past that by the school. By the school, yeah. So when you have to stop before you make the left to go up the hill or make the right? Yes. Thank you. One second. Recording stopped. thank you mr chair what i think is uh important to mention is that when you i don't know if you are going to be pointing in from my perspective but when you reach to the bottom of mart prod foot drive which you would take a left if you're at the stop sign to go up the hill yes um there is the road still continues across the street and that is a residential area so it goes but there's a dead end in there no no no no no no no it's not come to room you're coming come right wrong by ebenezer garden okay okay but i believe that that is the continuation of okay so let me ask this question today of that let me ask this question that is the other portion thank you tangible let me ask this question to captain cologne where does mark powerful end we know it begins here at farrelly justice where does it end it goes all the way up by muffley uh up, up Maffley, up Maffley, go, we'll figure it out, because you see, the roadways, because right after that, when you're buried on the other side by the fish market, that's actually

1:07:57 Hospital Lane, so you have the Hospital Lane, and then the other road goes up, if I'm correct, is um hospital ground drive or something that the road between the ball field where the where the old cemetery is okay so you have different roadways in that area good that's why i know we name it it is it is so fitting when we describe that roadway and as mentioned before yes it is in In fact, the road that Junie would have crossed to enter the station, and it is further fitting because then just beyond where Mad 12th Drive ends, it intersects directly with the same very road that goes through Jayad where he lost his life. So it is a running road if we would say bypass that intersection and continue throughout to where his life ended. straight through jaya that brings the back out to ebenezer garden uh that if you comfortable with it we comfortable with it we'll rename the whole thing well i would propose that senator angel workers you recognize for your point of information thank you mr chair if in fact um that is the the posture of the body to include the present testifiers, I am more than willing to accommodate that request.

1:09:31 At the time, you know, in discussions, you know, we wanted to just name that portion to not have to read, you know. Yeah, I got you. So, but if, in fact, that is the case, I'm more than willing to. Thank you. You know, one of the things I heard today, you know, that was really inspiring, that is that Delbert wanted to be just like you. Better. And better. Yes. So I could tell you for a very long time growing up, nobody couldn't tell Avery Lewis he wasn't going to be a cop.

1:10:10 My dad was a cop. My mother worked in the department. I mean, I born and raised in it. That's right. And my dad, you know, that time, public safety, I could go back to. Not VIP, public safety. Right? And I could tell you. And, you know, my father, my mother brought a shot home. I'm proud. My dad is a cop. I wear a shot so much. I can't hold water. So I know his feelings. I know what he went through. Went to college. I don't know what went wrong. Went into education. Follow Maria and everybody. She didn't tell you she had an elementary education degree, but follow all of them, we went into education, became an educator. But it was just a proud moment. Those who follow behind your dad is a proud moment, you know.

1:10:58 My father was a detective. You couldn't tell me, and I said, this man, I'm getting dressed like a detective today. Let me badge home, but, you know. Senator Franklin Jansen, you're recognized for your four minutes. Good afternoon. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I could figure out why you always act like a police now, I didn't know all of that information you gave out there. I definitely want to say it's one of those bittersweet moments you say congratulations, but at the same time, It's it's a very difficult task I stepped out for a while and It was an easier thing for me to step out for a minute You know what it is like for a parent to bury a child and Your child was in the line of service for the people at his territory So

I say thank you For bringing up your child in a manner in which you did to the point that he wanted to be just like you and, as you say, better.

- 1:12:14 Senior, can you give me a little bit more about your son coming up as a little young star in the Virgin Islands? Tell me something nice about him, a little joke, something that ever so often you go back to laugh about when you think about him. Well, when we talk about Buju, Juni, Delbert, So, he was one, like I said, he was the second of my children. I joined the department back in 1982, so he was just about one year when I joined the department. He pretty much grew up being transported back and forth in police cars, so, yeah, that was one, something that, yes, he certainly grew into.
- 1:13:00 but knowing him even though I said he was the second of our children he would act like he is the first of the children he wanted to boss around everybody he was a protector of the home as a matter of fact it was difficult to even bring anybody at the house because it's like we had to go through him to to get approval he took over my house yeah he took over my garage I mean that's the kind of person he was like everybody say if you know him he was quiet he never required much he don't like fanfare he yes he could crack a good joke on you and yes certainly he's truly miss I've really miss as a matter of fact he was the pretty much the last of our five children that remained in the home since some of them had traveled away so he was always there you could always hear that door opening and before it opened you could always hear police radio you know so i mean he was just too much into that and like i said before the way that delbert jr was was going i was heading in this department i don't think that he had a expectation of just being a police detective he was striving for the high size i've seen him take on recruits train them i've seen him gathered with other officers and just before he died he was preparing for the sergeant's tests and not by himself he drew up his own curriculum and he was teaching people and i'm thankful to say even after he died some of those same officers who he was uh preparing for the tests end up taking the tests passed and became sergeant and I know he too would have been a sergeant and gone much further even towards a possible being a commissioner of our department thank you thank you for taking so
- 1:15:02 heavily again I extend congratulations and I thank the sponsor for bringing this measure it's a heavy heart but it's a it's a blessing in in some sort of disguise thank you very much thank you very much Mr. Chair thank you Senator Thank you. Thank you. Senator Novalee Francis, Jr., you're recognized. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and good afternoon to everyone. Good afternoon to my brothers and sisters in blue. And my mind is all over the place this afternoon, I think, because I've gotten older, I've gotten a lot more emotional.
- 1:15:37 And certainly today has evoked a lot of my emotions just listening to some of the testimony. If there's anything I must say is that my resolve is even made stronger in terms of recognizing Delbert Phipps Jr. Of course, I've had the opportunity to work along with his father. He joined in 1982. I joined in 1987. And after wearing the badge for 25 years, that dreaded call, that dreaded moment is often one that we have all thought about in our career in law enforcement.
- 1:16:12 So I'm reminded by Matthew 5, 9, where there was a special carved out by the Bible that talks about blessed are the peacemakers, for they should be called the children of God. You know, many are called, few are chosen. All gave some, some gave all. That's right. paying the ultimate sacrifice for this community so truly I'm I'm biased my vote is already yes in this measure and I want to take this opportunity to come in on my colleague Senator Bulkens and moving this legislation and of course I'll be signing on to it as well but it's not how this Delbert Phipps Jr. live that made him a hero it's what he died for he died for you and for me he died for carrying out that task that we have all been in law enforcement have been respond community so yes today is a rather agony and painful and I wish I I wish the family didn't have to relive.
- 1:17:36 I'm not sure what's going on with my mic. Senator. On this eve of... I don't know what's going on with this mic. On this eve of Police Week, I think the timing is right for us to be able to recognize the contribution that had been made by Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. I know that there is some amendment that's been moved around and some discussion in terms of the roadway that's to be named and certainly I'm sure by the end of this we'll be able to tweak that. I know that there's a conversation about perhaps naming the street the Delbert Phipps Jr. Detective Delbert Phipps Jr.'s memorial drive again to recognize the contribution that he have made but whatever the decision is that's made final we want to make sure that he's honored in the most prudent way and and again to live his memory so know that that I vote in the affirmative and for this measure and again my brother and colleague there but Phipps a senior I know of the pain and agony that you continue to live in this situation and my heart continue to go out to the family during this difficult time. I have no question. I'm biased. My vote is yes. And again, I'm sorry that you had to endure this, but your son have made the ultimate sacrifice on this committee. None of us could question the work of the Almighty, but we all know that we have lost a hero. And for that, We want to ensure that it's enshrined in the annals of the Virgin Islands community forever.

- 1:19:31 Thank you very much, and again, God bless his family, his son, his mother, his father, his brothers, sisters, everyone, as well as his extended family, the Virgin Islands Police Department. Blessings. Thank you, Senator Francis. Thank you, Senator Novel E. Francis Jr. I'll ask you, Chief Hodge, I'll ask you a question. I know the captain for training is there, but I'll just ask you this. Do you think we as a department, and I say we, in the position of the year, could we have done anything different that morning? That's a very difficult question. I think that if you knew Detective Delbert Phipps Jr., I don't think there was anything you could have said to him that would have stopped him from running to assist an officer in need. To get into the specifics as to... No, no, no, no. That's what I want to say. I would not.
- 1:20:46 So I would have to say that there was nothing that we could have said to him that would have stopped him from assisting a fellow officer. So I would imagine after that we had more training and more everything? We are constantly, unlike what most people think, our training division is second to none. We train every law enforcement post-certified officer in the territory, and we are constantly in training. We don't just train because something occurs, but we use things that happen to help us to better train.
- 1:21:30 But we are constantly in training. Thank you. No problem, sir. Dad, I'll say this. i you know i thought delano was a chef yeah he was but i know finding out no boojo on the hand too he was too good good good good good good so you and mom did a good job passing on the recipe anyhow next is senator carla joseph and thank you so kindly mr chairman a pleasant good day to everyone. I want to, first of all, say how, how much I'm thankful to my colleague that he saw is fitting to name this street, this portion of the street, after this Virgin Islands hero. Because that's what you are. That's what he is. Sometimes we don't see the heroes. They walk around here nonchalant, unassuming, but when it comes time for them to step up and make that positive difference, they do. And so I want to commend the bill's sponsor and also his family for being here today to give their support of this measure. Now I wanted to ask a question of Mr. Delbert Phipps Sr. Corporal? Yes, Senator. Retired Corporal?
- 1:23:02 Yes, Senator. Yes. Did you and your son serve in the VIPD at the same time? No, we did not. I retired back in 2012. He joined the department back in 2016. Pretty much while I was active, he himself would have wanted to join the department at but circumstances did not put that forward. So when I retired that was the part that he really wanted to take and he ended up taking a part. It speaks volumes to me when you see a child go into the same profession as a parent. It shows that he valued the work that you did at home. He saw it because I know in your testimony you you mentioned that he rode around in the the vehicle yes with you we need more fathers like you in this this island i'm going to tell you that need more fathers who are able to stand up and to have children who are brought up well and to be able to to serve our community.
- 1:24:23 I always, there's a nice hymn, I like it, you know, rise up ye men of God. And your son demonstrated that and he had to have come from that home and from you. So I know Father's Day is not here yet. If I can say, Senator, it's not a practice that the department would have actually encouraged driving around your children in a police vehicle my children were somewhat lucky because i was one of those uh early officers who was uh given a privilege to take home an unmarked vehicle and because of the job i did for many years you could say i somewhat got away with driving around my children in a police vehicle so they got that opportunity but to say to put them in a police marker that was not against i mean that is not police procedure and i would not encourage that but yes so confession is good confession is good confession is always good the good silver himself was one of those who were privileged to be taken home in the police car as well oh he was he was also so privileged but confession is good but the see it was the parenting the parenting um that i am looking at okay even though it was not within the policy and i'm saying that all of the human beings who have the unmarked cars now do not do it okay those days are over try not to do it because this is a different time we live in okay very different from when your son was growing up your children and the chairman was uh a young star i can't even imagine that you were young mr chairman yeah your your old fellow here anyhow so i i really want to uh commend you as a father and your parenting skills now i want to ask about the motorcycles i like motorcycles if you didn't know
- 1:26:26 and I do, and I would love to be able to ride one. Tell me, Mr. Carr, about his love. I heard my time, Mr. Chairman. A long time ago, but finish up. I just heard it just now. Yes. Tell me about his love of motorcycles. Tell me how much that he enjoyed that and what role it played in his life to be able to ride on a motorcycle that is a great scale in my book motorcycles for him was life motorcycle was the escape when the realities of the job got strenuous or the cases got rough that was his way of just escaping and sometimes even processing things he owned two motorcycles at the time before his death, one that we put together for years and years, years and years. One of the fastest bikes here in the Virgin Islands was a Turbo Hayabusa 2008. Wow. Then he also bought a 2023 Hayabusa that he said that would be for his son. We flew to Puerto Rico, he bought my ticket, called me and said, hey, you calling in sick tomorrow? No. So we don't encourage that either.

- 1:27:41 that's right do not encourage those things I said I said no I asked he said well okay I just buy you a ticket we go in Puerto Rico for the weekend bought the bikes brought it over and and that was just it everything about it was bikes and um I don't know if he knew something was going on but the conversations prior and that was the goal he owned two I owned three and we just that was just our escape when the days got rough for supervisors or the job wasn't going according to plan we would just take those things for a ride mom moms would cuss and um daddy wanted them out of the garage but no matter what we we got in there and that was that was our time and to help others in the community and to work on those bikes were just our passion thank you i'm going to definitely sign on and just as a preface to uh police week Next week, I want to salute all of you.
- 1:28:45 Salute every single one of you for your work that you do in our community to protect and serve us. And know that we value your service. We do. I most certainly do. But don't do the abuses anymore, okay? It's a different time. Thank you so kindly, Mr. Chairman, for the time. I appreciate it, and I will be voting for this resolution. Thank you. the only vip to get their children a ride okay but we ain't encouraging it so that i'm having blighted you're recognized for your forbiddance thank you mr chair and good afternoon again to the people of the virgin alms good afternoon testifiers and thank you so much for your testimony your kind words um i must say to our In respect to the testifiers, especially many of his colleagues, you know, as you stated, he was not just your colleague, but he's like a friend, a brother from another mother. So Mr. Callamey, actually, in that respect, I know the Chair talked about, made a joke about Bujo and he thought Bujo was coming.
- 1:29:57 How did he come up with the name Bujo? That was years ago. The story is, his favorite artist was actually K. Poulton, but being in and living in Dewey Tuna over time and his love for reggae music and music in general just developed that nickname and many others from Sam to Dell to different things, but Bujo just stuck with all of us and he just carried that presence. Okay, very well. And Senior, how are you doing?
- 1:30:32 That's pretty good, thank you. Let me ask you about your son. Because I know, but I don't know, but I know it's very difficult to lose any loved one must let your son. And as a former detective yourself, and knowing the feel you're in, and to have such a tragedy occur at such a time in terms of why we were doing a celebration, et cetera, like carnival. Let me ask you this in terms of that moment. You know what? Let me don't ask you because I don't think it's appropriate at this time. Let me don't ask you.
- 1:31:23 I know that in terms of the testimonies, though, I just want to reiterate some of the stuff that was said that really touched me in terms of your son. He was a great man, one who gave his life in service to protect our community. Yes, go ahead. He made sure people found joy even during difficult times. He had a way of calming situations before they escalated. he was a kind person and he was the type of person you could call at any hour and would answer without hesitation ready to help that's a remarkable person, a remarkable human being also it was said that he had a passion Ms. Colum for training and developing others and that his training was unmatched Can you speak to me about that?
- 1:32:20 Yes. First, there's a little history behind Phibs being interested in training. He was in a police academy for over eight months. Longer than the norm, but what happened at the time, there were transitions of leadership in a training academy. So when I came, I was assigned there, I inherited his class. I had to do an assessment of the curriculum that was done and ensure that whatever they took was completed and done properly. Well, I had some courses that, of course, they were not done properly with the hours, so I had to give them the bad news that basically not starting over, but there were some classes that had to be done the proper way to meet the the curriculum that was required so from then I know I pull him in my office because I know him from a little boy also because I work years with his dad and I had a conversation with him and he was frustrated and flustered because he was there so long and you know I explained to him the process what had to be done and from then like you know I was a lieutenant at a time I respect that I understand what is being done because we don't want to be out there not properly prepared when he graduated out to the academy he showed potential he used to come to any trainings that we held and i want to thank the chief too because the chief did mention that we do a lot of training throughout the year not because it's not publicized doesn't mean that we don't do numerous hours of training with different scenarios different firearms training different trainings that we conduct to include sensitivity training that was discussed in an earlier hearing so um phib showed potential he always especially it started off with firearms he he always wanted
- 1:34:12 to learn learn more always assist us he was that type of officer that although he was not assigned to the training bureau he was one of those individuals i used to come and assist taking Taking down the targets, helping us with the line, meaning the firing line, asking questions. Always want to know more and was willing to learn. So I saw the potential in him, discuss it with the staff in the training academy, and we made him an instructor. So we observe him teaching, we put him to the classes that were required, and the last course that I'm, if I'm correct, that he did was a use of force instructor course. intense course that all of us were required to attend and he did very well he was this individual that when we had

challenges um particularly on the range where somebody was had had difficulty shooting he was the one that we break for lunch he will tell the person you go ahead and eat something quick and you come down on the line with me and by the time he was finished with them it was success very well mr chair including i will say um what what inspired me to see he was a young detective and he was really moving up the ladder quickly and i'm sure his son who is here right now is proud to hear all that he had done did it at such a young age i want to thank all of you for your service and thank you so much for the chef return thank you demel i'll ask you what's the future for you um i don't think i'm getting into police work anytime soon but it is on my mind admittedly because that was also when when i used to see him like go out to work and stuff i always wanted to know like what that was like i mean i had some experience

1:36:06 with it because I'm gonna admit I was also in the police car so that is a familial thing but but I I don't know like what is it in for my future now because I said before like I like to write so I want to hopefully be an author someday but if you know life deals me the hand of police work i don't think i'll be too mad at that thank you thank you you're going to be the best at whatever you want to be his father his grandfather his great grandfather who i met on the force back then was the nonsense so he too was also into law enforcement his great grandfather oh okay great great great great great Senator Alma-Francis, hi, Lega.

1:37:04 Good day to my colleagues. Good day to the testifiers. Good day to those here in the chambers. I want to really express my gratitude for what we're doing here today. Any time that we as a body come together to do something where we memorialize someone that did such a sacrifice, I think it's a blessing for us to have that named after him. Because no matter what, he'll always be remembered. and when we could do things like that so that people will never forget the sacrifice mr. fifth made that is a blessing in itself I want to thank my colleague for bringing forward this piece of legislation I I want to I want to talk to his son first I know you talked a little bit earlier about you You know, you wish you had an opportunity to do more things with your dad. And you just talked and hinted about the possibility of heading into that field. Do you think, what did your dad want for you?

1:38:23 Do you, all the time that you spent with him. You know, a lot of times when, as parents, we might want to see our children going a particular direction. Or we want more for them than we might want for ourselves. Tell me a little bit about what he often talked to you about, or what did he want for you? My dad, he didn't really want anything specific, but what he always did tell me was that just do whatever I wanted to do, and he'd be there to support. Excellent. I like that.

1:39:01 You know, because when I was growing up, my stuff that I wanted to do, it always was changing. so I was always into some new thing by the week so he never he it got to a point where he never used to really ask me what I wanted to do because I'd always have something different to tell him but the consensus was that you know whatever I ended up choosing and ended up sticking with that I'd always he'd always be there to help me with it like I remember one time I got really into making videos like on the internet to post so he ended up buying me like this huge like tripod thing but I couldn't do anything with it because he didn't have a camera so it kind of just like stood in my room and I just didn't use it and then you know I moved on to the other thing but that was just the kind of person he was he was always like trying to help me he was a supportive parent yeah and I love to hear that yeah just like how it seems like he supported this department, even with you as his son, you know, it's good when parents just allow children to be children, be who they are, and let them find their way. So I think that's a great thing that you shared with us. I want to ask from the department standpoint, since this situation happened, what are some of the things that's changed that potentially were a direct impact of the loss of Officer Phipps. Yes.

1:40:35 One minute. What we would expect is, you know, paying the ultimate sacrifice puts you in a position where you kind of feel that, just like Carr mentioned, that he felt like it should have been him and why Phipps? So you start to feel somewhat guilty or you feel bad because when one of your loved ones or your colleagues pays the ultimate sacrifice, it puts you in a peculiar position. And I think what we would expect is that we as officers remember the importance of supporting each other, continuing to back up each other and not use that as a reason not to.

1:41:24 more so now than then we are we need to be our gatekeepers of not just the community but for each other so it just kind of motivates you to do more to be more trained and you come into work more prepared physically, mentally you know just being ready for anything because anything can happen Okay, could I ask my final question? I had about 10 but I look like in game 3 I want to ask, what qualities that Detective Phipps had left a lasting impact on the officers that no matter what, it could be a situation, you know, it would remind you of him, that it had that impact on you in a positive way?

1:42:17 I think it would go back to the same thing. He was always there for everyone. If you needed assistance, and I think we've heard it throughout most of the testifiers, back up, he was there, leaving his breakfast behind. Director Newton talked about needing him to help her with her mechanical issues, removing frogs, dealing with her own family matters. There's so many, there's a myriad of things that were mentioned just in this short time that would speak to his character. and I think that we can all learn from it and continue to be there for each other based on especially the fact that he lost his life

doing exactly that, helping someone else. Okay.

- 1:43:02 Well, I appreciate the responses. I will be definitely supporting this legislation. I know they spoke of an amendment to potentially add memorial. I'm not sure how that's going to work out, but I'll await while everything comes forward. but i definitely do support naming this partial street after um detective fifths thank you so much mr chair for the additional time thank you clipper joseph you're recognized for your four minutes good off good off thank you mr chair and good afternoon to the testifiers and good afternoon to the family and to the parents i too have lost a son and regardless of how long we live we just continue to pray for coping skills to continue to live on and for young men um i i i take the same kind of sentiment you allow your chair and them to kind of choose a path um we take time we spend time with you guys and when the time comes you you still have to choose a direction that you feel that you could feel feed your family by i i encourage young men and woman that whatever your parents did for a living if it could take care of you then over time if you choose that same field you should be able to take care of your family as well without question um any individual that would be a good friend to anybody else if i have been through the police academy myself and i you you don't meet a lot of folks that actually takes time on their own to come out and help training that that speaks a lot of volume of the character of the individual
- 1:44:59 so i know to myself when i look at he spent devoted hours devoted his day his night in many training incidents that's that's that again that speaks a lot of volume and to end up living to the ultimate price which is in the line of duty um i i i take my hats off and And I know to myself that the families, the friends, they're going to be forever missed. So to the bill sponsor, I support. I support in this measure regardless of what. If it's a short street, the long street, whatever. Whatever we end up with, I support in it. Because I feel that you have to continue to make sure in that line of duty, nobody ever knows if you're coming home.
- 1:46:11 And it goes for firefighters, it goes for prison guards. Once you're on the line in any job, you just never know. So some families are lucky enough to finish a career, be able to retire, and could have conversation about it. And some others will have the shard fall, just like this family did. And they will still have to speak about the good days. One minute.
- 1:46:39 And speak about the actual sorrow. To his close friend, I mean, how is going to work? how is going to work without him how has that been how has that affected you personally which one you're talking about everybody everybody good friend but I know if they're going to Puerto Rico together they get more to say I would swear that this is the closest one I did not call in sick it was my dear you said on your testimony rewind it No, they say it's not.
- 1:47:18 Yeah, he was out. Yeah, he was out. Thank you. Okay, okay. You know, to be honest with you, it's been about three years, and it's never been the same. The first couple of weeks is just being strong for everybody else. You never had time to grieve. You never had time to process anything. You just had to continue, because even while processing that scene for him calls for service from this community keep coming in time it doesn't stop um and and it only take i i would say it's only now that i'm starting to realize that i can't pick up the phone on hard days to call i can't i can't reach out other days when i i probably ride my motorcycle once every two or three months now just to make sure the passion the the wanting to see that person next to you or that phone call when you need to do that servicing it just can't happen anymore and it's never been the same and it never will be the same i i clearly i clearly understand so and to all you guys i mean always in support of the guys in blue anyway ladies ladies and gentlemen and i'm happy i i explain i explain my gratitude to the chief you know when she became that we we we're in the era where I know for myself I don't have a problem with woman being the boss because most of my career woman been the boss I've been in the fire service and until I became the director of fire service I always had to report a lady so ain't no problem I feel you guys could do just as good as us maybe sometime even better because you have a little chip on your shoulder to work a little harder to make sure you do a little more. Do a little more. But thank you guys for the response, and I'll be supporting this
- 1:49:14 measure. I'm not a part of this committee, but I'll be supporting it when they do reach the Rules Committee, because I know it's coming. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you. Senator Gittins, you're recognized for your four minutes. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and good afternoon to all, Mr. Chair, a.k.a. Lieutenant Lewis. Detective Corporal Phibb Senior, how are you today?
- 1:49:46 I'm pretty good, Senator. You know, let me first say happy Police Week to all my brothers and sisters in blue. Police Week coming up. This is a time that we usually recognize the good deeds of the men and women in blue, and even the civilian staff, while they're here with us, that they could receive their flowers. today we're here to recognize a fallen brother who's not here to receive his flowers but we heard or we've heard the testimony of his commitment and dedication to the people of the Virgin Islands, and specifically to the district in which he worked. Now, I first want to commend the bill's sponsor, Senator Bulkis Jr., and he beat me to the punchline with this one, but it was a good call on his behalf in honoring and commending Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. for his dedicated service and ultimate sacrifice to the people of the Virgin Islands. And although I didn't have an opportunity to work alongside Detective Phipps Jr., I did

have an opportunity to work alongside his father, Detective Corporal Phipps Senior, whose professionalism, I must say, and commitment to law enforcement also left a lasting impression on me. So it was good serving with you, Detective Corporal.

1:51:43 Thank you, Senator. After discussions with the bill's sponsor, and even Senator Francis, and a brief conversation with the good chairman, a.k.a. Lieutenant Lewis. We have a running joke with that, because sometimes he thinks he's his father. You remember his dad, right? Oh, yes. Oh, yes. No, no, no, no. So, all of them whom understand the traditions and the dignity associated with honouring fallen officers you know I would like to offer an amendment in an amendment number 36 that's 812 to clarify the recognition is being bestowed posthumously and to ensure that the street naming convention appropriately respect reflects Detective Delbert Phipps, Jr.

1:52:40 One minute. Memorial Street. The amendment would not be offered today as it was just submitted last evening. But once I've discussed with the entire committee and also have a conversation with you two, Detective Corporal Phipps, Sr., I'll be calling you on this as well. Um, once we have our conversation, then I will, uh, be in a better position to offer it at the next, uh, step. But again, we want him to be properly recognized for his distinguished service and sacrifice in the line of duty.

1:53:25 and lately i haven't uh been uh in full agreement we haven't been in full agreement uh captain colong and i but today she made a statement there that i i must agree with when i read the bill uh mr chair i think i heard time call make conclude conclude senator when i when i heard her speak to uh the naming of the partial a partial area of the road that came to mind too why partial and not the entire street so hopefully um we're able to iron that out i totally agree with the captain on that that once we're doing this that we do the entire street name. Again, this is what's nationally used to honor fallen officers and serves to clearly denote that the designation commemorates his service and sacrifice in the line of duty.

1:54:32 And so therefore, I respectfully ask all the committee members and the rest of the body at the appropriate time for a favorable consideration of both the resolution of this bill and the amendment when and if it's offered. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to all the men and women in blue for all that you do. And again, happy National Police Week as it comes up this Sunday, and on a special day as well, Mother's Day. Thank you. Thank you, Senator Zagete. Senator Fonseca?

1:55:18 Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair, and good afternoon to all the viewing and listening audience and colleagues and all the testifiers. um you know my my mother retired as a police officer and so did my aunt i i don't remember if i had an opportunity to get a little driver wrong but i may have you know um this is a important honor um i couldn't miss this opportunity to come and cast my vote i i know well both the father and the mother and I know that you've retired with the police and your wife also retired in the health profession that's good I think is about two years ago she did about 30 years 33 years yes so the whole family you know has served the community you know in the military this type of family is called the gold star family. So this family is a Virgin Islands gold star family and the gold star families in the military get certain benefits and privileges that no other families are afforded. So we have to look, you know, and see how we can, you know, juice it up a little bit. I'd like to congratulate the bill sponsor, very important and I think I think your wife is a member of the stroke support group right yes she is and are you a member as well I am always there well you know I am I'm so glad that you and your wife attend the meetings because you know that's something that I want my colleagues to understand how important it is because we want to make sure that we can provide assistance to those members of

1:57:25 the stroke support group because those people in our community are at risk for immediate emergencies. And so, you know, Delbert Phipps Jr. was 42 years old. I think he was 42 years old. That is correct. Yeah, when this tragedy healed. And I agree, we can do the whole street up by Jaya there. It comes wrong about by the graveyard and on. So I wanted to ask you, because I know there's been some other tragedies in the family as well. How are you doing?

1:58:05 How are you doing? Well, I guess we're very strong. I guess we lost our first son in 2014. Our third son suffered with COVID in 2020 and died, and then Delbert Jr. in 23. So we lost three of our sons in just a matter of nine years' time, thereabout. But we're still holding. One minute? We're thankful for the support. Yes, and, you know, my condolences and blessings. I know that's incredible. is not many families, Virgin Islands, Gold Star families, has had to endure those kinds of personal pain and suffering and tragedies. And I'd like to congratulate you because I know you're a loving couple. You're excellent.

1:58:53 The Madam Rose Chair mentioned that we need more fathers like you, and that's awesome because, you know, when you step up, Your son followed in your footsteps, and it's fitting to note, right, that your son thought so highly of you that he decided to follow in his father's footsteps. You know, that's very important, and we need to see some more of that. So I'd like to ask Captain Cologne in the academy, tell me how Detective Phipps was. I understand he was a cops, cops, but give me a little bit more detail.

- 1:59:36 Well, he was, I would say he was very stern, but he was more on the quiet side. He was that gentle giant that he had this charisma about him with communication. So he was stern with the recruits, he was stern when he thought, but he was more of a molder. He would take his time. If he had to teach the same thing 10 times before they got it, that was him. That was our to-go guy, and he's missed every day. Every recruit class, we talk about him. If Fibs were here on the range, this would have already taken place. He was a contributor to, we have something as a simulator, a virtual reality training system. he bought the surroundings surround some for our system go he like no this need to be louder so he bought it out his pocket and contributed that you so operate the system like I said he was he was this person that no matter how many times you call him or what you need him for he's always there along with after Carter we miss because he gone to work with another agency now so they used to work as a as a good team you know and I saying that you could probably come back if you feel like but you know all in all i'm just saying that he was he was a very helpful individual i honestly i was trying to take him away from the unit that he was in to come to the training academy to teach full time but he was like between a rock and a hard place he was a major crime where his dad was and i don't think that he wanted to leave there because he didn't want to hear his father's mouth but he still used to love to train so he used to split his time between assisting us with
- 2:01:25 training and doing his detective work thank you and congratulations to the senator from st john i definitely have signed on to this bill and i definitely will be casting a vote in affirmative mr chair thanks for the extended um time thank you senator fonseca point of information senator Frances. Thank you so much Mr. Chair. While I too at the beginning of this process wanted to know why it said partial because I was like I was up in arms oh my god why you didn't what is this partial about and when I found out exactly why my colleague stopped where he did I supported him a hundred 100%. I don't think we're looking at it from the entire stretch of the street, but I'm also looking at it from a legal standpoint, because once we name that street after Detective Fitz, anything that happens there, his name is always going to be called with it. And until we make the effort to clean up that area, I really don't want his name to be constantly being called in Pete teamed up with a lot of negatives and you know you're calling his name and then oh oh i don't think that's best for him because that is what's going to legally go down in a document so until we as a community and even the police department say you know what we'll clean up there so it's worthy so that at the minute we do what we gotta do we could come back and extend it later on but for me I don't want to associate his name right now while we're still battling a lot of issues that happen in that area. So that's why I'm saying what I say.
- 2:03:12 Okay? Thank you. Makes sense. Makes sense? Thank you. Senator Hellegard. Senator Volquez? Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon, Mr. Chair. afternoon colleagues and the listening and viewing audience um it's been a semi good day but i understand and know that you know um different energies come up a little bit you know when we go into the discussion because we're remembering a very awesome and great person and unfortunately we lost him too soon um but nevertheless um i want to thank each and every one of you because each and every one of you had to have the strength and the fortitude to be here today so i personally want to thank you for coming here and sharing with us and giving us your you know presence um to help move this forward and um with what i'm hearing here with my colleagues um definitely it's going to go all the way um i wanted to say that we all kind of end up in a police car but it's just the reason you don't want to end up in a police car for the wrong reason so if you're driving around with your father and stuff like that i could understand that you know but um public service is is interesting i must say i've never served in your capacity but But I, from the outside looking in, I see that it's not easy.
- 2:04:56 And I commend each and every one of you for that. And young man, you speak very, very, very well. Your parents have done a wonderful job with you. I see your mom back there smiling and glowing. And your grandparents, everybody, I know you have a good structure around you. You seem very intelligent and keep up the good work, do well and do great things. Thank you, Salton. One thing I want... You're welcome. One thing I wanted to mention, I know we're talking about the motorcycles, but it was the Love City Riders. I make sure I get that straight.
- 2:05:30 Okay? Love City Riders. Okay? Make sure I get that straight. That's you nodding over there, Mr. Carr. And I did not know he liked Capleton. That's one of my favorite artists as well. Yeah, if I had known, I would have wear the fire suit today. But, yeah, one of my favorite artists. I also wanted to thank Senator Avery Lewis because we have been coordinating and communicating with him for a while. This bill was prepared, and we had looked at February 1st, then it moved to March, and then the parents had to leave and travel, and everything worked out well because we're going right into police week. And you know when God works and when his hand is in everything, everything just works out perfectly. So everything worked out exactly how it needed to. And I really just wanted to ask one question, just to the whole panel.
- 2:06:26 If they would be willing to share maybe one funny or memorable or unforgettable, you know, moment. One minute. They wanted to share with the listening and viewing audience and us here in the chambers. That always brings a smile to your

face, you know, when you think about Delbert Phipps Jr. so we could start on whichever side wants to begin first we're going to start here so the captain talked about training and one of the training that is required for you to be an instructor is known as idc instructor development course and i'm one of those instructors so in order for for fips or any other officer to train at the academy you have to take that course it's a very extensive course that a lot of hands-on and one of the activities you had to talk about it was a lot of presentations and one of the one of the concerns that one of the presentations that he did to pass the class time was about his son he talked about some his son was at the time living in the States so he used his son as the platform to do his presentation and at that moment I realized that that was his number one focus and there's one that troubled me just before he passed his son had a birthday April. It was April, right? And it was a busy time of the year, and he wanted a cake. And I couldn't do it. But it bothered me, but now I make every birthday cake for him. And I look forward to making that cake for him, because it's what he wanted for him.

2:08:23 So my fun fact is that I know that he loved his son, and he showed that love all the time. oh awesome was it vienna no he changed his all the time right now he's red velvet no cookies and cream sorry cookies and cream uh well senator ball case i think my testimony gave a lot between the frogs and him trying get me on motorcycles and that's always a fight right born on still up to now he will never if he were here today still the same thing you crazy or nothing I don't know.

2:09:02 It's not really, well, I guess it's kind of funny, but I smile when I think about it. My dad used to have a Mustang a long, long time ago. And when he used to take me with him, he used to do burnouts in the street because he knew it would make me laugh. Not heavily populated, please. Don't get me like that. But it kind of like, Ever since now, like, I hear something loud coming down the street, I kind of, like, instantly start smiling because it reminds me of it.

2:09:36 And I guess that's one of the reasons I also like the bikes so much because there's a picture of me on the same blue bike smiling heavily. And, you know, I still like it. So, you know, hopefully I get to ride it with his other friends. Nice. I still have his Love City jacket. So, you know, I'll be on the street. I'll wear it. All right. All right. Thank you. As much as we talk about him and his motorbikes, Vernon mentioned escaping. He didn't just jump on his bike to escape with work issues. Even at home, if we spoke to him too hard, before you realize, he took up his helmet, open the door and he jump on his bike. Now Junie know that his mother especially had this thing about him jumping on this motorcycle because again like it was mentioned they only have two wheels so he had a way of riding and there's a stretch under my house before he gets up to a heaping curve and even though he can ride his bike up there in a gear he would willfully wait until he gets under a window he rev the bike shift down he's like to say he's coming and we kind of miss that i mean you know every time you watch this bike and you can think of that uh yeah so yeah he'll let you know i'm back home safe everything is all right you know so don't worry right always a pleasure to see you under these circumstances sir likewise senator yes sir We have spoken about Detective Phipps' professional career, but we haven't mentioned his love for cologne.

2:11:26 Detective Phipps had a love for cologne, and you could smell him before you see him, and you know, he had a really good sense of taste when it came to cologne, so that's one of the things I miss, you know, you know, that's what I miss about him. Before you go, sorry, your title, Chief Cologne, still? No, Cologne, no, I was talking to Cologne. Captain, sorry, Captain Cologne, before you go, I'm wondering here, because when you said that, Mr. Innes, Ms. Davis was over there smiling, so I'm assuming that the Cologne attracted her to him. So.

2:12:05 Well, that's interesting that you said about the Cologne, because my captain texts me also and tells me, don't forget to mention the Cologne, because that's we know what we assign him or when even we smell him before we see him so that was one thing that we still miss but another thing that was funny to me that I always remember and when I saw Corporal Phibs I would never call him Delbot so I like Phibs why your father named you Delbot he like this old time boxing kids think they always wanted him their first child be after the father. So I'm like, okay, at the time I was sending him to travel 235 for Taser. So I say, Phibs, tell me the correct spelling of your name. Because it's D-E-L-T-H. D-E-L-B-E-R-T.

2:12:57 But I think it had some place, T-H. There's a T-H. There's some place in the department that had him under T alone. So I said, listen, it's a confusion with the Delbert and the delbert i i don't know this this h this sink it's h so that was funny to me because when i see the name and it was a big confusion with with finance too he couldn't get his money to travel because he would not i don't know if you knew this fibs he would not put on the h after the delbert he he no no he wanted i dropped it he wanted the h he wanted the h and you dropped the h somebody dropped the h and somebody added t so that was funny to me because this this thing became a whole topic of conversation for a whole hour with the th and the h so the cologne yes and the name of the spelling is something that i remember him by and of course we miss him daily in training because he had this charisma about him that any little difficult or little hiccups that we had with training somebody or providing remedial or anything he used to be there he was like that charismatic individual they used to just come in and wave it across and by the time he done do that we get this individual properly trained thank you uh well you know so much stories to mention some not even appropriate for the floor here but um now that we mentioned training um

firearm straining is something we took very serious but they get one person that or two people i used to take it just a little more too serious than us one sitting to the left and one sitting in the back on the left and the deal was once i run in the line they'll both have to run the distraction for the captain and keep her in her car just talk to her because she don't need to know that this is the fourth or fifth time this person going you got distract her bro i

- 2:14:53 I'm going to get her to qualify, let me just get it done. You know that they didn't work all the time, right? We know. Because you used to call us to the car after and say, you think I don't know what the two-hours do? But we got through, and we got our officers trained. And even after passing, we instilled in them and that structure for firearms qualifications and the seriousness of being ready. And I thank police department now for even, it was hard before, but they stepped up that firearms training to a whole new level after that. I'm not talking about standing up and shooting, putting you in high-stress situations, firing shots next to you while you are trying to qualify, and for the captain and the new captain to always accept the trainings that we, Delbert and I, always brought forward, even though others would think, hey, that might be a little too risky, but we put people in real-life situations and train them how to act while on the street, preparing them for anything.
- 2:15:50 Thank you so much. And Mr. Chair, one last thing, if you don't mind, please. I just wanted to mention that yesterday was Mr. Phipps' mother, Ms. Denise Phipps' birthday. So I wanted to publicly wish her a happy, happy belated birthday. God bless you and wish you many more. I tell you, man, Taurus and rule. Taurus. Taurus. We Taurus. Good, good. A lot That was said here today, and I think it was all great, a great morning, starting with Miss Captaville, and now we're down to Delbert Phipps.
- 2:16:24 Just for the record, it was Captain Cologne who said that Stinkets have a own language, a own T and H, okay? Not the legislature. So I ain't losing no vote, talking about Zinkets, I'm Captain Cologne. That's what Phipps tell me, that's what Bojo tell me. Not the legislature. I do have a motion. Senator Carla Joseph, recognize for your motion. Thank you so kindly, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman and colleagues, I move that bill number 36-0191, an act honoring and commending Detective Delberth Phipps Jr. for his service with the Virgin Islands Police Department and to the Virgin Islands community by renaming the portion of Hospital Garda where it intersects with Veterans Drive at the Alexander Farrelly Criminal Justice Complex to the beginning of the Maud Proudfoot Drive, the Delberth Phipps Junior Street, be favorably voted upon in this committee, the Committee on Government Operations, Veteran Affairs, and Consumer Protection and forwarded to the Committee on Rules and Judiciary for further action and consideration.
- 2:17:49 I so move. Second. Second. Third. Bill number 360191, an act honoring and commending Detective Delbert Phipps Jr. for his service with the Virgin Islands Police Department and to the Virgin Islands community by renaming the portion of Hospital Garda where it intersects with Veterans Drive at the Alexander Farrelly Justice Complex to the beginning of the Marth Profoot Drive. The Delbert Phipps Jr. Street has been properly moved by Senator Collard, Jay Joseph seconded by Senator Ray Fonseca, Senator Alma Frances Hylliger, Senator Kenneth Gittins. Alma Frances Heiliger? Yes. Senator Frances Heiliger? Yay. Senator Kenneth L. Gittins? Yes. Senator Gittins? Yay.
- 2:19:06 Senator Franklin D. Johnson? Yes. Senator Johnson? Yay. Senator Carla J. Joseph? Yes. Senator Joseph? Yay. Senator Avery L. Lewis? Yes. Senator Lewis? Yay. Mr. Chair, you have seven yays. Thank you, Madam Clerk. bill number three six zero one nine one and act honoring and commending detective delbert fips jr for his service with the virgin islands police department and to the virgin islands community by renaming the portion of hospital garter where it intersects with veteran joys at the alexander farrelly justice complex at the beginning of the mob powerful drive the delbert fips juniors junior street has been voted upon favorably in this committee government operation veterans of Fair and Consumer Protection, and will be forwarded to the Committee of Rules and Judiciary for further vetting and consideration. Yes.
- 2:20:02 Thank you. One second. One second. One second. One second. One second. Delbert Pips Sr. Yes, sir. I'll give you 30 seconds to give some closing remarks. One second. Delbert Pips Sr. Yes, sir. Delbert Pips Sr. I'll give you 30 seconds to give some closing remarks. Once again, I'd like to say thank you to Senator Angel Bolkis for thinking about our son and bringing this bill to this Honorable House. Again, we are thankful for all the testifiers, all the friends and supporters and co-workers that came out to give testimony and to support the family as well on this measure. this fitting, as we say, June is one that does not really like much fanfare, but in his absence, he have no say in this, so we're thankful. Thank you again, Senator.
- 2:21:02 Thank you. Son, I normally would just leave that close up, but you have the floor. I guess I'll piggyback off my grandfather a little bit and say thank you to everybody. all the senators I've not I've never really been good with public speaking but it's nice to be here I get to say some words about my dad and I truly appreciate the motion thank you yeah I wonder else I think I could speak on behalf of my colleagues with this I think you did a very good job today for someone who's not good with public speaking you articulated well you spoke Work well, and you're going to have a very bright future in your hands, and anything we could do as a body to support you, feel free to call in, any one of us. Thank you,

sir. The Committee of Government Operations, wait, before I go, while I have the Chief here and the Deputy Chief in the back, I'd like to say express a happy and joyous and all the, I know you have a lot of events, I see a church event posted on Facebook, very blessed, happy and safe police week. Thank you.

2:22:09 picnic hang on a picnic are you broke the whole of public safety would have had a big bash you know i mean we have several events um planned though so you could just follow us online and you can attend as many as you possibly can it's only a lot of vienna cake the committee on government operation veterans affair and consumer protection stands in recess for 10 minutes We'll be right back. Thank you. Oh, my God. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

2:27:39 Thank you. so Thank you. [2 such phrases repeated 9 times · standby audio before the proceeding, transcribed by the recogniser as speech]

2:32:39 Thank you. Thank you.

2:33:39 Thank you. Thank you.

2:34:39 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

2:36:39 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

2:38:39 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. ¶¶ Thank you.

2:41:09 Thank you. Thank you.

2:42:09 ¶¶ Thank you.

2:43:09 ¶¶ ¶¶ ¶¶ Thank you. Thank you.

2:45:08 Oh, yeah, man. Thank you. Oh, my God.

2:46:38 Thank you. Thank you. so Thank you.

2:48:38 the committee and government operation veterans affair and consumer protection is back on the record madam clerk could you read please read black two into the record today's agenda yes mr chair black two bill number three six zero one eight seven an act amendant title 18 virgin Islands code chapter 23 section 622 requiring the board of elections to count by hand votes deposited in a ballot box proposed by senator franklin d johnson invited testifiers mr raymond j williams chairman board of elections miss caroline fox supervisor election system of the virgin islands miss mary moorhead community activist mr chair this concludes the reading of block two thank you madam clerk uh mr williams is here ms fox is here personally apologize to both of you and to the entire board as well um but error that happened inadvertently the amendment was sent late i do take the blame for that um it was a in-house issue not an issue but just inadvertently something that slipped really thought it was attached until we review yesterday i do apologize for that because i went out late yesterday publicly i apologize thank you sir thank you um as it pertains to bill number three six zero one eight seven who speaks to this bill i i do i do mr senator franklin johnson you you may proceed Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. And just for the record, my office submitted that amendment April 10th. Just for the record, I submitted it in my timely manner. Thank you again, Mr. Chair. Bill number 360187 and revised amendment number 3662 are about one simple issue. Vote as choice. This proposal does not end machine voting. It does not remove the DS200 tabulator. I'm going to repeat, this proposal does not end machine voting or does it remove the DS200 tabulator for express vote system or the current electronic process.

2:51:16 This revised amendment says the paper ballot option is an addition to any voting method already allowed. By law, in plain terms, a voter who wants to use the method, the machine, may still use the machine. A voter who asks for a hand-marked paper ballot would have the option under the clear rules to do so. The amendment also makes clear that these paper ballots are kept separate. They go into a separate, sealed, clearly marked ballot box. They are not scanned by a machine, they are not mixed with machine cast ballots, and no ballot may be counted more than once. I want to acknowledge Supervisor Fox's testimony, past and present.

2:52:10 She raised real concern about counting, including voter intent, unclear mark, spoiled ballots, chain of custody, staffing, training, public viewing, and reconciliation. Those concerns should be taken seriously. But the revised amendment clearly answered many of those concerns. It requires spoiled ballots to be marked, secure, and reconciled. It requires a written chain of custody lag. It requires a manual count to be done in a public view by at least three election officials. It requires written reconciliation before certification. It also requires the Board of Elections to set voter intent standard, adapt rules, train election workers, and post notice to voters. The supervisor introduced the cast of America.

- 2:53:19 Present hand count procedures V1 document, which is important to this discussion. It's about procedures, the outline, how hand count paper ballots are to be processed. Whether one agrees with every part of the document or not, it shows that hand count is not just people standing around guessing at ballots. It lays out a structured process with sealed ballot box, start tables, content tables, tally tables, finish tables, batch count, tally sheet, multiple counters, public observations, video recording, and chain of custody documentation. The documents call for three independent counters to count ballots batch and compare their tally sheet.
- 2:54:12 If the number do not match, the batch is recounted. If the mismatch continues, the counter are replaced and the batch is counted again until the number match. Supervisor facts also explain the value of the DS200 and express vote system. I agree that those systems have value, especially for speed access and voters with disabilities. This amendment does not reject the current process. It simply says the machine should not be the only option for every voter in every situation.
- 2:54:54 Her testimony also says transparency is a continuing duty, not a one-time act. I agree. This amendment supports that same goal by adding public viewing, a clear paper trail, ballot separation, chain of custody, reconciliation training, voters' notice, and a post-election audit of machine result. So this should not be framed as paper versus technology.
- 2:55:28 The better question, whether we can use both technology for those who trust and prefer it and a secure paper option for voters who request it. If the election system needs more time, staff, forms, training or clear rules, we should discuss that. But those are reasons to improve the amendment, not reasons to reject voters' choice outright. The central question today is simple.
- 2:56:01 Does the voting system belong to the people, or do the people belong to the system? If a registered voter say, I want a paper ballot, and ask that it be secure, separated, and counted by hand, Under clear rules, that request should be dismissed. It should be respected. The government should not tell a voter, your only choice is the machine. When the system is supposed to belong to the people in a democracy, the voters is not the problem. The voter is the reason the system is fixed. That is the issue before us.
- 2:56:41 I look forward to the testimony and to serious discussion on how we protect voters confident while keeping our election orderly, lawful, and fair. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Senator Johnson. And I'll go to the testifiers. But before we begin, I'd like to do a mic check. Chairman Williams, state your name and position on your record. Raymond J. Williams, Chairman of the Board of Elections. Ms. Fox.
- 2:57:19 Good afternoon, Senator Caroline Fox, Supervisor of Elections. Thank you. Ms. Fox, are you ready to present your testimony? Yes, I am. You may proceed. Good afternoon, Honorable Chairman Avery L. Lewis, distinguished members of the committee, colleagues, members of the press, and the public. My name is Caroline Fox, Supervisor of Elections for the Virgin Islands, a Certified Registration Administrator. I appreciate the opportunity to once again appear before you to provide testimony on Bill No. 360187, which seeks to mandate the hand-counting of some ballots. Summary of the Bill Bill No. 360187 would amend Title 18, Virgin Islands Code, Chapter 23, Section 622, to require that votes deposited in a ballot box be counted by hand.
- 2:58:27 The bill also imposes new visibility, location, and timing requirements for ballot counting. The proposal eliminates electronic tabulation without explanation and fails to establish basic standards required to administer elections responsibly. While the goal of safeguarding election integrity is shared by ESVI, this bill as written would undermine accuracy, consistency, security, and public confidence in our elections. ESVI opposition is based solely on its inevitable consequences. Core concerns. First, the bill mandates hand counting while eliminating electronic tribulation without identifying any flaw in the current system. It provides no standards for determined voter intent, resolving ambiguous marks or reconciling discrepancies. Without uniform rules, hand counting virtually guarantees inconsistent results and increased human error, especially in complex elections. Second, the bill prohibits marking or tally tools removing the very safeguards that ensure accuracy and auditability the result is a recipe for confusion confrontation and security risks leaving election of officers without clear authority to maintain order third the bill prohibits ballots from being removed from the immediate vicinity of the polls that phase is undefined and unforeseeable it ignores space limitations crowd control and secure handling and it invites inconsistent application across
- 3:00:35 precincts on the mining chain of custody and increasing legal vulnerability Fourth, the bill forbids counting before 8pm, even though the poll closes at 7pm. This mandatory one-hour delay is unexplained and unjustified. It solves no identified problem and would only delay results and erode public confidence. Structural and legal defects.
- 3:01:08 The bill amends a single section of law without any confirming changes, implementation standards or administrative guidance. Under current law, ballots are tabulated using a DS200 system, which produces voter-verifiable paper records and supports secure audits, delivering accuracy, transparency and efficiency. tabulation of the DS200. The ES&S DS200 is a ballot scanning device. It is used in jurisdictions which voters hand mark paper ballots and or use ballot marking

devices when hand-fed the ballots into the scanner. Ballots can be inserted into the DS200 in multiple orientations, face up, face down, header first or footer first. The device simultaneously scans the front and back of a paper ballot, interprets voter marks and communicates any issues that require the voters attention back to the voter to an LCD display. If the voter has marked too many choices in a race, the display alerts the voter and offers the option to return the ballot for correction the ds200 scanner can also scan and tabulate the summary activation cards or ballot cards you may call them printed by esns express vote ballot marking devices which are called bmds express vote produce ballots print a paper summary

- 3:02:58 or activation card, of the voter choices with barcode that encodes the voter choices. When the paper record is hand-fed into the DS200 scanner, it scans the barcode to interpret voter choices and record the votes. Because the DS200 device is a scanning device only and does not have features that support marking choices on the ballot, features that may be helpful to voters with disabilities are limited. The DS200 is not marked as an accessible voting device. It does not have an audio tactile controller and its audio features are limited to only making different sounds as ballots are scanned or returned to the voter when marks require additional attention. The express vote machine, however, is the electronic marking device. The ExpressVote is a universal voting system that combines paper-based voting with touch-stream technology to create a breakthrough in voting solutions for hourly voting centers and on election day in precincts or voting centers. Election officials no longer must guess the number of ballots to print. Instead the vote section activator is printed with a barcode that determines the ballot style to display on the touch screen as a universal voting system the express vote allow all voters including those with special needs to cast their ballots privately and autonomously the express vote can serve every eligible voter including those with special needs as a fully compliant ada american with disabilities act voting solution the express vote enables every voter to cast his or her ballot independently key features innovative design
- 3:05:06 complete independence by the voter as he or she casts their own ballot selection changes will not spoil their voting session. The sip and puff capability for voters with disability. The official ballot provided in both audio and visual formats. The disabled and non-disabled voting can take place simultaneously. Next, voter confidence. It produces verifiable vote record, supports multiple languages, convenience of a direct voting electronic machine with peace of mind of a paper ballot trail. The express vote machines are advanced voting system designed to provide accessible voting solutions. They combine touchscreen technology with paper-based voting allowing voters to mark the choices on a touch screen while ensuring a paper record for tabulation. Key features include accessibility designed for voters with disability including those with visual impairments using audio instructions and tactile keyboards. After the voter inserts the paper ballot or or summary activation card from the express vote machine into the DS-200 scanner, they have a chance to review any potential mismarks that require attention. After the voter casts the ballot, the DS-200 scanner pulls the ballot through a motorized feed and deposits the ballot into an integrated ballot box.
- 3:06:52 The DS-200 device has the tabulating capabilities And when polls are closed, the DS200 can print out the race results and other information on a paper tape. When the voter has finished filling out their ballot, they should check it to ensure their selection matches their intentions. Next, the voter feeds their ballot into the DS200 machine. After the ballot is scanned and accepted, the voter's ballot cannot be redone. If the scanner is malfunctioning, voters should follow poll workers' instructions, which may include inserting the ballots directly into the ballot box underneath the DS200 scanner. As votes are entered, the DS200 stores the vote, tallies on its internal memory. When the polls close, the DS200 internal printing prints out the precinct's report on paper.
- 3:07:55 The DS200 is coded to detect and notify the voter when it encounters an overvote race or an issue on the ballot. An overvote is done when more than one allowed number of selections in a race or issue has been marked. An audio alert will sound and the display will indicate that an overvote race or issue was detected and offer the voter two choices, to accept or return the ballot. If the voter selects accept, the ballot will be counted. All properly marked races and issues will receive the appropriate votes, and the overvote races and issues will receive an overvote. The individual candidates or issue choices in an overrace will not receive any votes. If the voter selects return, the ballot will be returned uncounted, and the voter may contact the election official and have a spoiled ballot and receive a new one. Overvoting should not be confused with undervoting.
- 3:09:07 A voter undervotes when they cast fewer votes for a particular office than they are permitted to cast. No ballot or vote will be cancelled because of an under-vote. Now let me take some time to explain tallying and the individual contests on the U.S. Virgin Islands ballot. First, we have two separate ballots which represent each district. Tallying is a multi-step process ensuring accuracy, transparency and accountability. A single ballot contains multiple independent contests.
- 3:09:47 Every contest is tallied as if it was its own stand-alone election. Referandums are counted separately as yes or no outcome. Final results combine all contest level tallies into certified totals. Reconciliation ensures every ballot is accounted for. Auditability is essential to election integrity. I have three attachments. We bring the media to bring up the

Appendix A, showing the process for electronic counting ballots, hand counting ballots, and the process. So the first one we start is the electronic ballot process. As you can see, it's seven steps. First, the ballot and the activation card is fed into the DS200. Then there's tabulated collectively at each voting center.

3:10:47 And I want to make that clear. Tabulation is done at each voting center. Then the results come in. First, you get the election and official results at the night of election. Then we do the absentee and provisional ballots are tabulated. Then you get the election official results. Then you have certification within 15 days, and you have an added 30 days after every election. That's the electronic. Let's pull up the hand counting. 11 steps, and it could be more. First, the ballots are collected and secure. Then you have sorting. Then you have review and adjudication. Then you begin the hand counting. Then you're going to split in the number of contests that we have, and I'm using nine, highest we may have on our ballots in the USVI. And then you hire your independent tallyers, because the person that worked during the election from six to eight or nine that night cannot be your tallyers. Then you have the precinct results. Then you have to reconcile those numbers. you got to add it and verify then you have the aggregation step where you have to put everything together to get them from all the voting centers and then you do certification 11 steps and the last slide you can put it up just gives you a quick synopsis of the type that we have on our ballots nine different areas during certain elections so you have the governor's race that's a separate contest you have the delegate race that's a separate contest they have the senator at large separate countries you have the district senators seven of separate countries you have the board of education at large i'm putting that there but that was last two years ago 2024 you have the board of education you have the board of elections you got a board of elections in john and you have a referendum that's nine contests and one ballot so you're going to have to tabulate

3:12:58 hand count for those nine or eight areas separately individually i've also attached a guide cars of america precinct hankong procedures by a colonel sean smith for review explaining every step of the hand counting tallying process in more detail than i can do today in my testimony during a recent managers meeting i shared one of the best practices observed in dual county in 2016. building on that discussion i would like to formally present this proposal to the board of elections for their consideration aimed at increasing transparency in our election processes as the policy making body their review and approval are essential before any public dissemination of this initiative. Transparency is a cornerstone of public trust in the electoral process.

3:14:02 Enhancing transparency not only strengthens confidence among voters and stakeholders, but also reinforces the integrity and accountability of our operations. By clearly communicating procedures, ensuring visibility into key steps such as testing of the voting equipment prior to each election, vote tabulation, election night observation, 30 days after each election and added by the board of election members and aligning with proven best practices, we have provided greater assurance that our processes are conducted fairly, accurately and consistently.

3:14:45 We are also committed to continuous improvement in transparency. This means regularly evaluating our processes, incorporating feedback from stakeholders, and adapting to evolving best practices and technologies. By taking a proactive approach to refinement and openness, we can ensure that our transparency efforts remain effective, responsive, and align with the high standards of election administration. Transparency is a continuous commitment, not a one-time action. Transparency is not just about visibility, it's about clarity, consistency, and confidence in the process. For context, vote tabulation has been conducted at the voting center since the introduction of this equipment in 2014 to support my testimony I've also attached three DS 200 tabulation machine brochures which provides step-by-step details on both opening and closing procedures conclusion electronic tabulation combined with paper ballots and audit is a professional, legal, and proven standard, mandating hand counter that any of the ballots would reintroduce human error, increase delays and costs, create security and legal risks, and undermine public trust. For these reasons, the Office of the Supervisor of Elections firmly opposes Bill 36.0187. The proposed measure threatens to undermine the integrity, stability, and proven reliability of the election system currently in place. We remain committed to preserving lawful, secure, and transparent electoral processes that safeguard public trust and uphold democratic principles.

3:16:54 Our current system has been carefully developed, tested and proven to ensure elections that are lawful, reliable and tested. We remain steadfast in our duty to preserve and defend them against measures that would erode trust in our democratic institutions. Thank you. to take this opportunity to highlight the upcoming 2026 elections calendar events may 12th the first day of nomination petition papers may be filed from 12 to 6 pm may 19th the last day on which nomination petition and papers may be filed by 6 pm may 24th the deadline for withdrawal of nominating candidates may 24th the deadline for candidates with surnames of 22 characters or more may 29th the deadline for cast for filing substitute nomination certificates and papers may 29th the last i mean sorry casting of lots for position of names upon the official primary ballots and that's at 5 30 in person june 2nd the first day of receipt by the supervisor of election of applications for absentee ballots for the primary election june 2nd that's when the primary candidate certification of

nominees by the office of the supervisor of elections and importantly 17th of June all federal ballots will be emailed out to military and overseas personnel and again I want to reiterate so persons think the election is August 1st 45 days prior to any election federal ballots must be sent out to the voters which could be civilians overseas or military and that date is 17th of June this year again the rest of the calendar is available on our website the last day is June 30th sorry campaign disclosure report and July 2nd And last day for registration, 30 days prior to the election, registration closes.

3:19:10 Your voice is your vote and protecting that voice requires accuracy, consistency and the rule of law. I thank you and prepare to address any questions the Honourable Members may wish to raise. Thank you Supervisor Fox, Chairman Williams Good afternoon, the Honourable Avery L. Lewis, Chairman of the Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs and Consumer Protection, Members of the Committee and all other senators present.

3:19:52 My name is Raymond J. Williams, and I am the Chairman of the Board of Elections. I appear before you this afternoon at your request to present testimony on Bill 36.0187, an act amending Title 18 of the VI Code, Chapter 23, Section 622, which would require the Board of Elections to count by hand all votes deposited into a ballot box proposed by Senator Franklin D. Johnson. The Board of Elections met on January 16, 2026 to deliberate on this bill.

3:20:43 The Board voted not to support this measure and a 7 in favour of the motion for against and two absent based on the measure that was before us at the time. I received the amended version of this bill late yesterday afternoon, and unfortunately our board did not have sufficient time to meet to deliberate on the amended measure. Senators, I stand ready to answer any questions you may have.

3:21:15 Thank you. Sen. Thank you. Sen. Point of information. Point of information, Senator Franklin-Dunson. I'm just trying to find out something from Ms. Carolyn Fox if her testimony that she read here today was half of the amendment or half of the original bill. Good answer, Senator. Again, my testimony was due on May 30th, so it was half the original bill.

3:21:49 So you have not April 10th we send out that. May 30th, you're talking about? Senator, I did not get the amendment until 4.45 yesterday afternoon. That's what Senator Lewis mentioned here today. Yes. So now, did you read the amendment? I read it as I sat here, and I could answer the questions based on the amendment here today. But then you're saying your testimony was based on the bill, not the amendment, and you received the amendment yesterday. Am I correct to say that?

3:22:33 Yes, Senator. So, from receiving the amendment yesterday, you didn't have no time to actually redirect your testimony based on the amendment versus testimony on the bill? No, Senator, I did not. Thank you. We'll go ahead with the line of question as we go through. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Thank you. Senator Novole Francis, Jr., you're recognized for your four minutes.

3:23:04 Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon to Supervisor Carlin Fox, as well as to Chairman Raymond Williams. Good afternoon to the people of the Virgin Islands. So, in regards to the amendment, Ms. Fox, if you had an opportunity then to issue testimony per the amendment, your testimony be the same as you have given us to the bill yes senator they'll be the same so you don't see anything in the amendment that differs from the bill in its current form no senator okay in regards to the electronic tabulator based on the amendment or based on the bills you're saying that this particular measure requires that the electronic tabulator machine not be used no senator I said again that was changed from the first testimony to some as he said some ballots be um the people balance behind content so I am clear that the DS 200 will still be used they'll be used very well what was the average paper ballots that's requested during the election cycle? I would say it's 70% maybe. I would say 70%. 70% of the individuals ask for a paper ballot? No, that would be the reverse. Maybe 30%. Sorry.

3:24:48 Okay, yes. Most people use the electronic. Most person will trade up to use the electronic modem, which is the express vote machine. So I would say 30%. So 30%. I'm sorry, go ahead. Yes, Senator, about 30%. And tell me what currently happens to those paper ballots based on the 30% that's requested. based on the obtaining of these machines in 2012 all ballots based on the board policy are fed into the ds200 the ds200 tabulates whether it's paper or the express vote card and then the following year we move to absentee and provisional so every ballot is fed into the ds200 to be tabulated and um if I may senator I recognize that all ballots are stored in the bin at the base of the ds200 until the following election cycle so can you speak to this current amendment what is it proposing to do have a separate bin um have it not counted by the tabulator at that given time or what is your understanding how that happens currently with this proposed legislation so senator my understanding is this be two parallel voting system process going on at the same time in itself which is confusing um they are proposing that you bring ballot boxes there and those persons that vote on the paper ballot it'll be deposited in a ballot box and and they'll be counted by hand, and then the reports will be tabulated and calculated, and then it will provide it over to the main team to now merge with the electronic voting results

- 3:26:34 that came out of the system. That's my understanding. Mr. Williams, what's your understanding? Chairman Williams. Similar to what the supervisor just stated, I read this amendment, this morning and I think it suggests that yes we have to keep the choice of an elector requesting a ballot that they'll hand mark is going to be placed in that separate bin and at the end of the election day those bins will be transported I guess to the election office and be counted beginning at 8 p.m. My question though and that is do we begin an unparalleled process? Do we start counting the ballots that had the thumb drives at 7 as the policy is or do we wait until 8 o'clock to begin that process as well? That was one of my questions. I wish we had the opportunity to have looked at this before now, but that's one of my questions. In all fairness to the process of Chairman Williams, do you believe that there should be an opportunity for you to be able to take this amendment back to your board so that they could properly analyze, discuss the matter, and then rather than a unilateral decision that a board perspective could be then brought forth? Absolutely. Very well. Thank you very much for your responses.
- 3:28:19 Thank you very much for your time. Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, Senator Francis. Senator Carla Joseph. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, and a pleasant good day to you, Chairman Williams, and of course, Supervisor Fox. Good afternoon, Senator. I serve what you do, fine people and the Board of Elections, and I know the hard work that happened Even before election day, behind the scene, a lot of work goes on and so who knows it, understands it, and can appreciate the hard work that goes on behind the scenes.
- 3:28:58 Now, I have a question because, you know, for me, voter rights is one of my next biggest rights, next to freedom of speech. I really believe in people being able to vote. And we do have the ability to give people paper ballots, Ms. Fox, correct? Senator, that's the law. We have to have paper ballots and electronic voting. So the question here today is not the paper ballots. It's how the ballots are counted.
- 3:29:33 That's correct, Senator. okay and so some people want the ballots to be counted like it was 20 30 years ago with the tally and this is what is happening here and then they have other persons who just want to be able to put it in and have the machine counted and this is is this done uh using the tabulator electronic tabulator to count the ballots is that done only here in the virgin islands no senator it's done nationally and this company is within 23 states and about three territories so that's 28 places that use it the same machine new york use the same machine okay and and what about internationally are they doing that too or they hand counting uh using tally most places do not do tally like i said tally is mostly used for editing or recount okay we have moved away from tallies over the years okay so the practice now is to do the tabulation electronically because it's i guess more efficient efficient accurate and faster and the cost and cost the cost is is less costly i i do have a question because i i wanted to understand how many ballots this mean that anybody i was reading the amendment in the nature of a substitute is it it allows any person who wants to vote uh by paper ballot um that they are going to be able to vote by the paper ballot but that's already being done and where these boxes are going to be held i i didn't have a clear understanding based on the legislation is it going to be held at each voting center or is it going to be one location because i needed to have that detail based on the proposal
- 3:31:32 so that's one i thank you for that question senator so that was one of what i mentioned location and i'll give you two examples look at julia's sprawl cafeteria oclado marco cafeteria we cannot run two processes in that area so i could talk about a lot of voting centers that you can't vote you can't run parallel processes in that area yes and where the tabulation is going to take place because now you're going to do the tallies and you're going to have to do the tallies with human beings there to tally i mean i am i am familiar with tallying um like i mentioned when this bill was previously brought up i tally votes for our church council meetings i've done that years ago and it's a lot of us you're calling names it's very time consuming again who have been in it knows it it's time consuming and it holds up the process um i think we want to be able to time mr chairman i'll just wrap up quickly if you would allow me thank you so kindly I think we should allow you to get a little bit more time to review this amendment in the nature of a substitute and be able to come back and maybe give some recommendations on what can be done because it's apparent that a lot of work went into this bill in the nature of a substitute and I'm not for going backwards.
- 3:33:05 I am not, I want us to move forward and get things done quickly. So I thank you both for your time and for answering my question. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, for your leniency. Thank you. Senator Johnson. Point of information. Senator Johnson, you're recognized for your point of information. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. My point of information that I want to ask, Ms. Fox, are you saying that there's no state that does hand count with ballots?
- 3:33:39 Senator, that's not what I said. I said that they are... He's answering it? No, it's you, Ms. Fox. Go ahead. I said that hand counts is mostly utilized for recounts and edits. And if those states, I don't know, I know they mentioned some before, small contests those are states with small contests and number of voters so so there are states that does hand counting of the ballot senator i haven't researched it so i can't tell you yes or no i'm saying when i did the research it's majority of the states do not utilize and counting so i've been in the in this process for the last 13 years and none of the states one of the

election center conferences that we attend no one speaks about hand counting thank you very much thank you point of information i didn't catch your voice um sorry point of information senator francis senator francis you're recognized for your point of information thank you supervisor fox is there uh two versions of a paper ballot.

- 3:34:58 Can you qualify and quantify paper ballots? Is there a mechanism by which individuals are able to vote individual election or what you call the nine different election? Is there an opportunity to do that by marking on those paper ballots or the paper ballot that's then requested, the 30% that you spoke about is those individuals that then enter this into the DS200 tabulator for the purpose of still doing electronic voting and produce the result on the paper by the DS200. Can you qualify the paper ballot version? So, Senator, yes. The paper ballot version is when you get into the clerk's desk, you're given a paper ballot and you take a pen and you mark the ovals in the boot. The electronic version is you're given a blank card it's called an activation card and you send to the express vote machine you select your voting district i mean your voting center and then you feed that blank activation card into the express vote machine you go ahead and you make your selections in the nine contests it asks you any questions are you complete if you have any undervote or overvote then it prints out that card electronically for you you know take that electronic card which is the it's like 10 and long over to the ds200 so every whether it's paper ballot or the activation card goes into the ds200 at the tabulating that's the only machine that tabulates the votes and then you exit the building and and see the clerk so under that premise my original question about the
- 3:36:44 30 percent versus the 70 percent how many individuals actually get a paper ballot where they're able to mark on that paper ballot for the nine um or or so contest send i i'll have to give you some information to show more that data how many persons because i'm just saying i give you an estimate most of the lle's some of them will come in and ask for paper ballots some using technology right now a lot of the young people just do the express vote so again i could give you because in under tape the ds200 tape it tells you how many were paper and how many were activation cards so i could get you that information so your response 30 was activation cards or paper ballots i said 30 is paper ballots the majority of the persons use the activation cards very well thank you point of information point of information senator franklin johnson i i in my line of question i was asking uh miss fox about how many states you know know do paper ballot manual hand counting and she said she haven't seen it based on the seminars and stuff that she been so i want to ask her if she ever researched new hampshire maine massachusetts vermont wisconsin do you know what process they use for their voting no senator thank you thank you senator johnson senator francis heiliger recognize for your four minutes good day to my colleagues good day to the testifiers good day to the people of the territory those here in the well and staff um good afternoon senator good afternoon supervisor mr
- 3:38:40 william supervisor fox um i know there was a discussion about the document in the nature of a substitute when did you get a copy of this to review so you could give testimony on it they sent an email at 4 45 yesterday and when we reached here today they gave us provided us a copy today right here it's right here okay so when did you actually see it i cited my email yesterday evening yesterday evening okay after hours okay so it's fair to say you haven't really had a chance to assess and discuss this with the board or anything to see what change is it's fair to say that it's fair to say here they haven't discussed it with the board but again the board you analyzing as well i said i could answer the questions in here i could talk to the question because i reviewed the document i read through it and some of it i thought was in my testimony already says nothing for me to add to it but i can answer whatever questions are here what are some of the differences you saw um with the amendment in a nature of a substitute versus the original bill that stand out for you or i think they took the time to do a little bit more detail pulling out the processes that we already utilized right talking about the spoiled ballots about voters intent some of those things but again my concern is still the manual counting okay so even if you add and clarify this my testimony is not going to change because i'm supporting the ds200 to tabulate everything you're not supporting manual counting that's correct because of talia's making human errors um one of the things i witnessed when i was voting last election cycle um a young lady came in and said she wanted to do a separate paper ballot i guess the ones where you would put it in a bucket by itself to be i i i know they said they could have requested to have that um she did not want it to be go through the machine and what i saw is they went and they
- 3:40:41 opened up the bottom of the ds200 and they told her to drop it in there and when i witnessed that i was a little concerned because i'm scratching my head well if that didn't go through to be counted how actually is it going to be counted that means her vote is gone i mean am i wrong in making that to you because i i didn't understand it so explain it to me very good that's a good question it wasn't in the bottom of the bin yeah there's a process is that process right under the machine just in case power goes out same process that we utilize any voter that's in there and voting while the power is out and we don't have a backup generator the machine could last an hour with the battery power backup so anybody else that come in after that they'll have to put it in a bin the end of that evening in public one minute with everybody there those once the system comes back up they have to put it in the ds200 so those persons that was leaving it there because they refused to put it in the bin that evening the judge still had to feed it in so everybody ballot was counted so when when we feed it

through the machine because i don't use the express one i always take the ballot i read through exactly bubbling what i want so that's what the one i've always used so when i get that paper ballot i select what i want i walk up to the machine let it go in and it drops down into a bin if somebody physically walked over they open the bottom and drop it into the same bin so so you're saying that thing has two different bins that's correct it's called an emergency the device just to help i'm sorry but the device the box uh-huh there's a tabulator on top which is just a whole separate thing that is housed then you have an emergency bin that to that whole conversation power goes out you can put it in there until the part comes back then it's fed okay but for the ballots that are

3:42:41 put into the ds200 yes they literally go down all the way down into the bin and are stored in the bin so there are two different bins in that no there's one bit there's the emergency section right that it just you you put it into that slot okay and it sits right there it doesn't go down into the blue box so it it slips and when you open up the bottom when you put it in it doesn't go in the box it slips into it just sits right there in that section okay because i was concerned because i was like how would that person ballot even be counted but i i thank you for your clarity because i was a little confused at that so oh my time thank you so much okay from what i'm understanding some in the community want that they have the option to get a ballot, fill it out, and it's not tallied by the DS-200, basically. And they want those that humans sit there and count them manually.

3:43:52 And then they take that human count, pool it together with the count from DS-200 and the other service one? That's the DS-200. So it will be three different things. Two. Two. Okay. And Ms. Fox, you are saying your concern is it might be additional issues with the human count? or you're not worried about the human count or is it more about the time it will take to count those ballots? It's a variable. You got the time, you got the cost, you got the human errors. Like you said, we do tallying, we had tallying in 2014 or 16 here. So it's more than that. And it's a space location, like I mentioned. The cafeteria at Julia Sproul is no way for you to set up dual processes. And you can look at a lot of our voting centers, you don't have time for that. I mean space, not time, sorry, space for that. we're required to have the machines at a certain distance. We now have the six feet for COVID, et cetera. So you look at the layout that we put up in any place, even UVI, there's no more space for anything else. So now you've got to have two teams focusing and a group over here doing something and another group over here doing something else. We operate in really 14 different voting centers in one area. Have you estimated the cost to do a hand count per precinct?

3:45:12 We estimated, and we came to nearly \$50,000, because we have done recounts, right? Five board members in each district doing a recount. You pay them by, each clerk will be \$250 to do that work a day. And it takes a number of days to do hand counting. Again, that's an estimate from the board members doing a recount, \$50,000. You have to feed them. There's electricity. There's all the other stuff that goes with it. So they're not just sitting there counting happily.

3:45:41 That's for a recount. I'll wrap up quickly. I understand for a recount. So based on the percentage of individuals out of everybody that either uses the express service or either the DS200, the percentage of those that are left over that just want to have it hand counted, what percentage on average do you see of those people that request that? I'm not sure.

3:46:07 you can't answer that because we have not had a process like that okay god knows how many years so that would be trying to guess to me that would be so you would just be inaccurate yeah that would be providing bad information has any surveys been done to to verify what percentage of the public is even interested in in this option because i'm i to be honest with you if if situation was like oh they just want it what's the big deal for me that's your option and it's an option but then when we get to the point that just to do it and maybe it might be a hundred people fifty thousand dollars my brain I'm gonna start looking at numbers and the reality of which one is the greater good do we do we go into excess cost to accommodate a small percentage or is it going to be balanced across the board where we might have 3 000 residents that are interested in this you understand what i'm saying yes we don't have any data and that's where i'm kind of stuck with this because for me if people want to use paper ballad who am i to argue with you but then i still as a responsible representative that have to deal with the finances of the territory have to know exactly how much people we are attempting to accommodate and what the potential cost factor is and that's the thing nobody is telling me this could be 10 people for all i know this could be 10 000 people i have no clue so we're making a decision for me based on nothing and that's where for me being responsible to do this that's where my concern is and trying to figure out which one is in the best interest of the people. But I know I went kind of over my time, so thank you Mr. Chair for the additional time. Thank you. Senator Clifford Joseph.

3:48:08 Good afternoon, thank you Mr. Chair. Good afternoon to the testifiers. The first question I have will be for Mr. Williams. In your testimony you mentioned that the final count of the board there were four members who voted against this bill what what concerns of the bill were raised by these members there was no debate because a motion was proffered as soon as it was introduced so we went straight to the roll call but if this bill was to pass how many additional poor workers are we talking about I'm going to yield that to the supervisor because, again, a lot of this stuff would be speculative because

until the system had an opportunity to look at what the requirements would contain, you could not make those determinations.

3:49:12 Okay, thank you. Thank you for your response. Election system, Ms. Fox, The question I have is, across the country, people are raising concerns about election systems and machine tabulations. Has the election system of the Virgin Islands received any concerns or complaints from VI voters on this topic? Ms. Good afternoon, Senator, and thanks for that question. Yes, of course, in elections we hear a lot of complaints or questions about processes and ways to improve it. So, yes, have but um and since we in since we began using this equipment our role was not to connect it to the internet so you'll notice our machines are not connected to the internet because we can utilize the internet and send the data into the elections conference room or headquarters but we opt not to connect them to the internet so they're not tied in with any computer for hacking tampering etc So the machines are still being brought from the polling back to the election board system?

3:50:19 The jump drive and the tape. So that's the two parts that are brought back with security that night. The tape and the jump drive. And the ballots are retained in the machine for two years. But the boxes, the ballots, the machines are also brought back the same night. Yes. Do you believe the community fully understand the process? That's my concern, Senator. They do not fully understand the process. And again, we are talking about going forward in the future. So if we want to engage the young people, they are not going to go back into that manual system, nor wait for results that long. And so we're trying to go backwards instead of forward. And I'm with forward movement. Again, the machines have been tested and tried.

3:51:04 a hundred percent accuracy one minute and how do does the election system try and educate the community or research to see what the public i mean what's missing that they're not understanding senators uh center sorry we try to do our part the board do outreach we do open house the machines are on in each of our office right now to demonstrate to practice if they need practice and to see how the process work they also do drives where they take the machines out and demonstrate them to the public we do testing of the machines prior to the election on election night we also invite the public to come and look at the process and also the audit so we are continuing to do all we have publicly to encourage the public to come out and see and view the process for themselves and one more question i have um how much additional time in your estimation does hand counting will add in your in your in your time estimation we don't know we don't know the amount that want it but i'm just saying that because no i'm not speaking about a recount just to count on individuals on that particular night maybe are they going to be counted that night they don't be counted the next day what's the plan on the If this bill was to pass, what's the plan in trying to get these ballots to come?

3:52:33 Based on the proposed legislation, the process begins at 8 p.m. that same night. And I'm very careful because, you know, I want to make sure that our board gets an opportunity, if they had an opportunity, to have waited on the amendment. and I would have been able to speak on that. I would have loved to speak based on my experiences, but I'm not going to do that simply because every time I appear here, I always make it clear that it is not Raymond Jerome Williams' opinion or point.

3:53:13 It has to be based on its membership, the consensus of its membership. Well, thank you for that. So hopefully that you have a chance to meet with the board and discuss the amendment as it is right now. Thank you for your response. Thank you, Mr. Chair, for the time. Thank you, Senator Joseph. Senator Giddens, organize for your four minutes. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and good afternoon to all.

3:53:48 Good afternoon. You know, I'm looking at this, before I even ask my question, is there a reason Ms. Moorhead is not in the well testifying? Mr. Chair?

3:54:20 Mr. She hasn't responded, Senator. Mr. Excuse me? Mr. You're questioning me? Mr. I'm asking you if Ms. Moorhead is a testifier today, correct? Mr. My invitation was sent to us, Senator, and she hasn't responded. Mr. Okay. But, I mean, she's present. I'm just wondering what's the status. Senator Giddens, I wouldn't know that. I didn't know that she's present over there.

3:54:54 And I don't have a testimony from Ms. Moorhead. We have a testimony from her? She never responded. I don't have a testimony from her. Okay, Mr. Chairman. I'm just asking. I see her name here on the agenda. As a testifier, I see that she's here present in the St. Croix chambers. and I'm just asking a question so I could know which questions to ask and who to pose it to. Thank you.

3:55:24 I'm looking at the amendment in the nature of a substitute. Initially, when the bill came before us, I did have concerns with the heading as it states that it's an act amending Title 18 Virgin Islands Code Chapter 23, Section 622, requiring the Board of Elections to count by hand votes deposited in a ballot box. So, I was of the opinion, yes, that if one comes to vote and they would like to use a paper ballot, that they would have the option to use a paper ballot.

- 3:56:12 But I'm seeing now that this is talking about actually counting these ballots by hand. Is that your understanding, board chair and supervisor of elections? Absolutely. Yes, that's my understanding, Senator. So, can you both explain how the amendment in the nature of a summit aligns with existing law regarding the respective rules of the Board of Elections and the Supervisor of Elections. Specifically, if the Supervisor is responsible for administering Election Day operations, how would requiring the Board to directly supervise hand counting avoid any duplication of authority or operational conflict that's a very good question senator and again like I said I am not here in a position to answer certain questions like that simply because this is not hasn't been read and we debated or discussed with the full membership so i don't want to um give any response that will contradict what maybe the membership process represents so uh time has been called now mr che can i ask one more um go ahead go ahead senator so i'm looking at the um
- 3:58:08 chain of command and and election day operations as i'm looking at at the amendment in the nature of a substitute so under the proposed language who ultimately has the operational control or would have the operational control according to this amendment in the nature of a substitute the operational control during ballot counting and tabulation and election day and during canvassing because if disagreements arise between board members and election system staff regarding procedures, staffing or ballot handling, what mechanism resolves those disputes in real time?
- 3:59:00 Dr. Again, I'm definitely not going to answer that because, like I said, until it had been-if we had the opportunity, probably we could have had those discussions and maybe proffered something um else to assist in making this process a reality but um until such time no because i i know where you're going going senator you know right and i understand now what i don't want is for for us to create um any friction further friction between the board and the election system we know that the day-to-day operations uh on election day is handled by the supposed to be handled by the supervisor of elections while the board is a policy making body however with the language as is it will create conflict between um the two entities So I would like to see some clean-up language in this before we move forward.
- 4:00:14 Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Senator Gittins. Senator Danton, you're recognized. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I'd like to start out asking both Caroline Fox and Mr. Williams, what does title 18 section 517 says yeah senator i don't i don't remember the code of one like that that's an maybe miss fox will know it she seems to know a lot i don't have it to the tip of my hands right here either but if you could tell us what it says hold up hold up hold up hold up miss fox hold up So, Title 18, Section 517. Let's go back to the 2018 election. Can you recall the 2018 election?
- 4:01:15 The Frederic Stead part of this territory ran out a paper ballot. Can you recall that, Ms. Fox? No, Senator, I cannot recall. You cannot recall me calling you, asking you about paper ballot being ran out in Frederic Stead? I heard you mention it at the last testimony. No, no, I don't want you to tell me what you heard me mention. I want for you to answer. Can you not recall me and you having a conversation?
- 4:01:43 Yes, Senator. Good. And when I asked about it, your response, my moral life, your response to me was, you deliberately didn't provide enough ballot because you want folks to vote on the machine and today you make it clear you're not in favor of hankong period you said that today and i said to you that day that's the problem people have with the election system why they don't trust it because people try to determine how you must vote and that's why there are people who are continually asking for paper ballot and the hankong what is wrong with giving 30 percent if that's the number you guys say not me of the people totaling what to have a access that they desire for they to feel comfortable to have a paper ballot and it be counted manually you in your testimony here today again you talk about your cars electrical bill you gotta pay you you'd have paid electrical bill to the schools then when they got election? Senator, could I respond now? You want me to respond?
- 4:02:56 Well, the question I just asked is, do you pay electric bill to the schools when there's election? Senator, we do not only use schools, we use private- Slow down a minute for me. You could answer anything to anybody else. My question is very clear do you pay electrical bill when we have election to the schools then i would say no senator but we do not only use schools thank you very much thank you very much because you use that as part of your calculating to say it will cause us an additional fifty thousand dollars these are your statement not mine you're saying that if we go to this it's going to cause us an additional 52 and you use electrical bill as part of it how does that work out and then we continue saying that we want this to go to the board i need to ask a question that's a little off subject here but it's still important here there was a mediation agreement both of you sign off on that mediation agreement am i correct to say that yes yes senator did the board get to see it and did you guys discuss it with the board i am happy to answer that for you senator we went before the court of the virgin islands it was not no no no no i'm answering your question it's my time hold a minute you don't get your chance wait one second one second one second johnson one yes sir i'm not saying to the testifiers and to you one person When the senator is speaking, testify to us. Only let him speak. Let him speak and then you may answer after. You may proceed, Senator Johnson. My question is simple. Did you guys go to the board before you signed this? My question is a bit straightforward. The question is, did you go to the board before you signed off that mediation

agreement?

- 4:05:02 the answer is no and it's not a simple question okay you you answer hold up hold up let miss fox answer too please senator in my position based on where i was represented there i did not have to go before the board to answer the judge and sign the mediation requirement thank you very much but this has to go to the board for how to make a decision today so the board is for convenience and when it's not inconvenience you don't need the board you could go ahead and respond now mr williams you know you know that that is so unfair at least to say that you know because in the mediation hearing and i'm going to put it out on the record here today okay um we were before the court we were not in some other forum i was not going to tell Judge Henderson, I need to recess or ask you to recess for me to get and go back to the membership to discuss something that was not even necessarily germane specifically to the board. It was a matter between the Democratic Party and the Office of the Supervisor.
- 4:06:16 We were enjoined, I was enjoined because of my position as chairman, okay? So let me clarify that. know i i am saying to you today that i am not here able to speak to the amendment i'm not saying it's bad it's good or indifferent the legislature is who go vote and it's not the board but for me to respond i would want want the opportunity to have had that discussion with the board and that's the that's where you draw the line it's not where it's convenient so i don't appreciate the term that it's convenient because it's not a matter of convenience for me thank you miss fox you could go ahead so senator i respond to your question when you call on concern i stated our proposal is to encourage voters to use the activation card not telling them that the activation card is the only means of voting um this statement was made again yes as the election administrator as a person with 30 something years of management, I would not go back to hand counting.
- 4:07:29 And that's just the position of the management and it's not Ms. Fox alone. Three managers, you have the two deputies, my staff and myself, we meet and discuss before I come here. And we three who runs the election do not agree with going back to manual counting. And that's just it. A lot of us here talking, you have a cell phone now. You don't want to go back to the phone you had in your home a hundred years ago. But we want election to remain stagnant back in the 60s, but we don't want to live our lives back in the 60s. So that's all I'll say. Thank you.
- 4:08:03 I'll close on this message here. I'll go to any phone that I'm going to make good communication with, any phone. So I'm not afraid of that. But I can tell you that we have had hand ballots before. And we're making it sound today like as if hand ballots was the most corrupted thing in this territory. And there are states that are still using hand counted ballots. And here it is, we are saying that a few people, and I can't understand why the board is so against it, anything that we can do to bring more people to the poll, we should be willing to do. Because right now the percentage of people that are taking part of the election has been diminishing. There was a time that you needed 5,000 votes to become a senator to then know you could get in with three. And if you don't watch, we'll get in with two. So it tells me something is wrong, and nobody has found a solution, and nobody isn't willing to try to say if we could encourage more people to come and vote.
- 4:09:05 That's what I'm talking about here today. That's why we're asking for this, because people are asking for it. Could you imagine it takes another 3,000 to become a senator? When before it was 5,000 and 6,000, that's what the top vote I get to know. It tells me that we have a problem. People do not trust the system that we have right now. That's what it's saying. And if you could duck, we could hide. We could do what we want to do. But it's continued to, the writing is on the wall. People don't have the option. They want an option.
- 4:09:42 They want to take part. And when you listen to them, they say, I ain't going back to the poll because I don't think my vote is being counted. I ain't going back to use that machine because I don't trust that machine. You got people who will never go to the bank machine to the teller. They're going in the bank and draw their money. You got people who don't want to use that debit card. They're going to write a check to pay their bill. You got people walking straight up to WAPA when they could use technology. Go to the WAPA line and you see how much people still doing that. And here it is, we're asking for something simple That the people want And we're saying, no, I ain't going back to the Hong Kong thing Whatever it takes To bring more people out We should be willing to try And stop saying time Stop using time against this Stop putting false numbers Like \$50,000 To do this Because you don't have the facts to prove that You don't And it's very irresponsible to make people believe They're going to cast you \$50,000 to count maybe 20 ballots, 50 ballots. But if it's 50 more, if it's 100 more, that's what you should want.
- 4:10:50 Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair. Thank you. One second, Mr. Chairman Williams. You know, I really didn't weigh in much today. But at my age, I ain't too young to remember when they had the big brown backs. in the front and people used to go throw the ballot in there and i ain't young to forget whenever people were kicking up wrong here and saying we need to go the electronic way because i remember it take two three days before you find out who won right and then they had all kind of discrepancies and back then the same talk with what going on by improprieties and different things so i mean we got to trust some kind of system wrong here 15 of us in here the system work for 15 our governor

lieutenant governor a delegate and all the different other categories on water never backward and i rest there mr williams you had something to say i just wanted to say to my good friend senator johnson um i want you to take into consideration population okay because um the the number of five to three look at population as one of those aspects okay mr williams i gave you a 30 second closeout i sorry i needed to respond to something quickly too again for the record i presented data that we have used before and that's why i said a recon cost us fifty thousand dollars in two district that's facts that's not what i designed i was showing all the categories that we have to look at it wasn't fifty thousand dollars for electricity fifty thousand dollars to show you was five board members in every district you have to duplicate whatever we do in one you have to do in the other and the recount took many days so that's the only data i could have used to show we never had a hand counting in my tenure of 64 years so i won't know what it costs in the virgin islands thank you thank you mr chair can i have a quick point of

4:13:12 information i wanted to share title 18 section 517 ballot box go right ahead senator the supervisor of election and this is title 18 section 517 ballot box the supervisor of election shall furnish to each board of election one ballot box for each poll in place in its district to contain ballots voted the ballot box shall be of sufficient size to contain all the votes and shall be so constructed that no ballots can be taken out of any box without the box being open It's very simple. It allows me.

4:13:56 Thank you, Senator Johnson. Thank you very much. Mr. Williams, you have 30 seconds. And again, I just want to tell Senator Johnson, there is a ballot box in the machine that holds the paper that is trapped down into it. Simple. Okay, and if you'll allow me, Senator, and because this is a matter of urgency, and i'm saying this on behalf of my membership we have written to this body on three occasions relative to the conflicts that are contained in act 8690 we're coming up days away from um election and we still don't have those conflicts resolved you know part of one of the comments made by one the senators earlier we need to get those conflicts resolved please i'm begging this body other you know we need to really get that resolved because it's giving the supervisor the office of the supervisor and the board the same responsibilities it's not going to work so i'm pleading with this organization this body to bring us back here or even not bring us back just make some decisions who has the responsibility for what please thank you thank you for the opportunity and so the senator quoted a section of the code and also i like to quote section 622 part of it it says the election officer shall open the electronic voting machine and the ballot boxes holding paper ballots and obtain the tabulation separately cast for election to the boards of education election from all other tabulation of ballots cast in the election so we did mention that before electronic took over and it's what they call it implied if you get a new act it implied that that's what you use going forward so this 622 clearly states open the electronic voting machine thank you very much for this opportunity and again based on research and facts and technology and proven technology i support the ds200 electronic tabulation of all ballots and we are mandated by law and we will continue to have paper ballots for choices you have your paper ballot you complete it and is fed into tabulating at the machine thank you thank you the committee of government

4:16:34 Operation Veterans Affairs and Consumer Protection stands in Mises for three minutes. Thank you. Thank you.

4:18:04 Thank you. We'll be right back. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

4:21:04 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. so Thank you.

4:23:34 so Thank you. Thank you.

4:25:04 Thank you. Thank you.

4:26:04 Thank you. Oh, my God. the committee on government operation veterans affair consumer protection is [3 such phrases repeated 8 times · standby audio before the proceeding, transcribed by the recogniser as speech]

4:29:48 back on the record miss fox mr williams your excuse thank you sir Thank you. It's back on the record, isn't it?

4:30:45 Well, we're back on the record. number three six zero one eight seven and act amending title 18 for general code chapter 23 section 622 requiring the board of elections to come by hand votes deposited in a ballot box proposed by senator franklin johnson and now we said time to take action madam clerk could i have a roll call please yes mr chair senator ray fonseca senator fonseca absent senator novel e francis jr senator francis senator novel e francis jr senator francis jr present absent senator alma francis heiliger Present. Senator Francis Heiliger?

4:32:10 Present. Senator Kenneth L. Gittins? Present. Senator Gittins? Present. Senator Franklin D. Johnson? Here. Senator Johnson? Present. Senator Carla J. Joseph? Present. Senator Joseph? Present. Senator Avery L. Lewis? Present. Senator Lewis? Present.

4:32:37 please record me as being present thank you please record senator nobel francis jr is present senate mr chair you have six members present one member absent do i hear motion hearing none sort of motion motion i said motion motion Go

ahead, motion, Senator Gittins.

4:33:20 Thank you, Mr. Chair and colleagues, I move that amendment in the nature of a substitute to Bill No. 36-0187, offered by Senator Franklin D. Johnson, be held in the Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs and Consumer Protection at the call of the Chair. so move second point of order but he said amendment he's supposed to say the bill my my mr chair let me uh withdraw my previous motion Thank you. Wait one second. Senator Francis Jr. are you withdrawing your second?

4:34:24 There's a motion to restate, Mr. Chair. Are you withdrawing your second first? Yes. Thank you. Proceed with the motion. We're withdrawing. Ryan, proceed with your motion, Senator Gittins. To restate. Thank you. Motion to restate. Mr. Chair and colleagues, I move that Bill No. 36-0187, an act amending Title 18, Virgin Islands Code, Chapter 23, Section 622, to requiring the Board of Elections to count by hand votes deposited in a ballot box be held in the Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, and Consumer Protection at the call of the chair. I so move.

4:35:22 Is there a second? Please turn on Senator Johnson's mic so you could hear the second. second second bill number three six zero one eight seven an act amending title 18 virgin islands code chapter 23 section 622 requiring the board of election to come by hand votes deposited in a ballot box was properly moved by senator Kenneth Gittins seconded by senator Franklin Johnson roll call Senator Ray Fonseca, Senator Fonseca, absent. Senator Novell E. Francis Jr.

4:36:00 Yay. Senator Francis Jr., yay. Senator Alma Francis Heiliger. Senator Francis Heiliger, yay. Senator Kenneth L. Gittins. Yes. Senator Gittins, yay. Senator Franklin D. Johnson. No. Senator Johnson? Nay. Senator Carla J. Joseph?

4:36:31 Senator Joseph? Yay. Senator Avery L. Lewis? No. Senator Lewis? Nay. Mr. Chair, you have... Madam Clerk, Chair and Senator Carla Joseph, vote to no. Mr. Chair, you have three yeas, three nays, and one absent. Chair, Mr. Chair, change my vote to yay. As it pertains to bill number 36, that's zero. Madam Clerk, we have a total tally now.

4:37:12 Mr. Chair, you have four yays, two nays, and one absent. As it pertains to Bill No. 36-0187, an act of mind in Title 18, Virgin Islands Code, Chapter 23, Section 622, requiring the Board of Elections to count by hand votes deposited in a ballot box, has been held in this committee at the call of the Chair. As I put, Madam Clerk, could you please read, one second, Madam Clerk, could you please read Block 3 into the record?

4:37:53 Yes, Mr. Chair, Block 3. The Committee would receive testimony from the Virgin Islands Taxi Cab Commission to provide an update and overview of the Office of the Virgin Islands Inspector General's audit of administrative functions of the Virgin Islands taxicab commission invited testifiers miss Melissa Smith executive director Virgin Islands taxicab commission thank you as it pertains to this colleagues we're going to have to make a decision that's what we're going to do the taxicab was audited by the office of the inspector general and they had several different findings and we requested their presence here today so how we have to see how we as a body could assist as today our invitation was sent out initial invitation was sent out april 10 to the executive director we follow up day first and then we followed back up with them the 21st the 27th and in between there was numerous phone calls i reached out thinking maybe there was a health issue or something to the Government House. Then shortly after May 5th, Ms. Melissa Smith of the Taxi Commission responds and said due to prior engagements and schedule conflicting, she would not be here. At some point in time, colleagues, we're going to have to step up and we're going to subpoena them to be here because with these findings, this is also an ISO on this government and a compounding problem at the taxi commission and we have all of us have received numerous numerous complaints in the taxicab commission um at so again

4:39:47 there was notified and no one responded and to include which is what inadvertently not place here the chairwoman responded as well and said she will not be able to make it for the same look like they use the same thing uh scheduling and um conflict of issues um before i'll give them one more invitation for our june meeting uh before i conclude today i'd like to wish all mothers a happy mother's day i already wish a happy police week to all mothers in the legislature all mothers out there and they're listening and viewing public i wish you a happy oh a happy mother's day i think we have something queued up um for this afternoon media okay we good man Is that right, Media? Pause. Pause. There being no further business to come before the Committee of Government Operations, Veterans Affairs and Consumer Protection, this meeting is here by Osho. Before I pong the gavel, let me thank my staff, Ms. Watley, Ms. Michael, thank you for all your hard work, thank you Media, thank you Sergeant of Arms, thank you all the legislative staff who made it possible. Thank you to my colleagues. I really, really, really and truly would like to thank all of my colleagues who are here today and their staff. Thank you to the stenographer, the legal counsel, all who made today possible. Hearing no more nothing else, committee and government operation, veterans of fair and consumer protection is hereby adjourned. God bless and peace and love to the people of the Virgin Islands.

4:41:44 Thank you. Thank 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.

17x	Senator Avery Lewis heard in this transcript as: Avery L. Lewis, Lewis
17x	Senator Franklin D. Johnson heard in this transcript as: Johnson, Johnson's
15x	Senator Kenneth L. Gittens heard in this transcript as: Giddens, Gittins, Kenneth Gittins, Kenneth L. Gittins
12x	Senator Carla Joseph the surname alone also matches: Clifford Joseph; Karla J. Joseph heard in this transcript as: Carla J. Joseph, Joseph
11x	Senator Novelle Francis heard in this transcript as: Francis, Francis Jr, Novalee Francis Jr., Novel E. Francis Jr, Novell E. Francis Jr, Novelli Francis Jr.
7x	Senator Alma Francis-Heyliger heard in this transcript as: Alma Frances Hylliger, Alma Francis Heiliger, Frances Heiliger, Francis Heiliger
6x	Senator Ray Fonseca heard in this transcript as: Fonseca
5x	Senator Angel L. Bulkes Jr heard in this transcript as: Angel Bulkes, Bulkers, Bulkis Jr
3x	Senator Angel L. Bolques, Jr. heard in this transcript as: Angel Bolquez, Angel L. Bolques Jr., Volquez
2x	Senator Angel L. Bocas Jr heard in this transcript as: Angel Bocas Jr
2x	Senator Angel L. Bolkis Jr heard in this transcript as: Angel Bolkis
2x	Senator Clifford Joseph

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.

Act 8690	Act 8690 · December 30, 2022 · An Act appropriating \$500,000 from the Emergency Services Fund to the Department of Health for the purposes authorized in 33 V.I.C. § 3099(d); amending Virgin Islands Code, title 3, chapter 255, section 559 to provide for a hazardous duty pay differential for all Emergency Medical Services employees of the Virgin Islands Department of Health transferred to the Virgin Islands Fire and Emergency Medical Services; amending various sections of title 18 of the Virgin Islands Code related to the appointment of the Supervisor of Elections, compensation of election workers and for other related purposes; amending title 3, Virgin Islands Code, chapter 27, section 706 to allow retirees of the Governme
-----------------	--

Referred to but not found in our acts corpus: Bill 36-0191, Bill 36-0187