

NOMINATIONS FOR THE V.I. RACING COMMISSION MOVES

Date : August 23, 2018



ST. THOMAS- Members of the Committee on Rules and Judiciary, chaired by Sen. Novelle Francis, held a meeting at the Capitol Building to vote and approve the nominations of Sheldon Turnbull and Laura Palminteri, MD. to serve as a member on the V.I. Racing Commission for the St. Thomas-St. John District. The nomination was sent by the governor of the U.S. Virgin Islands Kenneth E. Mapp as outlined in Section 16(c) of the Revised Organic Act of 1954, and Title 3, Section 65a of the V.I. Code.

Turnbull stated that although he is not an expert in the Horse Racing Industry, he has participated in various capacities. "I am a fan and a broadcaster for over twenty years. I have been involved in discussions concerning horse racing and its survival and growth in the Virgin Islands numerous times," said Turnbull. Sen. Janelle Sarauw inquired, "What research have you done regarding marketing on the mainland?" Turnbull noted that horse racing in the U.S. is very different in comparison to the Virgin Islands because locally there are limitations. However, interisland racing draws the most excitement amongst residents.

Some of Turnbull's goals are to unify the rules and operations between horseracing in both

Districts and to have a balanced racing calendar between the Clinton E. Phipps and Randal Doc James Racetracks. "How would you balance the horse races between both districts?" asked Sen. Francis. In response, Turnbull said, "There is not a balance between holiday weekend races. Previously, there was a conflict with scheduling races, which hurts the industry. Therefore, he will tackle that issue."

Dr. Palminteri has over twenty years of experience working with thoroughbred racing in the Territory. She has a veterinary medical background and has worked as a track veterinarian for Yonkers Raceway, Meadowlands Racetrack, Monticello Racetracks, Belmont Racetrack and Goshen Raceway. "As a member, I would strive to elevate and modernize the standards of racing in the Territory and to make it as safe as possible for both the animals and jockey," she said.

"Do you see the Horse Racing Industry becoming lucrative for participants?" asked Sen. Janette Millin Young. Palminteri said, No, because financially horse racing barely breaks-even. Promoters are needed to attract visitors from the mainland to help the industry to grow locally.

Some senators expressed concerns of conflict of interest as it pertains to Palminteri becoming a member of the commission although she is the only veterinarian specializing in equine care in the Territory. In response, Palminteri stated that neither positions affect her role in horse racing from a medical viewpoint because she must examine each horse before the race.

Separately, lawmakers voted and approved the following bills below. All items approved will be forwarded to the full body for further consideration.

- Bill No. 32-0173 - A Resolution Honoring and Commending "The Family Resource Center" for its services to victims and families in the US Virgin Islands throughout the years;
- Bill No. 32-0244 - An Act amending Title 27 of the Virgin Islands Code, Chapter 1 Subchapter VII, Section 161 relating to the practice of optometry;
- Bill No. 32-0245 - An Act amending Title 19 of the Virgin Islands Code, Part II, Chapter 15, Section 221 to define urgent care facilities and stand-alone facilities and section 223 to accept urgent care facilities from the requirement of getting a certificate of need mandating that these entities must take the MAP, Medicare, and uninsured patients;
- Bill No. 32-0185 - An Act amending Title 23 of the Virgin Islands Code, Chapter 10, Section 1005 relating to the Governor of the Virgin Islands and emergencies and major disasters

Senators present are Novelle Francis, Positive Nelson, Janette Millin Young, Myron Jackson, Janelle Sarauw, Sammuel Sanes, Nereida Rivera O'Reilly, and Jean Forde. <http://www.legvi.org/committeemeetings/Media/>

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