

ALL NOMINATIONS SENT DOWN BY THE GOVERNOR MOVES FORWARD

Date : November 13, 2019

ST. THOMAS- The

members of the Committee on Rules and Judiciary, chaired by Sen. Janelle K. Sarauw, convened in a meeting at the Capitol Building on Wednesday, Nov. 13th. On the agenda were the Governor's board nominations, which all would receive a favorable vote to be heard in Legislative Session. The nominations were sent by the Governor by virtue of the Revised Organic Act of 1954, and Title 3, Section 65a of the Virgin Islands Code. Additionally, lawmakers voted and approved several bills which will be heard before the full body.

The

nominees for consideration were Gary Jett, MD. to serve as a Health Practitioner Representative for the Virgin Islands Cannabis Advisory Board, Christopher Jones as a Disability Advocate Representative for the Virgin Islands Cannabis Advisory Board, Jason Williams for the V.I. Board of Chiropractic Examiner for the St. Croix District, Eavey-Monique James, CSW, CPM as Compact Administrator for the V.I. Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC), Charisse Hart, MSW, LSW as Deputy Compact Administrator for the V.I. Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children, and Keith O'Neal, Jr. to serve on the Virgin Islands Public Finance Authority Board of Directors for the St. Croix District.

According

to Nominee Jett, he has an extensive work history practicing medicine for twenty years on St. Croix and eight years in Florida. Out of the eight years, he worked as a certified medical marijuana physician specializing on interventional and non-interventional pain management in the state of Florida for approximately four years. Jett also stated he treats patients diagnosed with chronic ailments such as cancer, HIV, AIDS, Crohn's disease and others. Jones' short-term goals to improve the Virgin Islands Cannabis Advisory Board are to develop the mission statement, ensuring the alignment of the rules and regulations with Act 8167, and to review the Cannabis Boards on the mainland. Identifying a secure location for a cannabis testing lab and designing a Non-Resident

Medicinal Cannabis Tourism Program are two of Jones' long-term goals.

Similarly,

Nominee Williams, who presently is the Chief Clinician at the Williams Family Practice on St. Croix, shared his goals for the V.I. Board of Chiropractic Examiners. Williams indicated that his top priorities to improve the Board are to ensure that chiropractors are licensed who are practicing in the Territory, collaborating with lawmakers to draft laws about the Chiropractic Industry, and streamlining the process for incoming chiropractors. Separately, Nominee Hart mentioned that her role to serve on the V.I. Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children commences with becoming acquainted with ICPC statutes, child placement laws on the mainland, and federal laws. Meanwhile, Nominee James stated that her objectives are to host the Association of Administration ICPC annual business meetings in the Territory, to propose legislation that will be ratified by the Senate and to establish the Virgin Islands as a leader in compacting affairs due to best practices. Separately, Nominee O'Neal noted that his recommendation for moving along capital projects is to continue to follow existing strategies of the Virgin Islands Public Finance Authority Board of Directors. This includes which reviewing accounts quarterly to determine whether there are unexpended funds and to ensure its use before expiration.

Policymakers

voted and approved the following bills:

- Bill No. 33-0095- An Act amending Title 34 of the Virgin Islands Code by adding a new chapter 18 enacting the "Virgin Islands Medicaid Program Integrity Act." Sponsored by senators Novelle E. Francis, Jr. and Athneil "Bobby" Thomas; Co-Sponsored by senators Donna Frett-Gregory and Kurt A. Vialet.
- Bill No. 33-0201- An Act amending Title 20, part II, chapter 43, section 504 of the Virgin Islands Code by increasing the punishment for negligent homicide using a motor vehicle. Sponsored by senators Javan E. James, Sr. and Steven D. Payne, Sr.
- Bill No. 33-0134- An act amending title 17, chapter 15 of the Virgin Islands Code to establish a Psychiatric Medical Doctoral Program Scholarship. Sponsored by senators Kurt A. Vialet and Steven

D. Payne, Sr.; Co-Sponsored by senators Stedmann Hodge, Jr. and Allison L. DeGazon.

- Bill No. 33-0199- An Act making an appropriation from the St. Croix Capital Improvement Fund to be used as matching funds to acquire federal funds under the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant award for the St. Croix Molasses Pier Enhancement Project. Sponsored by senators Alicia V. Barnes, Novelle E. Francis, Jr, Donna Frett Gregory, and Kurt A. Vialet; Co-Sponsored by Sen. Allison DeGazon.

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