

BILL TO CHANGE "HANDICAP" PARKING SIGNS TO "DISABLED" MOVE FORWARD

Date : May 10, 2018

St. Thomas – The Committee on Rules and Judiciary, chaired by Sen. Novelle Francis, Jr., held a meeting at the Capitol Building on Thursday, to vote and approve several measures including Bill No. 32-0055 for the Virgin Islands Public Works to replace public parking signs that refer to “Handicap Parking” making an appropriation from the Transportation Trust Fund for replacement of parking signs and other related purposes.

“We know that there is much to be addressed when it comes to removing the word “Handicap” from our disabled parking signs to be addressed when it comes to removing the barriers that are preventing individuals with disabilities from having complete inclusion,” said Julien Henley, Advocate and Trainer for the Disability Rights Center of the Virgin Islands.

Sen. Francis inquired, “Are businesses in compliance with the requirements with parking spots for the disabled?” Henley stated that businesses do not have the knowledge to change. For example, one company painted their entire parking lot blue without access to an aisle. These parking spots have dimensions for a legal disable parking spot for a reason. The problem is that the public needs to be educated on this topic.

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Similarly, Sen. Sammuel Sanes said, “Educating the community on this matter is a must because a person may have a disability that is a not a physical or obvious one.”

Additional challenges that disabled people face are the lack of parking spots for the disabled, accessible side-walk curb cuts that lead from the parking spots to the entrance of the business and the costly and lengthy process of approving individuals to park in these parking spots for the disabled.

Ultimately, lawmakers voted to approve Bill No. 32-0055. The following measures also received a favorable recommendation

- Bill No. 32-0146-An Act honoring and commending Irvin “Brownie” Brown Sr. for his significant contributions to the culture and music of the Virgin Islands by renaming the portion of General Gade, which runs from the intersection of Veterans Drive up to the intersection of Silke Gade “The Irvin “Brownie” Brown, Sr. Road
- Bill No. 32-0148-An Act amending Title 1 Virgin Islands Code, Chapter 11 by adding section 200i establishing the month of May as Virgin Islands Stroke Awareness Month
- Bill No. 32-0170-A Resolution honoring and commending Lorna Lenise Freeman for her outstanding charitable performances to the community and her many contributions to the people of the Virgin Islands and for being a true ambassadress of the Virgin Islands
- Bill No. 32-0055- An Act providing for the Virgin Islands Department of Public works to replace public parking signs that refer to “Handicap Parking”, making an appropriation from the Transportation Trust Fund for replacement of parking signs and for other related purposes
- Bill No. 32-0064- An Act Amending the Virgin Islands Code, Title 3, Chapter 24, Section 431 providing for a registry of the elderly and persons with disabilities living alone
- Bill No. 32-0129- An Act Amending Title 14 of the Virgin Islands Code, Chapter 3A relating to human trafficking to enact the Virgin Islands Uniform Prevention of and
- Bill No. 32-0129- An Act Amending Title 14 of the Virgin Islands Code, Chapter 3A relating to human trafficking to enact the Virgin Islands Uniform Prevention of and Remedies of Human Trafficking Act and amending title 5, Chapter 303, Section 3541 relating to the statute of limitations for prosecuting the crime of Human Trafficking
- Bill No. 32-0179 -An Act amending Virgin Islands Code, Title 24 Chapter 10, amending Sections 221, 228 and 230, relating to the apprenticeship standards

However, the following was held in committee:

- Bill No. 32-0127- An Act amending Virgin Islands Code, Title 14 Chapter 60 Section 1191 to strengthen the loitering law and increase the sentence for loitering

All bills approved will be forwarded to the Committee on the Whole for further consideration.

Senators present are Novelle Francis, Jr. Brian Smith, Janette Millin Young, Myron Jackson, Jean Forde, Marvin Blyden, Dwayne DeGraff, Alicia “Chucky” Hansen, Sammuell Sanes, Janelle

Sarauw, and Positive Nelson. Photo:
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