

BILL TO RENAME THE V.I. CASINO CONTROL COMMISSION BUILDING “THE EILEEN R. PETERSON CASINO CONTROL COMMISSION BUILDING” MOVES FORWARD

Date : October 4, 2018

ST. THOMAS- Members of the Committee on Workforce Development, Consumer Affairs and Culture chaired by Sen. Janelle Sarauw, held a meeting at the Capitol Building on Wednesday, to vote and approve Bill No. 32-0193-An Act to honor and commend the Honorable Eileen R. Peterson for her service to the community, to name the Virgin Islands Casino Control Commission Building in her honor and to make an appropriation. The measure will be forwarded to the Committee on Rules and Judiciary for further consideration.

“We should honor our own,” said Sen. Sarauw. “As a female politician, we are often judged by society. It is my impression that Judge Peterson broke the glass with water pouring down from the ceiling. She paved the way for many of us.”

Judge Peterson was the first female Judge in the Territorial Court of the Virgin Islands. She was also the first appointed chairwoman of the Virgin Islands Casino Control Commission. She was responsible for establishing the foundation, educating board members on the regulatory rules and guidelines, and was an advocate for the community by disseminating positive information to uplift young people through “The Village” a group dedicated to raising the youths.

In a written testimony submitted by Henry Smock, Esq. He commended Judge Peterson for her compassionate demeanor towards everyone. “Even in the most trying of criminal and civil cases, she never lost her composure and treated all litigants that came before her with decency and respect.”

Gizette Thomas, Esq. The successor of Judge Peterson as chairwoman of the Commission stated that the judge touched the lives of many people. "Judge Peterson's name is theoretically eternal, as is evident from her legacy of first and documented history of positive impact in this community. Her name provides stability and trustworthiness representative of sound decisions."

"I was brought on board with the Commission as an Inspector," said Henry Schjang. "Judge Peterson ensured that the entire staff at the Casino Control Commission were properly educated and trained in the gaming industry. Judge Peterson sent the staff to be trained by the experts in the field and would often test us by asking a question as it relates to the rules."

The sponsor of the bill, Sen. Novelle Francis shared his remarks. She was a trailblazer and laid the groundwork for members of the Commission. The Territory will reap the benefits of her tenacity for many years to come.

Sen. Brian Smith stated that it takes one with the right amount of courage to keep pushing. Fortitude and courage are what's required, and Judge Peterson embodies both.

In accordance to Section 4 of the bill, in recognition and appreciation of her contributions to the people of the Virgin Islands, the President of the Legislature of the President's designee shall present to Judge Eileen R. Peterson, or her representative, a perma copy of this act at the appropriate ceremony.

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