

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP MEASURE AND RESOLUTIONS PASS FAVORABLY TO RULES COMMITTEE

Date : April 5, 2018

ST. THOMAS – On Thursday, the Committee on Workforce Development, Consumer Affairs & Culture convened at the Earle B. Ottley Legislative Hall. Chaired by Sen. Janelle K. Sarauw, the Committee received testimony and consider several measures related to Registered Apprenticeship and resolutions honoring Irvin “Brownie” Browne and Lorna L. Freeman.

Bill No. 32-0179, An Act amending title 24 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 10, (title 24, chapter 10, sections 230, 228, and 221) which would allow for the Virgin Islands Department of Labor (VIDOL) to comply with the federal code, CFR 29.13 (a)(1) and fulfill the final requirement for VIDOL to be recognized as a State Apprenticeship Agency. Proposed by Sen. Janelle Sarauw, the Bill involves the input of numerous agencies to provide the skills in demand according to labor market information and trends.

Catherine L. Hendry, Esq., Commissioner of the Dept. of Labor stated, “It needs to be a collaborative effort by High schools, Technical schools, UVI and employers in both public and private sectors. We need a workforce pipeline.” “The Dept. of Education, when called to testify asked, what does this bill have to do with them? It’s sad that the players involved have no idea what affects them,” added Chairwoman Sarauw. Post-hurricanes Irma and Maria, the Retail/Hospitality & Leisure industries are predicted to be impacted until the first quarter of 2019.

“Our people are being left behind. I understand that this is a collaborative effort, but I need assurances. When I speak to residents about using the resources at the Dept. of Labor, they are frustrated. They watch planes fly in full of workers, watching boats arrive on the South shore of St. Croix claiming we don’t have the skill set to complete these jobs. Our people are being left behind,” said Sen. Brian Smith. Construction is currently the main industry demand sector, while

the demand for trained workers in the Healthcare, Information Technology, Business Administration, Trade and Transportation industries remain consistent. The measure for Registered Apprenticeship was favorably approved and forwarded to the Committee on Rules & Judiciary for further consideration.

Bill No. 32-0146, a Resolution honoring and commending Irvin “Brownie” Brown, Sr. for his significant contributions to the culture and music of the Virgin Islands. “Anyone who has ever met Brownie will tell you, he lives under a love umbrella that he is always happy to share. You may cross paths even for a moment, but you will remember that full smile, his warmth, and his intent to make your moment better, your life greater,” stated colleague Anita Davis. In commemoration of his many contributions to the islands, the portion of General Gade, which runs from the intersection of Veterans Drive up to the intersection of Silke Gade is renamed “The Irvin “Brownie” Brown, Sr. Road”. Sponsored by Sen. Dwayne DeGraff, the measure was favorably approved and forwarded to the Committee on Rules & Judiciary for further consideration.

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 ambadress of the Virgin Islands. The President of the Legislature or the President’s designee shall prepare and present a perma plaque copy of this resolution and the official Key to the Territory at an appropriate ceremony.

Jo Sandra Jones-James, Music Educator testified, “The Songstress firmly believes that Music is the universal language of the world, and as such, there is much responsibility to share and give back as much as possible. To this end, Lorna prides herself on the outreach work and musical collaborations she has had with her USVI community over the years.” Sponsored by Senators Janelle Sarauw and Dwayne DeGraff, the measure was favorably approved and forwarded to the Committee on Rules & Judiciary for further consideration.

The following Committee members present: Chairwoman Janelle K. Sarauw, Senators Nereida Rivera-O’Reilly, Janette Millin-Young, Brian A. Smith, Positive T.A. Nelson and Marvin A. Blyden. Non-Committee members present: Senate President Myron Jackson, Jean A. Forde and Dwayne M. DeGraff.

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