

## **Senators Approves Bills and Resolutions**

**Date :** December 28, 2018

St. Thomas--The 32<sup>nd</sup> Legislature Chaired by Senate President Myron D. Jackson held its last Legislative Session on Friday, December 28, 2018, in the Earle B. Ottley Legislative Hall, St. Thomas. The Session included the consideration of several lease agreements; consideration of a Quitclaim Deed, many committees approved legislation, Special Orders, and a Bill establishing "The Virgin Islands Medical Cannabis Patient Care Act."

In light of the magnitude of the day's agenda, the Body established four voting blocks and in the first block senators gave favorable consideration to the following:

Bill No. 32-0336 – An Act approving the Lease Agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands Department of Property and Procurement and Marco St. Croix, Inc.

Bill No. 32-0338 – An Act approving the Lease Agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands Department of Property and THAW, LLC d/b/a # 1 Gopher.

Bill No. 32-0340 – An Act approving the Lease Agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands, Department of Property and Procurement, on behalf of the Department of Agriculture and Grantley Samuel.

Bill No. 32-0342 – An Act approving the Lease Agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands, Department of Property and Procurement, on behalf of the Department of Agriculture and Louis Orta.

Bill No. 32-0343 – An Act approving the Lease Agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands, Department of Property and Procurement, on behalf of the Department of Agriculture and Philippe Philbert.

Bill No. 32-0346 – An Act approving the Lease Agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands, Department of Property and Procurement on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, and Andrea Montoute and Claritta Montoute.

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In the second block, the following Bills were also approved and forwarded to the Governor for his review and approval:

Bill No.32- 0347-An Act approving the Lease Agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands, Department of Property and Procurement on behalf of the Department of Agriculture and

Jerome Bryan's consideration of a QUITCLAIM DEED.

Bill No. 32-0341 – An Act approving the proposed sale of unit No. 3012, Building L in a group of buildings known as Cowpet Beach Resort, located on Parcels No. 8-1-11 Estate Nazareth, No. 1 Red Hook, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

Bill No. 32-0327 - An Act benefiting especially Senior Citizens of the Virgin Islands by enacting the Uniform Non-Probate Transfer Act; the Uniform Transfer on Death Act; the Uniform Disclaimer of Property Interest Act; the Uniform Custodial Trust Act; and the Uniform Partition of Heirs Property Act. This Bill was amended in several parts by Sen. Jackson.

Bill No. 32-0241 - An Act amending the Virgin Islands Code relating to the Virgin Islands Emergency Management Plan and the Virgin Islands Territorial Management and Homeland Security Council." This Bill was amended by Sen. Dwayne DeGraff.

Bill No. 32-0247 - "An Act amending Titles 3,5,14,15,16,19,23 27, and 34 to change all references to mental health to behavioral health; amending Title 19, Chapter 31, Section 7 I 6(A) relating to the Citizens Council on Mental Illness Alcoholism and Drug Dependency; repealing Section 14 of Act No. 7897 and Section 2, paragraph (I) of Act No. 7697; appropriating \$3,000,000 for the establishment of a behavioral health care facility on the island of St. Croix; and establishing requirements for the operation of in-patient and out-patient treatment programs at the behavioral health care facility."

Bill No. 32-0256 –An Act seeking to amend the Virgin Islands Code by enacting the Finance Lenders Law. This Bill was amended by Sen. Nereida Rivera-O'Reilly.

Bill No. 32-0308 – An Act amending the Virgin Islands Code and adding several sections to establish the Division of Festivals within the Department of Tourism whose function is organizing and executing festivals and to re-establish the Virgin Islands Cultural Heritage Institute, within the Department of Tourism and to re-name the "Carnival and Festival Committee Revolving Fund" as the "Division of Festivals Revolving Fund."

The third block of Bills that were considered and approved were:

Bill No. 32-0204 - "An act amending Title 12 of the Virgin Islands Code, Chapter 16A, Section 691a by re-defining the term "government agency" and by defining the term "communications provider", and section 698a regarding the construction of conduits by government agencies in the public rights-of-way and for other related purposes." This Bill was amended by Sen. Rivera-O'Reilly.

Bill No. 32-0229 - An Act amending the Virgin Islands Code, requiring the Government of the Virgin Islands to enter into contracts before June 1<sup>st</sup> of each year in preparedness for hurricane season or any emergency or major disaster."

Bill No. 32-0062 – An Act amending the Virgin Islands Code, by adding a Chapter establishing the Community and Heritage Tree Law of the Virgin Islands.

Bill No. 32-0345 - An Act amending the Virgin Islands Code relating to physician licensure and applicant qualifications. This Bill was amended by Sen. Rivera-O'Reilly.

Bill No. 32-0328 - An Act amending the Virgin Islands Code, Chapter 15 relating to scholarship programs to provide financial aid for tuition to residents of the Virgin Islands for post-secondary education at the University of the Virgin Islands. The legislation was amended by the primary-sponsor, Sen. Tregenza Roach.

Bill No. 32-0349 – A Resolution honoring and commending the Voices of Love Choir for its forty years of performance for various segments of the community. This

Bill No. 32-0298 – A Resolution posthumously honoring and commending Guilderoy Ashley Sprauve, Sr. for his extensive work as a diesel mechanic for the major ferryboats on St. John, St. Thomas, and Tortola, B.V.I., and for his service and contributions to the marine industry.

Bill No. 32-0315 – An Act honoring and commending Noel "Breeze" Boynes, Sr. for his service to

his community of St. John and renaming Route 104 South (a/k/a) the South side Road in St. John in his honor.

Bill No. 32-0350 – An Act ratifying and approving the Agreement for Medical Health Insurance made and entered into by and between the Government of the Virgin Islands through the GESG Health Insurance Board of Trustees, the University of the Virgin Islands, and the Virgin Islands Housing Authority and United Healthcare Insurance Company and its affiliates. All of the outlined Bills were approved and forwarded to the Governor for final consideration.

The Body also special ordered and overrode the Governor's veto of Bill 32-0325, which is an Act authorizing the Judicial Branch to reprogram prior year encumbered funds for use during FY 2019 and to utilize any accumulated residual funds for more critical priorities.

A motion was then made to override certain sections of Act 8063, specifically sections 8 and 13. The motion was unanimously approved by all senators present during Friday's Senate Session.

Bill 32-0236 which seeks to limit the practice of dental therapy to public health facilities was also passed by lawmakers.

The much talked about Bill 32-0135- which was generated from a referendum, seeks to establish, "The Virgin Islands Medical Cannabis Patient Care Act" as relates to the Medical Use and Regulation of Cannabis. The Legislation was considered by the Body and after much deliberation, the Bill received a favorable vote by a majority of senators in attendance and was forwarded to the Governor for final review.

Bill 32-0344-An Act appropriating \$380,000 to the Virgin Islands Elections System for the cost associated with the November 20, 2018 run-off election was approved by the Body.

Bill 32-0351- An Act amending the Virgin Islands Code, title 12A, by adding chapter 9 to enact the Timeshare Resale Act, was also approved.

Pages for Friday's Legislative Session were: Vernisha Hodge and Mauricio Francis from the Seventh-day Adventist School.

Senators in attendance at Friday's Legislative Session were; Chairman, President Myron D. Jackson, Nereida Rivera-O'Reilly, Jean A. Forde, Novelle E. Francis, Jr., Positive T. Nelson, Neville A. James, Dwayne M. DeGraff, Tregenza A. Roach, Sammuel Sanes, Kurt A. Violet, Brian A. Smith, Marvin Blyden and Janelle Sarauw.