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Bill to Appropriate Funds for the VI Agricultural Plan Now Law

Christiansted, US Virgin Islands – AARP in The Virgin Islands has had a significant win with the signing of **Bill Number 35-0003** by Governor Albert Bryan, Jr. early in February 2023, making the Bill law. The Bill appropriates funds for the **Virgin Islands Agricultural Plan**. AARP thanks the VI Legislature, the Governor, and all the supporters of the Bill.

AARP in The Virgin Islands advocated for funding to support the local farming industry in the Virgin Islands, in particular the Agricultural Plan. The plan adopted in 2021 provided an outline to advance the industry; however, it lacked an identified funding source to help put it into action.

In 2022, the AARP in The Virgin Islands Advocacy Team sprang into action, hosting several meetings with the President of We Grow Food, Inc. and key members of the 34th Legislature and contacting members of Governor Bryan's Cabinet, specifically the Commissioner of Agriculture, to advocate on the importance of food security for all Virgin Islanders. Most recently, AARP surveyed 400 Virgin Islanders at the 24th Bordeaux Farmers Agricultural Fair on the importance of food security. The survey shows that 92% of those surveyed ranked food security as an important issue for elected officials to focus on in 2023.

"Food security isn't just about having enough food to eat; it's about having enough good, nutritious food to sustain you and your family to stay healthy," said Troy de Chabert-Schuster, AARP-VI State Director. "The Virgin Islands Agricultural Plan will now have funds to address food insecurity, an issue affecting many Virgin Islands families. AARP is proud to advocate for all Virgin Islanders to ensure they have access to sufficient nutritious food to live a healthy life."

To learn more, visit aarp.org/vi or AARP Virgin Islands on Facebook at Facebook.com/aarpvi or Facebook.com/aarpviespanol and https://states.aarp.org/virgin-islands/section/espanol/, for information in Spanish.

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About AARP

AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With a nationwide presence and nearly 38 million members, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to families: health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. AARP also produces the nation's largest circulation publications: AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. To learn more, visit www.aarp.org or follow @AARP and @AARPadvocates on social media.

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