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Governor, Lt. Governor Sign 34 Bills Into Law

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — Governor Albert Bryan Jr., and Lt. Governor Tregenza A. Roach in his capacity as Acting Governor, have signed into law 34 bills sent up by the 34th Legislature, including a measure merging Emergency Medical Services under the V.I. Fire Service (Bill No. 34-0101); a measure promoting responsible fatherhood (Bill No. 34-0055); and a measure allowing retirees to return to work and pay into the Government Employees' Retirement System without penalty to their benefits (Bill No. 34-0171).

Although Governor Bryan approved Bill No. 34-0087, which provides for a "Clean Streets" policy and task force, he exercised his line-item veto power on the portion of the bill appropriating $3.5 million to the V.I. Port Authority (VIPA) for the expansion of Henry Rohlsen Airport on St. Croix because the Administration already had provided $8 million to VIPA for the project.

"Additionally, the funds provided to the Virgin Islands through the American Rescue Plan Act have already been allocated by the Administration as authorized by the Federal Government and cannot be re-appropriated by the Virgin Islands Legislature," Governor Bryan wrote in his transmittal letter to Senate President Donna Frett-Gregory.

The Governor also said that although he signed into law Bill No. 34-0072, which provides for the declaration of firearms components upon their entry into the Virgin Islands, he did so because it doesn't amend all sections of the V.I. Code that need revision to achieve comprehensive gun control and to establish a clear process of declaration of weapons and ammunition on entry into the Territory.

"Further, the Bill as finalized removes reference to ammunition in several crucial areas and, as a consequence, removes any control of ammunition entering the Territory," Governor Bryan wrote in his transmittal letter.

The Governor also said he approved "with great reservation" Bill No. 34-0170, which amends the incentives to beneficiaries in the Economic Development Program to further their commitments to investment in the Territory.

"It is respectfully requested that the Legislature expeditiously confer with the Economic Development Authority to improve these changes and to remove certain detrimental provisions to our tax incentives program," the Governor wrote in his transmittal letter.

Other measures
Other measures that Governor Bryan approved were:

- **Bill No. 34-0090,** which extends the career incentive program for peace officers to officers in the Department of Planning and Natural Resources; the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs; the Department of Health Environmental Division; and the V.I. Legislature.
- **Bill No. 34-0096,** which establishes the Virgin Islands Virtual Information System.
- **Bill No. 34-0141,** which requires the Bureau of Corrections and V.I. Attorney general's Office to expeditiously notify victims of crimes of the release of their alleged perpetrators.
- **Bill No. 34-0142,** which provides for an automated license plate reader system as a crime-fighting tool throughout the Virgin Islands and appropriates $500,000 to the V.I. Police Department to establish a pilot speed and red-light camera program.
- **Bill No. 34-0147,** which prohibits discriminating against a person because of their hairstyle.
- **Bill No. 34-0152,** which relates to include professions in plumbing, electrical, mechanical and fiber-optic fields under general contractor licensing regulations.
- **Bill No. 0154,** which directs the Department of Education to establish a Bilingual and English Language Development Program in the public schools.
- **Bill No. 34-0198,** which establishes the Virgin Islands Board of Contractors, Trades and Crafts.
- **Bill No. 34-0155,** which enacts the Virgin Islands Uniform Law on Notarial Acts (2021).
- **Bill No. 34-0156,** which enacts the Virgin Islands Uniform Electronic Wills Act.
- **Bill No. 34-0166,** which establishes requirements for surplus lines insurance brokers.
- **Bill No. 34-0182,** which exempts the University of the Virgin Islands, Juan F. Luis Hospital and Schneider Regional Medical Center from having to obtain legislative approval before naming any of their property for the sole purpose of fundraising.
- **Bill No. 34-0191,** which prohibits the organization of a special category of multi-state insurers that may not be required to comply with accreditation standards.
- **Bill No. 34-0204,** which allows the VIPA to establish a self-insurance program.

Zoning requests

Governor Bryan also signed the following zoning requests:

- **Bill No. 34-0184** to change the zoning designation of two plots in Estate Peter's Rest on St. Croix from R-2 to B-1.
- **Bill No. 34-0213** to rezone a parcel in Estate Sorgenfri on St. Thomas from R-1 to R-2.
- **Bill No. 34-214** to grant a zoning use variance for a parcel in St. John, St. Croix, for dwellings.
- **Bill No. 34-215** to grant a zoning use variance for a parcel in William's Delight on St. Croix for a nail salon.
- **Bill No. 34-216** to rezone two parcels in Estate Castle Burke on St. Croix from A-1 to A-2 and B-1 respectively and remove the rum distillation exclusion.
- **Bill No. 34-217** to rezone two parcels in Estate Frydenhoj on St. Thomas from R-2 to B-3
- **Bill No. 34-218** to rezone a plot in Estate Richmond on St. Croix from C to B-3.
- **Bill No. 34-219** to grant a zoning use variance for a plot in Estate Whim on St. Croix for an adult day care and assisted living facility.
- **Bill No. 34-222** to rezone two parcels in Estate Thomas on St. Thomas from W-2 to R-3.
- **Bill No. 34-223** to rezone a parcel in Estate Susannaberg on St. John from P to R-3.

Other measures

Governor Bryan also signed:

- **Bill No. 34-0146,** which honors Mary Thomas, Axeline Salomon, Mathilde McBean, Susanna Abramson and other estate laborers for their pursuit of human rights and freedom from serdom before, during and after the Labor Uprising of 1878.
- **Bill No. 34-0148,** which honors and commends Dr. LaVerne Ragster for her contributions to the University of the Virgin Islands and for being the first female president of the university and renames the UVI Administration and Conference Center on St. Thomas in her honor.
- **Bill No 34-0157,** which honors and commends Gloria Canegata for her years of service as an educator and public servant through various organizations.
- **Bill No. 34-0174 (Resolution No. 1886),** commending Ivanna Eudora Kean High School on St. Thomas on the commemoration of its 50th anniversary.

The Bryan-Roach Administration is investing in the Territory's people, infrastructure and future through transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in the government and ensuring that recovery projects are completed as quickly as possible. Visit transparency.vi.gov

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