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THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

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Fellow Virgin Islanders,

This February marks 46 years since the first Black History Month declaration was signed in 1976. Every U.S. president elected since has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month. Other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also devote a month to celebrating Black history. While it is a timestamp in American history, the impact of this observance is felt around the world. Current events have demonstrated that these moments return in smaller doses as a testament to our true connection, life.

As we come together to honor the lives and contributions of Black leaders and African ancestors, we remember the names of those who worked without compensation. Laboring under some of the worst conditions known to mankind, these souls were examples of how humanity had to change. Although we continue to endure brutal times where all lives are not treated with the same reverence, the COVID-19 pandemic reminds us that our mortality is the great equalizer.

While we look at the many strides made by Americans on the mainland, we relish in our pride as Virgin Islanders and continue to recognize the key influencers of these movements that came from our territory and our Caribbean community at large. From Denmark Vessy to Marcus Garvey, we hold a torch of a pathway lit so ancestors of enslaved Africans can seek justice from all corners of the world.

As we cultivate future global leaders, we can truly celebrate the benefits of anti-discrimination, equal opportunity measures, and human rights. Our purest form of celebrating these tenants is by repeated reflection and promoting the respect of all of humanity. Happy Black History Month!

Respectfully,

Gary A. Molloy
Commissioner



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