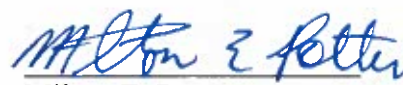


LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
CERTIFICATE OF ENACTMENT
NOTWITHSTANDING THE GOVERNOR'S VETO

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT, Bill No. 36-0053 - An act amending title 3 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 25, subchapter V, section 555b to increase the minimum annual salary for full time employees of the Government of the Virgin Islands, its semi-autonomous agencies and independent instrumentalities from \$27,040 to \$35,000, and requiring the Office of Management and Budget to submit a report to the President of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands detailing the fiscal impact of the act and requiring the Virgin Islands Department of Finance to biennially conduct a review of the cost of living in the Virgin Islands and submit a report to the President of the Legislature regarding adjustments to the minimum salary of full-time employees of the Government of the Virgin Islands by the Thirty-Sixth Legislature of the Virgin Islands at its regular session held on June 4, 2025, (a copy of which is attached hereto) and vetoed by the Governor on June 13, 2025, was duly enacted by override by the Thirty-Sixth Legislature at its regular session held on June 27, 2025, pursuant to section 9(d) of the Revised Organic Act of the Virgin Islands, 48 U.S.C. §1575 (d).


DATED: 6/30/2025





Milton E. Potter
President

ATTEST:


Avery L. Lewis
Legislative Secretary

OVERRIDDEN
DATE: 06/27/2025

ACT NO. 8995

BILL NO. 36-0053

VETOED

JUN 13 2025

GOVERNOR

THIRTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

Regular Session

2025

An act amending title 3 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 25, subchapter V, section 555b to increase the minimum annual salary for full time employees of the Government of the Virgin Islands, its semi-autonomous agencies and independent instrumentalities from \$27,040 to \$35,000, and requiring the Office of Management and Budget to submit a report to the President of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands detailing the fiscal impact of the act and requiring the Virgin Islands Department of Finance to biennially conduct a review of the cost of living in the Virgin Islands and submit a report to the President of the Legislature regarding adjustments to the minimum salary of full-time employees of the Government of the Virgin Islands

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WHEREAS, the Government of the Virgin Islands recognizes the necessity of ensuring that full-time employees receive fair and competitive wages that reflect the economic realities of the Territory;

WHEREAS, the current minimum salary for full-time employees of the Government of the Virgin Islands, semi-autonomous agencies, and independent instrumentalities is \$27,040 per annum, which has not kept pace with the rising cost of living in the Territory;

WHEREAS, the cost of living in the Virgin Islands is significantly higher than in many states and jurisdictions within the continental United States, particularly in the areas of housing, groceries, and utilities;

WHEREAS, the cost of groceries in the Virgin Islands is substantially higher than the national average, with food prices often exceeding those on the United States mainland due to import costs, supply chain limitations, and logistical expenses;

WHEREAS, the cost of housing in the Virgin Islands, including rent and homeownership expenses, remains disproportionately high compared to many areas in the continental United States, making it increasingly difficult for government employees to afford stable housing within the Territory;

WHEREAS, the cost of electricity in the Virgin Islands is among the highest in the United States and the Caribbean, with residents and businesses paying significantly more per kilowatt-hour than their counterparts in the United States mainland and many neighboring jurisdictions, further exacerbating the financial burden on government employees;

WHEREAS, high energy costs, combined with increasing prices for other essential goods and services, continue to place significant economic strain on workers, impacting their quality of life and financial stability;

WHEREAS, increasing the minimum salary from \$27,040 per annum to \$35,000 per annum will provide necessary economic relief to employees and help them better manage the cost of living, and support their financial security; and

WHEREAS, this wage adjustment aligns with the Government of the Virgin Islands' commitment to fostering a sustainable workforce, enhancing employee retention, and ensuring that all public sector employees receive compensation that reflects economic conditions and inflationary trends; Now, Therefore,

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

SECTION 1. Title 3 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 25, subchapter V, section 555b is amended by:

- (1) striking each instance of "27,040" and inserting "35,000" in its place; and
- (2) inserting a comma between "Government of the Virgin Islands" and "semi-autonomous agencies" in each instance where it appears.

SECTION 2. This act takes effect October 1, 2025.

SECTION 3. (a) Not later than March 31, 2026, the Office of Management and Budget, in coordination with all independent instrumentalities, shall submit a report to the President of the Legislature detailing the projected fiscal impact of this act, including anticipated changes to personnel expenditures and agency operating budgets resulting from the increase in the minimum salary established in section 1 of this act.

(b) Beginning in fiscal year 2028 and every two years thereafter, the Department of Finance, in consultation with the Virgin Islands Bureau of Economic Research, shall review trends in the cost of living in the Virgin Islands and submit a report to the President of the Legislature evaluating whether further adjustments to the minimum annual salary for full-time employees of the Government of the Virgin Islands and independent instrumentalities are warranted based on inflationary data and economic indicators.

Thus passed by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands on June 4, 2025.

Witness our Hands and Seal of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands this 5th day of June, A.D., 2025.



Milton E. Potter

Milton E. Potter
President

Avery L. Lewis

Avery L. Lewis
Secretary