

ACT NO. 8926

BILL NO. 35-0285

THIRTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

Regular Session

2024

An Act honoring and commending Bryan "Benny-Demus" Boulai for his outstanding achievements in the music and entertainment industries and for his contributions to the Virgin Islands community and awarding him The Official Key to the Virgin Islands

---0---

WHEREAS, Bryan Boulai, colloquially known as "Benny-Demus", was born in 1977 on St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, to Claudina Boulai; and

WHEREAS, Benny-Demus attended E. Benjamin Oliver Elementary School, Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School, and Ivanna Eudora Kean High School; and

WHEREAS, from his early childhood years, he was captivated by the melodies of music and started playing the saxophone; and

WHEREAS, Benny-Demus displayed a profound affection for the art form of disc jockeying ("DJ'ing") and started DJ'ing when he was in the fourth grade, allowing him to nurture his innate talent and passion for musical expression; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, he attended Minot State University-Bottineau in North Dakota, where he made the decision in his freshman year to transition from playing the saxophone to dedicating himself full time to the craft of DJ'ing; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, Benny-Demus continued his academic journey at Western Wyoming Community College in Wyoming; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, the artist Akon enlisted Benny-Demus as his personal DJ, propelling him into a whirlwind of opportunities where he entertained audiences not only for Akon, but also for a roster of renowned artists including Rock City, TLC, Melanie Fiona, Shontelle, Kardinal Offishall, and Eve; and

WHEREAS, in 2004, Benny-Demus contributed to the signing of Rock City to Akon's record label, Konvict Muzik, and he also played a pivotal role to the signing of Canadian superstar Kardinal Offishall to Konvict Muzik; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, Benny-Demus assisted Rock City in securing their first writing placement on Akon's eight-time platinum album, *Konvicted*; and

WHEREAS, Benny-Demus earned global recognition as an Entertainer Extraordinaire, showcasing his talents as a DJ, producer, screenwriter, film director, and artist manager; and

WHEREAS, he built a loyal global following through performances in over 180 countries; including Germany, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Japan, Nigeria, Egypt, and the Virgin Islands; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, Benny-Demus was honored as a Global Ambassador of Liberia, West Africa by former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, Benny-Demus opened the MTV European Awards held in Spain by introducing Akon and the awards show host, Becky G; and

WHEREAS, Benny-Demus facilitated hip-hop legend Doug E. Fresh's performance on *American Idol*; and

WHEREAS, Benny-Demus has quietly contributed to the success of numerous popular musicians, including Kendrick Lamar, Lloyd, Jada Kingdom, Wiz Kid, TLC, Eve, and DJ Apeman in Uganda; and

WHEREAS, Benny-Demus launched his own management company, Purple Beacon Management and Touring, where he manages talents such as Rock City and Jamaican superstar Jada Kingdom; and

WHEREAS, beyond his musical prowess, Benny-Demus is dedicated to raising awareness about the challenges faced in his homeland of St. Thomas, and is committed to enhancing cultural morale and creating opportunities for the youth; and

WHEREAS, Benny-Demus has demonstrated a philanthropic spirit in so many ways including, collaborating with a team of Virgin Islanders in Atlanta to transport twenty 40-foot shipping containers filled with supplies to the Virgin Islands after Hurricanes Irma and Maria; sponsoring the Virgin Islands Men's All-Star Basketball Game; bringing Akon and Rock City to St. Thomas and St. Croix to visit children in local schools and to spread inspiration to youth in the juvenile detention center; and

WHEREAS, through his foundation, The DEMUS Foundation, Benny-Demus has provided family-oriented activities on St. Thomas such as the LOOMINATE Bike Ride and the Benny-Demus Carnival Kickball Tournament, drawing over 2000 spectators of all ages in person and online through live streaming; and

WHEREAS, these activities have allowed him to donate school supplies for teachers in St. Thomas and St. Croix and provide donations to other local non-profit organizations such as the Family Resource Center; My Brother's Workshop; City of Refuge Church; the Mamba Mentality Basketball Tournament; St. Thomas Rescue; St. Thomas Baseball Explorers; Young

Women's Christian Association; KC Art Creations; APC Classic Tournament; and Big Man Tings 40+ Basketball Tournament; and

WHEREAS, his philanthropic spirit was recognized by the 28th Legislature of the Virgin Islands at the Legislature's Oath of Office ceremony in 2009; and

WHEREAS, Benny-Demus continues to steadfastly support the emergence of future artists and leaders, carrying forward his legacy of selflessness and commitment to enriching the community; and

WHEREAS, Benny-Demus is a dedicated husband to Ebony Hill-Boulai and the proud father of three children: Kaniya Robinson-Boulai; Jahlan Thomas-Boulai; and Brionna Boulai; Now, Therefore,

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

SECTION 1. The Legislature of the Virgin Islands, on behalf of the people of the Virgin Islands, honors and commends Bryan "Benny-Demus" Boulai for his outstanding achievements in the music and entertainment industries and for his contributions to the Virgin Islands community.

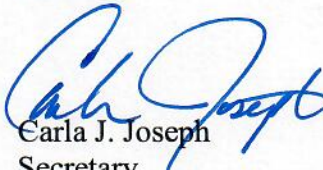
SECTION 2. Pursuant to title 1 Virgin Islands Code, section 103a (b), and in recognition and appreciation of his outstanding achievements in the music and entertainment industries and for his contributions to the Virgin Islands community, the President of the Legislature, or the President's designee, shall present Bryan "Benny-Demus" Boulai with The Official Key to the Virgin Islands and shall prepare and present a perma plaque copy of this Act to Bryan "Benny-Demus" Boulai at an appropriate ceremony.

Thus passed by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands on October 16, 2024.

Witness our Hands and Seal of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands this 22nd day of October, A.D., 2024.




Novelle E. Francis, Jr.
President


Carla J. Joseph
Secretary



Bill No. 35- 0285 is hereby approved.

**Witness my hand and the Seal of the Government of
the United States Virgin Islands at Charlotte Amalie,
St. Thomas, this 31 day of October, 2024 A.D.**

Kevin McCurdy

**Kevin McCurdy
Acting Governor**