

ACT NO. 9076

BILL NO. 36-0222

THIRTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

Regular Session

2026

An act designating January 27, 2026 as St. John Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise Day and appropriating up to \$35,000 from the Tourism Advertising Revolving Fund to the Department of Tourism to organize and host festivities in celebration of St. John Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise Day

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WHEREAS, the Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise was established in 2002 and is a fully chartered seven-day themed cruise that features live music from a lineup of famous blues and R and B artists; and

WHEREAS, the Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise has visited the Virgin Islands many times over the past years. Its predecessor, Blues Cruise Company, held one-day blues festivals during its January 1996 and January 1997 visits to Frederiksted, St. Croix; and

WHEREAS, on January 26, 2011, the Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise made its maiden voyage to Cruz Bay, St. John aboard the Holland America MS Eurodam, carrying more than 2,000 passengers; and

WHEREAS, during its first visit to Cruz Bay, the Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise organizers, in conjunction with the Department of Tourism, conducted blues-in-the-schools programs at the Guy Benjamin Elementary School, the Gift Hill School and the Julius E. Sprauve School and held music festivals in both Cruz Bay and Coral Bay; and

WHEREAS, on January 25, 2017, the Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise visited Cruz Bay where its organizers again conducted blues-in-the-school programs and held performances by artists from aboard the ship in several Cruz Bay venues; and

WHEREAS, on January 27, 2026, the Holland America MS Nieuw Statendam, with its full compliment of 2,666 passengers and 1,053 crew, will again call on Cruz Bay St. John;

WHEREAS, the Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise is known to carry passengers from almost every state in the nation and over 15 countries; and

WHEREAS, representatives from several major blues review magazines will be on board to cover events for their respective magazines, including events that take place in ports; and

WHEREAS, the visit of the Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise to Cruz Bay St. John will afford the Virgin Islands an excellent opportunity to advertise and promote among the cruisers and other day visitors, "overnight stays" in the Virgin Islands, and to maximize this opportunity, it is fitting to host entertainment, including cultural and promotional activities for cruise passengers while in port;

WHEREAS, the organizers of the Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise are enthusiastic about once again sharing blues music with the community and participating in cultural activities while in port; and

WHEREAS, with the assistance of the Department of Tourism and the participation of blues cruise organizers, St. John Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise Day will be enjoyed by visitors and residents alike; 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, notably the people of St. John, welcome the Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise and the passengers and crew aboard the Holland America MS Nieuw Statendam to visit and enjoy St. John.

SECTION 2. The Legislature of the Virgin Islands designates January 27, 2026 as the "St. John Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise Day".

SECTION 3. (a) The Department of Tourism shall organize and host a program celebrating St. John Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise Day, that includes:

(1) a welcoming ceremony conducted by St. John community leaders and officials;

(2) a mini blues festival in the Franklin A. Powell, Sr. Park in Cruz Bay that includes both Blues Cruise bands and local bands; and

(3) such other cultural and promotional activities as the Department of Tourism considers appropriate.

(b) All departments and agencies of the Government of the Virgin Islands shall assist the Department of Tourism, as requested, to carry out the purposes of this act.

SECTION 4. (a) The sum of up to \$35,000 is appropriated from the Tourism Advertising Revolving Fund to the Virgin Islands Department of Tourism in the fiscal year ending September 30, 2026, to organize and host the program to celebrate "St. John Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise Day" as provided in section 3.

(b) The sum appropriated in subsection (a) must be made available to the Department of Tourism on or before January 9, 2026.

Thus passed by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands on January 12, 2026.

Witness our Hands and Seal of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands this 13th day of January, A.D., 2026.



Milton E. Potter

Milton E. Potter
President

Avery L. Lewis

Avery L. Lewis
Secretary



Bill No. 36-0222 is hereby approved.

Witness my hand and the Seal of the Government of the United States Virgin Islands at Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, this 25th day of January, 2026 A.D.

Albert Bryan Jr.

Albert Bryan Jr.
Governor