

ACT NO. 8733

BILL NO. 35-0033

THIRTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

Regular Session

2023

An Act honoring and commending Mr. Benburin "Benny" Stephens posthumously for his heroism in saving the lives of a mother and her children and to rename the Bovoni Road (Route No. 30), specifically from the entrance of the St. Thomas Abattoir to the entrance of the Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School, "The Benburin "Benny" Stephens Drive"

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WHEREAS, Benburin Stephens and his wife Valeria lived in Estate Nadir, St. Thomas, United States Virgin Islands; and

WHEREAS, on December 15, 1986, a large fire erupted in the kitchen at the Estate Nadir home of Janice Daniel and her six children; and

WHEREAS, the fire quickly spread throughout the home to the living room, blocking both exits, leaving Ms. Daniel and her children confined in a bedroom with no way to exit the home; and

WHEREAS, on that evening, Mr. Stephens was at home watching television when he smelled smoke and became alarmed; he investigated his neighborhood, and found Janice Daniel and five of her six children trapped inside their burning home; and

WHEREAS, Benburin Stephens, without any fear for himself, acted quickly and tore out a set of window louvers in the bedroom, pulling the family to safety; and

WHEREAS, Janice Daniel was admitted to the St. Thomas Hospital with a fractured leg and second degree burns on the lower parts of her body; and

WHEREAS, the entire Daniel's home was destroyed except for the cistern; and

WHEREAS, without any doubt, on that night, Benburin Stephens fearlessly and single-handedly saved the lives of Janice Daniel and her children; and

WHEREAS, at a special ceremony held at the fire station, Mr. Stephens was awarded the rank of Honorary Fire Chief and was presented with a plaque by Governor Alexander A. Farrelly; and

WHEREAS, Benburin Stephens passed away on July 30, 2010; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands that Benburin Stephens has earned the sincere respect and admiration of the people of the Virgin Islands; 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, hereby honors, commends, and thanks Mr. Benburin Stephens posthumously for his heroic action in saving the lives of Janice Daniel and her children.

SECTION 2. Bovoni Road, Route No. 30, from the entrance of the St. Thomas Abattoir to the entrance of Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School, is named the “The Benburin “Benny” Stephens Drive”.

SECTION 3. The Commissioner of the Virgin Islands Department of Public Works shall provide for the erection of appropriate signage in an appropriate location on Bovoni Road bearing the inscription “The Benburin “Benny” Stephens Drive”.

SECTION 4. (a) The sum of \$8,000 is appropriated for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2023, from the General Fund of the Treasury of the Government of the Virgin Islands to the Department of Public Works for the erection of signage for the purpose set forth in section 3.

(b) The sum appropriated in subsection (a) remains available until expended.

SECTION 5. In recognition and appreciation of his bravery, the President of the Legislature or the President’s designee shall have a perma plaque copy of this act prepared and presented to the family, or the family’s designee, of the late Benburin Stephens at an appropriate ceremony.

Thus passed by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands on July 20, 2023.

Witness our Hands and Seal of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands this 24th Day of July, A.D., 2023.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Novelle E. Francis, Jr.".

Novelle E. Francis, Jr.
President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Carla J. Joseph".

Carla J. Joseph
Secretary



Bill No. 35-0033 is hereby approved.

Witness my hand and the Seal of the Government of the United States Virgin Islands at Christiansted, St. Croix, This 15th day of August, 2023 A.D.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Albert Bryan Jr.".

Albert Bryan Jr.
Governor