

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,
VETERANS AFFAIRS AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

07/18/2024-REPORTED OUT TO THE FLOOR

06/24/2024-REASSIGNED TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND JUDICIARY

BILL NO. 35-0229

Thirty-Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

February 2, 2024

An Act honoring and commending the Eighth elected Governor of the Virgin Islands, Kenneth Ezra Mapp for his years of service to the people of the Virgin Islands and naming Route 75 on the island of St. Croix from Bassin Triangle intersection at Route 70, Estate Richmond and ending at Krausse’s Lagune the “Gov. Kenneth E. Mapp Highway”; appropriating \$45,000 from the General Fund of the Treasury of the Government of the Virgin Islands to the Department of Public Works to implement the mandates of this Act, to bestow the Virgin Islands Medal of Honor on Kenneth Ezra Mapp and for other related purposes

PROPOSED BY: Senators: Franklin D. Johnson, Milton E. Potter, Samuel Carrión, Javan E. James, Sr., and Kenneth L. Gittens

1 **WHEREAS**, Kenneth Ezra Mapp was born on November 2, 1955, in Brooklyn, New
2 York to Albert Mapp and Vashti Hewitt Mapp of St. Croix, Virgin Islands; and

3 **WHEREAS**, in 1961, Kenneth E. Mapp moved to St. Croix with his maternal
4 grandmother, Almina Nicholas Hewitt, began his education at Christiansted Public Grammar
5 School in the first grade, and graduated from St. Croix Central High School in 1973; and

6 **WHEREAS**, Kenneth E. Mapp joined the Boy Scouts of America at age eleven,
7 achieving the rank of Life and the position of Junior Assistant Scoutmaster; and

8 **WHEREAS**, after graduating high school, Kenneth E. Mapp returned to Brooklyn where
9 he joined the New York City Police Department as a police trainee, formally titled,
10 “Community Service Officer” and graduated from the New York City Police Academy in May
11 1974; and

1 **WHEREAS**, upon graduating from the police academy, Kenneth E. Mapp was assigned
2 to the 83rd Police Precinct in Brooklyn; and

3 **WHEREAS**, while at the New York City Police Department, Kenneth E. Mapp attended
4 New York City Community College of the City University of New York; and

5 **WHEREAS**, in 1977, the Virgin Islands Police Department recruited Kenneth E. Mapp
6 where he first briefly served as a school monitor, and then as a Virgin Islands Police Officer;
7 and

8 **WHEREAS**, Kenneth E. Mapp attended the University of the Virgin Islands and as a
9 police officer, served in the patrol division, the juvenile division, and as an Executive Security
10 Agent for Governor Juan F. Luis; and

11 **WHEREAS**, while a police officer, Kenneth E. Mapp was elected President of the Virgin
12 Islands Police Benevolent Association; and

13 **WHEREAS**, on November 2,1982, Kenneth E. Mapp was elected as a Senator in the
14 Fifteenth Legislature of the Virgin Islands; and

15 **WHEREAS**, in 1985, Kenneth E. Mapp was appointed Assistant Director of the
16 Industrial Development Commission, now the Economic Development Authority, and was
17 later nominated by Governor Juan F. Luis and confirmed by the Legislature to serve as the
18 Director of the Consumer Services Administration, now the Department of Licensing and
19 Consumer Affairs; and

20 **WHEREAS**, during his tenure as Director of the Consumer Services Administration,
21 Kenneth E. Mapp was a protagonist for enforcing food and medicinal standards, issuing
22 citations, and confiscating tens of thousands of food and medicinal items, some with expiration
23 dates beyond six years, and being sold as consumable products to Virgin Islands consumers;
24 and

1 **WHEREAS**, Kenneth E. Mapp attended a fellowship at Carnegie-Mellon University,
2 entitled, “Senior Executive Management” while serving at the Consumer Services
3 Administration; and

4 **WHEREAS**, in 1988, he was elected to the Eighteenth Legislature, and in 1992, he was
5 elected to the Twentieth Legislature of the Virgin Islands; and

6 **WHEREAS**, during his career, Kenneth E. Mapp was also employed in the private sector
7 at Abramson Enterprises, Inc. and at the Caribe Home Center, Inc. companies, both locally
8 owned and operated businesses; and

9 **WHEREAS**, in 1994, while serving in the Twentieth Legislature, Dr. Roy L. Schneider
10 selected Sen. Kenneth E. Mapp to be his running mate for Lieutenant Governor, both were
11 registered Republicans, but ran for office as independent candidates; and

12 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Roy L. Schneider and Sen. Kenneth E. Mapp were elected Governor
13 and Lieutenant Governor of the Virgin Islands of the United States in a runoff election on
14 November 22, 1994; and

15 **WHEREAS**, on January 2, 1995, Dr. Roy L. Schneider and Senator Kenneth E. Mapp
16 were inaugurated and took the oath of office to serve as Governor and Lieutenant Governor,
17 respectively; and

18 **WHEREAS**, during his tenure as Lieutenant Governor, Kenneth E. Mapp served as
19 Commissioner of Insurance and Chairman of the Virgin Islands Banking Board and was known
20 as an assiduous regulator of the banking and insurance industries, benefiting many banking and
21 insurance consumers; and

22 **WHEREAS**, while serving as Lieutenant Governor, Kenneth E. Mapp attended a
23 program at the Kennedy School of Government for senior executives in state and local
24 governments; and

1 **WHEREAS**, in 1997, the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University offered
2 Kenneth E. Mapp a mid-career opportunity to pursue a graduate degree in public
3 administration; and

4 **WHEREAS**, Kenneth E. Mapp, not having attained an associate or bachelor's degree,
5 the Kennedy School of Government set specific criteria, including a commitment from him to
6 continue serving in the public sector as pre-conditions to his admittance into its graduate
7 school; and

8 **WHEREAS**, Lieutenant Governor Kenneth E. Mapp did not seek re-election to the office
9 of Lieutenant Governor; and

10 **WHEREAS**, in January 1999, following his tenure as Lieutenant Governor, Kenneth E.
11 Mapp, entered Harvard College and in July 1999, after achieving the enrollment requirements,
12 the Kennedy School of Government admitted Kenneth E. Mapp to its fall semester to pursue a
13 master's degree in public administration; and

14 **WHEREAS**, in 1999, Kenneth E. Mapp was honored by the St. Thomas / St. John
15 Historic Society for the accurate restoration of the edifice housing the Offices of the Lieutenant
16 Governor, known as Haggerman House, which was built in 1789 and is in Charlotte Amalie;
17 and

18 **WHEREAS**, on June 8th, 2000, Harvard University, the President, and Fellows of
19 Harvard College, acting on the recommendation of the Faculty of Government, John Fitzgerald
20 Kennedy School of Government, and with the consent of the Honorable and Reverend the
21 Board of Overseers, conferred the degree of Master in Public Administration on Kenneth Ezra
22 Mapp; and

23 **WHEREAS**, on June 8th, 2000, and Harvard College's three hundred and sixty-fourth
24 (364th) year, it was noted that Kenneth E. Mapp was the third student since 1636 admitted to a

1 Harvard University graduate school and conferred a degree not having first attained an
2 associate or bachelor's degree; and

3 **WHEREAS**, in August 2000, Kenneth E. Mapp entered Harvard Business School and
4 completed the Advanced Management Program (AMP-159); and

5 **WHEREAS**, Kenneth E. Mapp is listed as an alumnus in good standing of the John F.
6 Kennedy School of Government and of Harvard Business School; and

7 **WHEREAS**, in March 2002, Governor Charles W. Turnbull, PhD appointed Kenneth
8 E. Mapp as the Director of Finance and Administration of the Virgin Islands Public Finance
9 Authority; and

10 **WHEREAS**, while serving at the Public Finance Authority, Kenneth E. Mapp raised
11 millions of dollars for a myriad of capital projects, including wastewater treatment facilities,
12 docks, road construction, school repairs, city and town improvements, sports and recreation
13 facilities, law enforcement equipment, and capital projects of nonprofit entities; and

14 **WHEREAS**, during his tenure at the Public Finance Authority, Kenneth E. Mapp raised
15 funds for, and managed Gov. Turnbull's historic restoration project, which included the Old
16 Danish School in Frederiksted built in 1799, the Peter von Scholten School in Estate Diamond
17 built in 1840, and "Quarters B" on Government Hill built in 1816; and

18 **WHEREAS**, Kenneth E. Mapp, while serving at the Virgin Islands Public Finance
19 Authority, also managed the development and/or construction of several major capital projects
20 including the creation and implementation of the Frederiksted Economic Revitalization
21 Project, renovation of the government owned Kings Alley hotel, modernization of the Ann E.
22 Abramson Marine Facility, the Vincent F. Mason, Sr. Coral Resort and Pool, the Verne I.
23 Richards Veterans Memorial Park and the Paul E. Joseph Stadium; and

1 **WHEREAS**, while serving at the Public Finance Authority, Kenneth E. Mapp recovered
2 millions of dollars of investment losses (negative arbitrage earnings) and attained the
3 Authority's first investment grade ratings on Virgin Islands municipal securities; and

4 **WHEREAS**, Kenneth E. Mapp, as Director of Finance and Administration, raised
5 millions of dollars through the issuance of Private Activity Bonds for HOVENSA, the
6 territory's largest private sector employer, that assisted HOVENSA in refinancing its high
7 interest cost debt with the proceeds of the low interest Private Activity bonds, incurring no debt
8 obligation to the Government of the Virgin Islands; and

9 **WHEREAS**, Kenneth E. Mapp ran unsuccessfully for Governor in 2006 and again in
10 2010; and

11 **WHEREAS**, Kenneth E. Mapp and former Senator Osbert E. Potter campaigned as
12 independent candidates, and were elected Governor and Lieutenant Governor of the Virgin
13 Islands on November 18, 2014; and

14 **WHEREAS**, on January 5, 2015, Kenneth E. Mapp and Osbert E. Potter took the Oath
15 of Office to serve as Governor and Lieutenant Governor, respectively, making Kenneth Ezra
16 Mapp the eighth elected Governor of the Virgin Islands, Commander-in-Chief of the Virgin
17 Islands National Guard and a member of the National Governors Association; and

18 **WHEREAS**, Gov. Kenneth E. Mapp and Lt. Governor Osbert E. Potter assembled a
19 cadre of highly qualified professionals to serve in the Governor's cabinet and on their
20 respective staff; and

21 **WHEREAS**, in January 2015 at the behest of HOVENSA Gov. Kenneth E. Mapp met
22 with the principals of the company, which was indebted to the Government of the Virgin
23 Islands for more than \$60 million dollars for the suspension of HOVENSA annual payments
24 in lieu of property taxes (PILOT); and

1 **WHEREAS**, at the meeting, HOVENSA demanded the Government of the Virgin
2 Islands provide it with codified immunity against all claims, now and in the future, public or
3 private, in exchange for a one-time reduced payment of \$41 million dollars for the PILOT
4 owed; and

5 **WHEREAS**, in January 2015, Gov. Kenneth E. Mapp rejected HOVENSA’S demands
6 and directed the Attorney General of the Virgin Islands to begin immediate foreclosure
7 proceedings in the District Court of the Virgin Islands against HOVENSA, its refinery and all
8 related real property pledged as a surety against the suspension of HOVENSA’S payments in
9 lieu of property taxes; and

10 **WHEREAS**, in November 2015, HOVENSA and the Government of the Virgin Islands
11 reached a settlement agreement resolving the PILOT owed, HOVENSA’S environmental
12 damages and obligations to the territory and other related issues between both entities; and

13 **WHEREAS**, the settlement provided that HOVENSA pay the Government of the Virgin
14 Islands approximately \$265 million dollars, transfer to the Government ownership of real
15 property in Estates Pearl and Hope, appraised at \$655 million dollars, and mitigate its
16 environmental damages by fulfilling its corrective obligations to the territory; and

17 **WHEREAS**, under the agreement, the Government would release its liens against
18 HOVENSA’S remaining property and cooperate with HOVENSA on the sale of its refinery
19 and other properties; and

20 **WHEREAS**, in December 2015, Governor Kenneth E. Mapp called the Legislature into
21 special session to consider his proposed settlement with HOVENSA and a revenue sharing
22 agreement between the Government of the Virgin Islands and Arclight Partners, LLC, an
23 investment conglomerate, to purchase the HOVENSA refinery, and related assets; to authorize
24 the operation of an oil storage terminal facility and to pursue a restart of the oil refinery; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Gov. Kenneth E. Mapp worked with the Trump Administration, Arclight
2 Partners, LLC and Sinopec USA, Inc., the largest integrated oil company in China on the
3 successful oil refinery restart, creating thousands of employment opportunities; and

4 **WHEREAS**, Gov. Kenneth E. Mapp and his administration successfully raised salaries
5 in the public and private sectors by negotiating and implementing new wage agreements with
6 unionized government workers, setting a new base wage for public employees, and signing
7 legislation raising minimum wages in the private sector; and

8 **WHEREAS**, the Mapp-Potter administration implemented Gov. Mapp's plan in Act No.
9 7987, further amended by Act No. 8469, to repay public employees \$63 million for an eight
10 percent (8%) salary reduction implemented in 2011 by Act No. 7261 over a two year period
11 which was subsequently found, in 2016, to have violated the contract clause of the United
12 States Constitution by the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit; and

13 **WHEREAS**, the Mapp-Potter administration paid refunds owed to taxpayers for tax
14 years 2010 through 2016, in excess of \$178 million; and

15 **WHEREAS**, Governor Kenneth E. Mapp and William J. Bratton, Police Commissioner
16 of the New York City Police Department (NYPD), formed an alliance between the Virgin
17 Islands Police Department (VIPD) and the NYPD to provide training and mentorship of VIPD
18 officers and supervisors at the New York City Police Academy; and

19 **WHEREAS**, the Mapp-Potter administration garnered full participation in the federal
20 Medicaid program for Virgin Islands residents who did not have health insurance, providing
21 vital healthcare services to many families; and

22 **WHEREAS**, in September 2017, the Virgin Islands experienced two of the Atlantic's
23 most destructive category 5 Hurricanes, named Irma and Maria, which barreled across the
24 Territory within fourteen days, disrupting the economy, and causing catastrophic damages to
25 homes, businesses, and the islands' infrastructure; and

1 **WHEREAS**, in October 2017, facing the devastation, Governor Kenneth E. Mapp
2 created a 20-member USVI Hurricane Recovery and Resilience Task Force noting, “this crisis
3 has afforded us the opportunity to build our communities better and stronger than ever”; and

4 **WHEREAS**, the taskforce included territorial agency heads, senators, federal partners,
5 business leaders, nonprofit and inter faith community leaders and subject matter experts and
6 published a final report in 2018; and

7 **WHEREAS**, the taskforce report formed the blueprint for the Mapp-Potter
8 Administration as its path for the recovery and future protection of the Virgin Islands; and

9 **WHEREAS**, Governor Kenneth E. Mapp launched a national campaign to aid in the
10 rebuilding of the territory, the campaign included the President and Vice President of the
11 United States, Members of Congress, Governors, philanthropic organizations, and national
12 conglomerates; and

13 **WHEREAS**, Governor Kenneth E. Mapp, Lieutenant Governor Osbert E. Potter and the
14 Virgin Islands Delegate to Congress hosted visits to the territory of Vice President Mike Pence,
15 heads of federal agencies/departments, and Members of Congress; and

16 **WHEREAS**, Governor Kenneth E. Mapp and Lieutenant Governor Osbert E. Potter
17 hosted former United States President William “Bill” Clinton and the Clinton Global Initiative,
18 former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and the Bloomberg Philanthropies, Mr.
19 Kenny Chesney, a homeowner on St. John and the Kenny Chesney Foundation Governors
20 Andrew Cuomo of New York, Chris Christie of New Jersey and Larry Hogan of Maryland and
21 Chairman of the National Governors Association, all of whom donated tremendous time,
22 money, expertise, resources, goodwill, and advice towards the Virgin Islands recovery; and

23 **WHEREAS**, Governor Kenneth E. Mapp with bipartisan support, successfully
24 persuaded Congress to adopt a number of unprecedented amendments to the Stafford Act, most

1 importantly, authorizing the federal government to invest in strengthening infrastructure to
2 withstand future disasters as opposed to rebuilding to an “as was” condition; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Congress authorized over \$9 billion to provide for the needs of the Virgin
4 Islands, operating bridge financing for the territorial government and its instrumentalities and
5 funds to rebuild its infrastructure, including but not limited to schools, hospitals, senior assisted
6 and long-term living facilities, electric production and distribution, airport improvements,
7 dredging of harbors, upgrading docks and bulkheads, road construction and repairs, hardening
8 telecommunication systems, and home and roof repairs; and

9 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to an Act of Congress and a historic first, the federal government
10 assumed 100% of the cost of the Virgin Islands Medicaid program for two years, which
11 provided much needed revenues to the territorial hospitals and healthcare system; and

12 **WHEREAS**, major capital projects completed during Governor Kenneth E. Mapp’s
13 tenure included the Veteran’s Drive Improvement Project, the bridge at Estate Nadir, known
14 as the “bridge to nowhere” on Turpentine Road, and the construction of the Downtown
15 Revitalization Project on Main Street in Charlotte Amalie; and

16 **WHEREAS**, Governor Kenneth E. Mapp, the President of the University of the Virgin
17 Islands, and the Chairperson of the University’s Board of Trustees jointly announced a plan to
18 provide free tuition to territorial high school graduates to attend the University of the Virgin
19 Islands. Governor Mapp signed legislation into law providing such free tuition in 2018; and

20 **WHEREAS**, on January 7, 2019, Gov. Kenneth E. Mapp retired from Government after
21 providing more than 40 years of public service to the people of the Virgin Islands of the United
22 States; Now, Therefore,

23 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:*

24 **SECTION 1.** The Legislature of the Virgin Islands, on behalf of the people of the Virgin
25 Islands, expresses its heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Governor Kenneth E. Mapp, eighth

1 elected Governor of the Virgin Islands for his dedication, commitment, leadership,
2 contributions, and outstanding public service of over 40 years.

3 **SECTION 2.** In recognition and appreciation of his contributions over a life of public
4 service, the Legislature hereby names Route 75, also known as Northside Road, on the
5 island of St. Croix, beginning at the intersection at Basin Triangle and Route 70 in Estate
6 Richmond through the northside of St. Croix and ending at Krausses Lagune, the “Gov.
7 Kenneth E. Mapp Highway”.

8 **SECTION 3.** The Virgin Islands Department of Public Works shall cause signage to be
9 placed at major intersections along Route 75, including, but not limited to the intersection at
10 Bassin Triangle traffic light and Route 70, the intersection in Golden Rock at Route 703, the
11 intersection known as Five Corners at Rattan Road at Route 74, the intersection known as
12 Claude A. “Bennie” Benjamin Memory Drive, Route 79, the intersection known as the Sidney
13 Lee/Northshore Rd Route 80, the intersection at Midland Road, Route 72, the intersection at
14 Queen Mary Highway, Route 70 and at the intersection at Melvin Evans Highway, Route 66.

15 **SECTION 4.** The signage required by section 3 of this Act shall conform to the
16 guidelines of the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway
17 Administration’s Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices bearing the inscription “Gov.
18 Kenneth E. Mapp Highway”.

19 **SECTION 5.** (a) The sum of \$45,000 is appropriated to the Department of Public Works
20 from the General Fund of the Treasury of the Government of the Virgin Islands, in the fiscal
21 year ending September 30, 2024, to carry out the provisions of section 3 and section 4.

22 (b) The funds appropriated remains available until expended.

23 **SECTION 6.** In continued recognition and appreciation of his contributions and service,
24 the Legislature also confers the Virgin Islands Medal of Honor on the Eighth elected Governor
25 of the Virgin Islands, Kenneth Ezra Mapp.

1 **SECTION 7.** The Virgin Islands Medal of Honor, cast in gold, together with a copy of
 2 this Act, shall be presented to Governor Kenneth Ezra Mapp by the President of the Legislature,
 3 or his designee, at an appropriate ceremony to be held for that purpose.

4 **BILL SUMMARY**

5 This bill commends Governor Kenneth Ezra Mapp for his years of service to the people
 6 of the Virgin Islands and names Route 75 on the island of St. Croix, starting at the Bassin
 7 Triangle traffic light in Estate Richmond and ending at Krausses Lagune, the “Gov. Kenneth
 8 E. Mapp Highway” in his honor. The bill recognizes several of Governor Mapp’s major
 9 achievements, which are not all inclusive, and appropriates the sum of \$45,000 from the
 10 General Fund of the Treasury of the Government of the Virgin Islands to the Virgin Islands
 11 Department of Public Works to carry out the provisions of this Act. The bill further confers
 12 the Virgin Islands Medal of Honor on Kenneth Ezra Mapp for his commitment, service, and
 13 dedication to the people of the territory.

14 **BR23-0656/January 23, 2024/SLR**