

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, VETERANS AFFAIRS
AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

10/10/2024-AMENDED AND REPORTED OUT TO THE FLOOR
09/24/2024-REPORTED OUT TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND JUDICARY

BILL NO. 35-0286

Thirty-Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

June 20, 2024

An Act honoring and commending Verne Antonio Hodge for his years of dedicated service to the people of the Virgin Islands and its jurisprudence by naming the courthouse of the Superior Court of the Virgin Islands, in the St. Thomas/St. John district the “Judge Verne A. Hodge Superior Courthouse”

PROPOSED BY: Senators Kenneth L. Gittens, Angel L. Bolques, Jr.,
Milton E. Potter, Marvin A. Blyden, Marise C. James,
Carla J. Joseph, Alma Francis Heyliger, Dwayne M. DeGraff,
Franklin D. Johnson, Donna A. Frett-Gregory and Javan E. James, Sr.
Co-Sponsors Ray Fonseca and Samuel Carrión

1 **WHEREAS**, Verne Antonio Hodge was born on November 16, 1933, on the island of
2 St. Thomas, Virgin Islands;

3 **WHEREAS**, Verne A. Hodge graduated salutatorian of the Charlotte Amalie High
4 School Class of 1952;

5 **WHEREAS**, in 1956, Verne Antonio Hodge graduated magna cum laude with a
6 Bachelor of Science from Hampton University and in 1969, he graduated cum laude from
7 Howard University with a Juris Doctor degree;

8 **WHEREAS**, from 1958-1961, he worked as an internal auditor and an internal revenue
9 agent in the Virgin Islands Government;

1 **WHEREAS**, from 1961-1965, he worked as a public accountant, comptroller with
2 Mannassah Busline, Inc., in St. Thomas;

3 **WHEREAS**, from 1965-1966, Verne Antonio Hodge worked as a business manager,
4 personnel director with the Virgin Islands Department of Public Works;

5 **WHEREAS**, from 1969-1973, he established a private practice in law in the Virgin
6 Islands;

7 **WHEREAS**, in 1973, Governor Melvin H. Evans appointed him to become the Attorney
8 General of the Virgin Islands, a position he held until 1976;

9 **WHEREAS**, in 1976, Governor Cyril E. King appointed him to serve as the Presiding
10 Judge of the then Territorial Court of the Virgin Islands, which, in 2004, was renamed the
11 Superior Court of the Virgin Islands;

12 **WHEREAS**, Verne A. Hodge was the Presiding Judge of the Territorial Court until
13 October 31, 1999;

14 **WHEREAS**, he served as past chairman of the Eastern Region National Association of
15 Attorneys General, and from 1963-1964, he was a member of the Virgin Islands Industrial
16 Board, and from 1964-1966, he was a member of the Virgin Islands Board of Elections;

17 **WHEREAS**, in the summer of 1981, Presiding Judge Verne Antonio Hodge created the
18 Rising Stars Steel Orchestra, with the goal of preventing school dropout and juvenile
19 delinquency among our youth;

20 **WHEREAS**, his many achievements included being a member of the Virgin Islands Bar,
21 the District of Columbia Bar, the United States Court of Appeals for the 3rd Circuit and the
22 Supreme Court of the United States;

1 **WHEREAS**, Verne Antonio Hodge held a certificate of advanced income tax law from
2 the United States Internal Revenue Service;

3 **WHEREAS**, he served in the United States Army and received an award of merit for the
4 9th Infantry Division;

5 **WHEREAS**, he was awarded the American Jurisprudence in state, local and federal
6 taxation;

7 **WHEREAS**, Verne Antonio Hodge has purposely shied away from public recognition
8 of his lifelong service and achievements as a jurist;

9 **WHEREAS**, his service was steeped in excellence, efficiencies and forward-thinking to
10 make the Virgin Islands courts respected by all;

11 **WHEREAS**, he is characterized by his down-to-earth humility;

12 **WHEREAS**, in 1999, Judge Verne Antonio Hodge was bestowed the Medal of Honor
13 by the Twenty-Third Legislature of the Virgin Islands; and

14 **WHEREAS**, it is only fitting that the courthouse of the Superior Court of the Virgin
15 Islands in the St. Thomas/St. John District be named the “Judge Verne A. Hodge Superior
16 Courthouse”, as a testament to his service of jurisprudence in the Virgin Islands; Now,
17 Therefore,

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

19 **SECTION 1.** The Legislature of the Virgin Islands, on behalf of the people of the Virgin
20 Islands, honors Verne Antonio Hodge by naming the courthouse of the Superior Court of the
21 Virgin Islands, in the St. Thomas/St. John district the “Judge Verne A. Hodge Superior
22 Courthouse”.

