

**BILL NO. 31-0073**

**Thirty-first Legislature of the Virgin Islands**

**March 26, 2015**

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An Act authorizing the Government of the Virgin Islands and the Department of Public Works to apply for no more than \$75,000,000 in Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicles pursuant to the requirements of 23 USC section 122

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**PROPOSED BY:** Senator Nereida Rivera-O'Reilly

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- 1**            *WHEREAS*, the Territorial highway system of St. Croix are in serious disrepair; and
- 2**            *WHEREAS*, due to the present downturn in the Virgin Islands' economy local monies are not
- 3** available to make the extensive upgrades necessary; and
- 4**            *WHEREAS*, a safe efficient and reliable territorial highways system plays a significant role in
- 5** providing and sustaining a vigorous economy; and
- 6**            *WHEREAS*, Congress has declared that it is in the national interest to preserve and enhance the
- 7** surface transportation system to meet the needs of the United States for the 21<sup>st</sup> century; and
- 8**            *WHEREAS*, to ensure that its intention is executed Congress has provided states with the ability
- 9** to apply for grants for transportation related projects which are necessary to improve the safe, secure and
- 10** efficient movement of people and goods; and

1           **WHEREAS**, the Melvin H. Evans Highway/Route 66 and the roads of the business district of  
2 downtown Christiansted, and King Street/Route 75E and Company Street/Route 75W are in dire need of  
3 improvement: and

4           **WHEREAS**, the Virgin Islands must continue to take full advantage of available federal aid to  
5 assist with transportation related projects;,

6           **WHEREAS**, the Government of the Virgin islands, Department of Public Works and the Federal  
7 Highway Administration, Puerto Rico/Virgin Islands Division Office entered into a Stewardship  
8 Agreement wherein the parties agreed that the oversight of the territorial Highway Program is to be  
9 carried out in the spirit of a true partnership; and that the cost of the maintenance of the Territorial  
10 Highway system shall be borne by the Virgin Islands Government and failure to do so may result in the  
11 withholding of approval of future projects; Now, Therefore,

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

13           **SECTION 1.** The Government of the Virgin Islands and the Department of Public Works,  
14 through its commissioner may facilitate the borrowing of \$75 million dollars plus costs in Grant  
15 Anticipation Revenue Vehicles (GARVEEs) pursuant to the provisions of 23 USC §122.

16           **SECTION 2.** Any proceeds derived from the GARVEEs must be utilized solely in the District  
17 of St. Croix to upgrade and pave all roads, and related infrastructure, in the historic towns of  
18 Christiansted and Frederiksted, territorial highway system major east-west arteries, to include Queen  
19 Mary Highway, Melvin H. Evans Highway/Route 66, Northside Road/Route 75, and all north-south  
20 arteries.

21           **SECTION 3.** The Department of Public Works shall submit a scope of work to the Legislature  
22 within sixty days of enactment of this Act. Copies of all correspondence with the Federal Highway

1 Administration and other related entities related to the execution of this mandate must also be submitted  
2 with the scope of work that include roads identified for upgrade and paving.

3 **BILL SUMMARY**

4 Section 1 authorizes the Government of the Virgin Islands and the Department of Public Works,  
5 through its commissioner to facilitate the borrowing of funds through GARVEEs

6 Section 2 mandates that the funds derived from the GARVEEs be utilized for specific repairs in  
7 St. Croix.

8 Section 3 requires the Department of Public Works to submit both a scope of work and all  
9 correspondence related to the execution of this legislation.

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13 **BR15-0177/January 22, 2015/**

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