

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT

**BILL NO. 31-0138**

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

**June 16, 2105**

An Act reestablishing the Bachelor of Science in the Nursing Degree Program at the University of the Virgin Islands, on the St. Croix Campus

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**PROPOSED BY:** Senators Kurt A. Vialet and Marvin A Blyden

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1           **WHEREAS**, the last St. Croix Bachelor of Science in Nursing class graduated in  
2   2009 from the University of the Virgin Islands; and

3           **WHEREAS**, currently the University of the Virgin Islands' School of Nursing, St.  
4   Croix campus, does not offer programs beyond Associates Degrees in Nursing; and

5           **WHEREAS**, the graduates from the School of Nursing's Associate Degree  
6   Program on the island of St. Croix must relocate to the island of St. Thomas to complete  
7   the Bachelor of Science in Nursing; and

8           **WHEREAS**, the vast majority of the graduates from the School of the Nursing's  
9   Associate Degree Program on the island of St. Croix cannot or do not pursue a Bachelor of  
10   Science in Nursing; and

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1           **WHEREAS**, the American Nurses Association of Colleges urges the support of  
2 furthering nursing education in order to deliver high quality nursing care for residents of  
3 the Territory, prepare a diverse nursing workforce, and be able to meet the demands of  
4 modern healthcare; and

5           **WHEREAS**, there is growing evidence to suggests that with a higher education  
6 level of the nurse, there is a decrease in negative patient outcomes, such as length of stay  
7 and mortality rates; and

8           **WHEREAS**, two campuses will have the capacity to produce a greater number of  
9 nurses to staff the hospitals and health care facilities in the Territory, consequently, reduce  
10 the dependency of travelling nurses; and

11           **WHEREAS**, nursing students on St. Croix will be able to achieve their career goals  
12 without disruption of family life, occasioned by having to relocate to St. Thomas, and the  
13 expense incurred therein; and

14           **WHEREAS**, in a recent meeting with twenty eight Pre-Nursing students to  
15 determine their interests in the Bachelor of Science in the Nursing program on the St. Croix  
16 campus of the University of the Virgin Islands, 100% of the participants expressed a desire  
17 to complete a Bachelor of Science in Nursing on the St. Croix Campus; Now, Therefore,

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

19           **SECTION 1.** The sum of \$432,000 is appropriated from the General Fund of the  
20 Government of the Virgin Islands, in the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, to the  
21 University of the Virgin Islands to fund the Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program on  
22 the island of St. Croix Campus.

23           **SECTION 2. (a)** The funds appropriated in section 1 of this Act remain available  
24 until expended and must be used solely for the implementation of the Bachelor of Science  
25 Nursing Program on the island of St. Croix.

1           **(b)**     Regardless of the amount, all expenditures from the funds must be  
 2 authorized by at least two members of the University of the Virgin Islands Board of  
 3 Trustees.

4           **SECTION 3.** The funds appropriated in Section 1 of this Act must be expended  
 5 for the specific purposes and in the amounts established in paragraphs (1) through (5) of  
 6 this section.

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| 7  | <b>(1)</b> | Recruitment of doctoral prepared nursing faculty           | <b>\$230,000</b> |
| 8  | <b>(2)</b> | Contracting expert for faculty & program development       | <b>\$42,000</b>  |
| 9  | <b>(3)</b> | Upgrade Information Technology for video conferencing      | <b>\$130,000</b> |
| 10 | <b>(4)</b> | Application for approval to offer BSN program on St. Croix | <b>\$5,000</b>   |
| 11 | <b>(5)</b> | Upgrade of Library resources                               | <b>\$25,000.</b> |

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### **BILL SUMMARY**

14           This bill appropriates \$432,000 to the University of the Virgin Islands to fund the  
 15 Bachelor of Science Nursing Program on the St. Croix Campus.

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18 **BR15-0572/ April 20, 2015/YLT**

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