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Crown Bay Marina Co-Owner Sues VIPD Commissioner Over Firearm License Renewal Denial

Kosei Ohno filed suit against Police Commissioner Mario Brooks and the VI government, claiming the denial of his concealed carry license renewal violates his Second Amendment rights and is not supported by local firearms statutes.

Government / **Published On March 28, 2025 06:27 AM /**

Janeke Simon **March 28, 2025**

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Crown Bay Marina in St. Thomas, owned in part by Kosei Ohno,

Kosei Ohno, one of the owners of Crown Bay Marina on St. Thomas, is suing Police Commissioner Mario Brooks and the Government of the Virgin Islands over alleged unlawfully blocking the renewal of his firearm licenses.

According to the civil suit, filed on Thursday, Mr. Ohno first applied for concealed carry licenses for two pistols in 2018, and was approved for both. In 2021, he applied to renew the permits, and that was also approved.

According to court documents, in August 2024, Mr. Ohno once again applied to renew his firearms licenses, but this time he says the V.I. Police Department refused to allow the renewal until he obtained a Virgin Islands driver's license. He applied again in October of the same year, and followed up on October 21 with a letter to Commissioner Brooks and the Director of the VIPD Firearms Bureau.

In the letter, Mr. Ohno noted that several incidents at Crown Bay Marina over the years had prompted the need for him to obtain and carry firearms. He noted that he possesses a concealed carry license issued by the state of Washington, where he resides. Mr. Ohno also informed authorities that when he comes to the Virgin Islands to conduct business, he does not stay long enough to need a Virgin Islands driver's license.

The requirement for a local driver's license, Mr. Ohno argues, is not contained in the statute governing the licensure of firearms in the territory – Title 23, Chapter 5 of the Virgin Islands Code. As such, his letter concluded, the denial of his application to renew his concealed carry permit was a violation of his rights under the Second Amendment of the United States Constitution.

Months passed with no response, the lawsuit claims, until Mr. Ohno received a letter from Commissioner Brooks dated March 12, 2025. The commissioner reportedly said that one of the firearms in question was not a pistol but an “assault weapon” according to the VI Code. The .300 Sig Sauer MCX was not a “standard handgun” as it has a removable scope and the capacity to be converted into a short-barreled rifle, according to the Commissioner's letter. As such, a concealed carry license was not available for that weapon.

Mr. Ohno was informed that the renewal of the other firearm, a 9mm HK P30 SK, could proceed.

A letter sent back to the commissioner disputing his assertions about the Sig Sauer's eligibility for a concealed carry license did not receive a response by the expressed deadline of March 26, 2025, “prompting Plaintiff to file this action seeking injunctive and declaratory relief.”

Noting that prevailing laws in the territory governing firearm licenses had not changed subsequent to Mr. Ohno's two initial successful applications, the lawsuit asks the court to direct Commissioner Brooks to immediately issue Mr. Ohno a concealed carry license renewal for the Sig Sauer.

Going even further, Mr. Ohno's lawsuit asks the court to “issue declaratory judgment pronouncing Chapter 5 is void and unenforceable, as well as the VIPD's existing firearms rules and regulations, as violative of the Second Amendment.”

As of press time, there has not been a response filed by the defendants.