

Bryan Signs Tax Amnesty, Racetrack Funding, and Cultural Recognition Bills Into Law

Gov. Bryan has signed several bills into law, including a 90-day tax amnesty program, funding for the Randall “Doc” James Racetrack, and an act honoring soca artist Dennis “Pumpa” Liburd Jr., while issuing line-item vetoes and urging legislative revisions

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Governor Albert Bryan Jr. By. GOV'T HOUSE.

Governor Albert Bryan Jr. has signed into law a series of bills passed by the 36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands, including measures establishing a 90-day tax amnesty period, funding for the completion of the Randall “Doc” James Racetrack, and the official recognition of soca artist Dennis “Pumpa” Liburd Jr. for his contributions to Virgin Islands music and culture.

The actions were part of a wide-ranging legislative package addressing government operations, cultural preservation, and community development, approved following the Legislature's October 30, 2025 session.

Governor Bryan approved Bill No. 36-0083, which creates a 90-day tax amnesty program waiving penalties for overdue property, income, and gross receipts taxes. The initiative is intended to assist taxpayers and businesses still recovering from Hurricanes Irma and Maria and Tropical Storm Ernesto.

Another key measure, Bill No. 36-0119, reprograms funds for the completion of the Randall "Doc" James Racetrack and supports multiple community and cultural projects while amending portions of the Virgin Islands Code. The governor, however, issued line-item vetoes for Sections 2 and 3 of the bill, citing constitutional and drafting concerns.

He explained that Section 2 would have removed the six-month grace period for judges serving with expired terms — an essential safeguard, he said, that "maintains checks and balances between the Executive and Legislative branches." Section 3, he added, inadvertently struck language that allows certain retirees, such as teachers, nurses, and police officers, to return to work immediately after retirement. Governor Bryan recommended the Legislature restore that provision "to ensure continuity in critical services."

The governor also signed Bill No. 36-0058, honoring and commending Dennis "Pumpa" Lennox Leroy Liburd Jr. for his impact on Virgin Islands culture and the music industry. The act awards Liburd the Official Key to the Territory and designates the main entrance of 6-Y Peters Rest Road in Christiansted in his honor.

Governor Bryan also approved Bill No. 36-0061, allowing retirees receiving Government Employees' Retirement System (GERS) annuities who return to work at the University of the Virgin Islands to continue receiving their pension while earning a salary, provided they enroll in a separate retirement plan.

In addition, Bill No. 36-0099, expanding the Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Prevention Act, was signed into law. However, the governor expressed concern about the bill's requirement that the Department of Justice maintain a registry of older adult offenders, noting the financial and legal burdens it could create. He urged lawmakers to collaborate with DOJ to develop a workable implementation and funding plan.

Among other measures signed were:

- Bill No. 36-0121 – Renaming Peter Carl Limpricht Park on St. Croix as the Ten Sleepless Knights Park and appropriating \$25,000 for new signage.
- Bill No. 36-0123 – Lowering the blood alcohol limit for commercial motor vehicle operators to 0.04 percent.
- Bill No. 36-0128 – Rezoning Parcel No. 68A Estate Lindberg Bay on St. Thomas from Public to Residential-Medium Density.
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Bill No. 36-0136 – Requiring lethal weapon training for licensed security guards and investigators.

- Bill No. 36-0140 – Clarifying the term of service for members of the Historic Preservation Commission.
- Bill No. 36-0141 – Establishing term limits for members of the Board of Physical Therapy.
- Bill No. 36-0142 – Adjusting the number of district members permitted on the Board for the Licensing of Barbering and Cosmetology.
- Bill No. 36-0201 – Extending deadlines and appropriations for the Sixth Constitutional Convention of the Virgin Islands.

Governor Bryan also acknowledged two resolutions approved by the Legislature:

- Resolution No. 1920 (Bill No. 36-0107), honoring Dr. Alfred Lee Anduze for his contributions to medicine, science, and public service.
- Resolution No. 1921 (Bill No. 36-0203), petitioning U.S. Congress to include the Virgin Islands as full participants in the Affordable Care Act.

The governor concluded his statement by thanking lawmakers for approving recent executive nominations, including Joan P. Foy to the Governing Board of the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority (WAPA) and Mark M. Wiechnik to the Virgin Islands Historic Preservation Commission.

“I thank the members of the Thirty-Sixth Legislature for their continued work on behalf of the people of the Virgin Islands,” Governor Bryan said.