

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Quick Note: Homeschooling And Guardianship Measures Move Forward

VIC News / **Published On November 19, 2016 10:46 AM /**

Staff **November 19, 2016**



ST. THOMAS -- A homeschooling measure sponsored by senators Nereida Rivera-O'Reilly and Novelle Francis, which first came to the Senate floor on October 1, has been forwarded to the full body for ratification after being approved during a Committee on Rules and Judiciary hearing at the Earl B. Ottley Legislative Hall on Friday.

The measure -- which first took away almost all the authority of the Board of Education over homeschooling -- was amended to give the board some power over curriculum (it must include math, science and social studies); have parents disclose who's teaching the children; and gives the commissioner of Education the authority to request the portfolio of the work of the child.

In October, Mr. Francis said he was offering Bill No. 31-0391 (amended version [here](#)) on behalf of families across the territory who have chosen to home-school their children.

“Across the territory, more and more families are choosing to home-school their children,” he said. “Home-schooling itself is becoming more mainstream as parents work to create the best learning environment for their children. This legislation recognizes the right of the parent to choose what is best for their child, whether it is public, private, parochial or home school and creates a regulatory structure for home instruction.”

Also in the Committee on Rules on Friday, a guardianship measure sponsored by Senator Janette Millin Young, was favorably voted out of the committee. The bill seeks to update the territory's guardianship laws, bringing the Virgin Islands guardianship statutes into modern-day compliance.

The bill provides procedures for how courts should appoint guardians and conservators for minors and incapacitated adults. It also provides for how they are to receive, invest, manage and disburse property held for a minor or an incapacitated person. And, it delineates the powers, duties and liabilities of guardians and conservators, according to release Mrs. Millin Young issued late Friday.

Key aspects of the bill are that, once the bill becomes law, the rules applied to guardianship will be just like many other states, according to the release. That means someone who needs a guardian moved from a state or territory to the Virgin Islands, the person would not have to begin the process again once arriving to the Virgin Islands. The same would be true for anyone leaving from the Virgin Islands to the states or other territory. Additionally, the law, if approved, will save all involved money, time and grief.

"We have a moral and social obligation to protect those in our community who are unable to help themselves. As leaders, we are the first line of defense for the residents of our territory. The measure now goes before the full body for consideration. It is my hope that my colleagues will join me to ensure that this legislation becomes law," Mrs. Millin Young said.