

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Former Foster Child Says Dept. of Human Services Has Either Lost, Or Refuses To Give Him His \$8,889 Earned Over Multiple Years. Now An Adult, Sammy Davis Is Pushing Back.

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Manager's check written out to D.H.S.

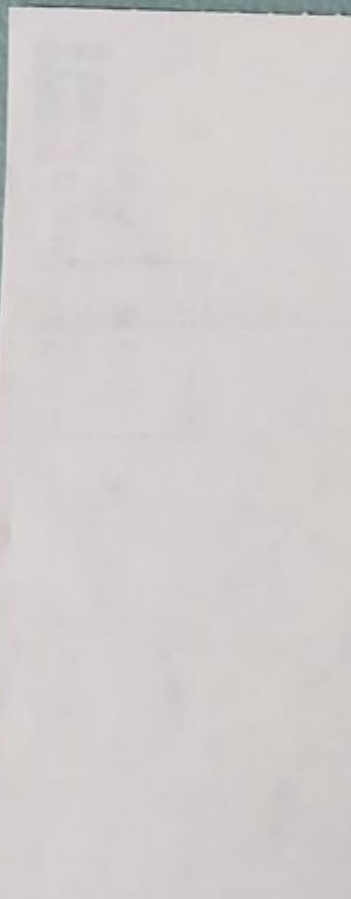
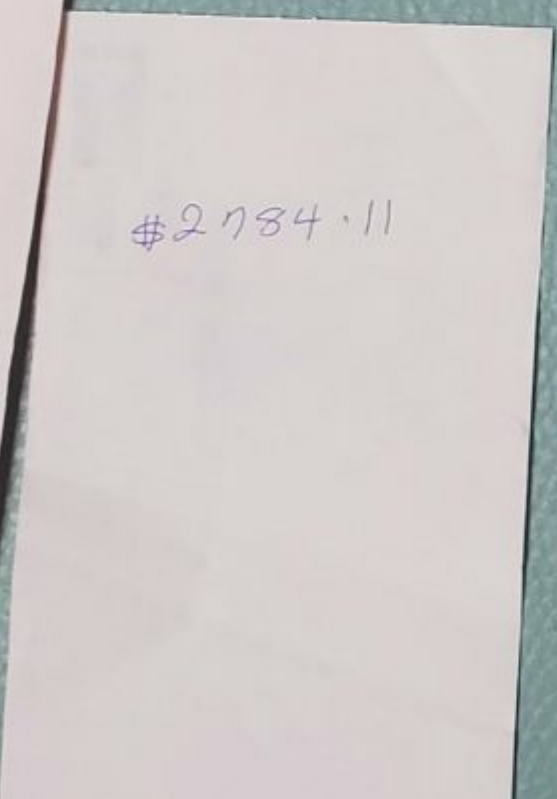
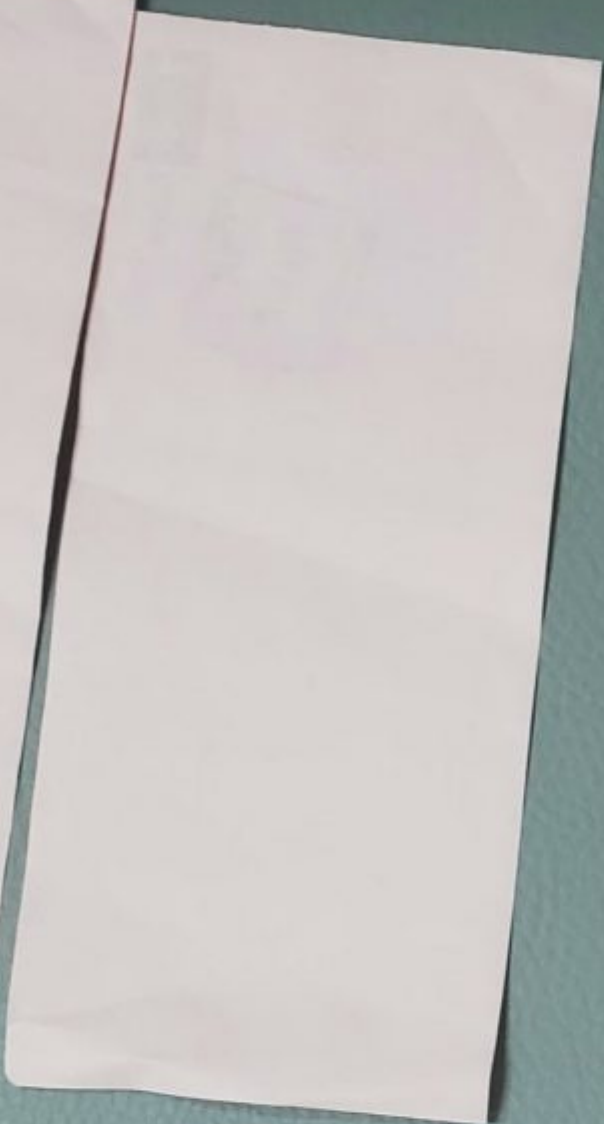
ST. CROIX -- Sammy Davis, Jr. didn't appear like the type who would go to the media to air his grievances. But the 22-year-old had had enough. As a foster child, Mr. Davis was raised by three different families, and during that time, he worked a number of jobs to earn money.

From landscaping to mechanic work, the young man labored over the years and the money he earned -- a total of \$8,889.28 -- was saved in Firstbank VI.

Mr. Davis was raised in foster care because his biological parents were both schizophrenic, he said.

His last foster mother was Susan V. Cissel. Mr. Davis said he was under her care from age 14 until he turned 18. However, before he turned 18, Ms. Cissel made a decision to place the funds, through a manager's check, in the care of the Department of Human Services because, according to Mr. Davis, she thought her foster son was a spender. Mr. Davis, however, said he saved all of his money as was evident by the \$8,889.28 accumulated over the years. "I actually saved every dollar that I got," he said.

Mr. Davis fought the decision in court, but his efforts so far have been unsuccessful. The young man also felt relegated by then-Family Court Judge Denise Hinds Roach, stating that the judge "basically decided because your foster mom decided that she wanted to give Dept. of the Human Services custody of your savings, and she didn't trust you with your money, we're going to take your money and do as what you foster mom told us to do."



\$2784.11

Sammy Davis Jr. brought receipts of deposits he has made to his account with First Bank

Mr. Davis said his efforts to collect his funds began around the time he turned 18. But that effort has lasted years -- four years to be exact -- with no results. As a last resort, he turned to the media for help.

The Consortium attempted to reach Carole Burke, D.H.S. PR person, but she was not available on Wednesday. The publication also attempted to reach D.H.S. Commissioner Kimberley Causey-Gomez, but she was said to be at a cabinet meeting. The assistant commissioner, Michal Rhymer-Brown, was supposed to return our call on Wednesday, but she did not.

Mr. Davis said he told Judge Hinds Roach not to give his savings to D.H.S. "because there's a lot of cases with people losing their monies in this system. And unfortunately the judge decided to wave my opinions off," he said.



Sammy Davis Jr.

Mr. Davis provided evidence of deposits that he has made to his Firstbank account. He also brought a statement copy of the manager's check to Consortium's offices that was written out to D.H.S. in the amount of \$8,889.28.

He said Firstbank has refused to give him the money because it was placed in the care of D.H.S. Now, however, he said D.H.S. officials are saying they cannot find the check. Multiple court appearances have led to the same result, Mr. Davis said, "It's a process," he said he is being told.

"The Department of Human Services needs to stop denying me of my savings. And not just me, but other people as well who are under their program who are also going through this same experience but don't want to speak out."

Mr. Davis, who is working part-time as a landscaper, said he needs his money to take care of his obligations as an adult.