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# James-Sponsored Bill Appropriating Revenue Collected From Firearm and Ammunition Licenses to VI's Career and Technical Centers Now Law (Update)

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Senator Javan James tours CTEC at the St. Croix Educational Complex By. THE OFFICE OF SENATOR JAVAN JAMES

**Update:** According to Sen. James, the initial fee for a license under Title 23 section 455 is \$75.00, and it may be renewed every three years for a fee of \$150.00. There were 581 newly registered firearms in the St. Croix District and 457 in the St. Thomas-St. John District from 2017-2018. There were also 546 renewal firearms in the St. Croix District and 447 in the St. Thomas-St. John District in 2017-2018.

**Original Story:** Senator Javan James has succeeded in having two of his bills officially acknowledged by Governor Albert Bryan as law on January 25, measures the senator says will serve to protect the territory's youth and provide them with crucial career and technical education.

According to a release Mr. James's office issued, the senator on Feb. 3 met with the leadership of the St. Croix Career and Technical Educational Center to bestow a copy of Act #8434. The senator also participated in a walk-through of CTEC grounds. "This was a momentous occasion during which the senator and CTEC leaders discussed James's new sponsored law and the groundbreaking impact it will have for vocational education," according to the release.

Act No. 8434 introduced as Bill No. 33-0112 in the 33rd Legislature, was vetoed by Mr. Bryan but was overridden by Mr. James and his colleagues. The Act appropriates all revenue from fees for initial and renewal firearms and ammunition licenses to the Virgin Islands Career and Technical Education Centers (CTEC). Rather than being deposited in the government's general fund, all fees will be allocated to the Virgin Islands Education Initiative Fund. The law also provides that all funds must be divided equally and used exclusively for purchasing books, equipment, and classroom materials for students and faculty.

Mr. James initially conceptualized legislation to assist CTEC programs in the districts of St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John in January 2019 after consulting educators at the facilities. They discussed the possibilities of improving available programs and creating partnerships between CTEC and technical companies in the territory.

"The senator is looking forward to working with the leaders of CTEC in the territory to revive their much-needed programs," stated the release. "His areas of focus include welding, hospitality, mechanics, plumbing, food management and production services, and cosmetology."

Said Mr. James, "This is a momentous achievement, of which I am extremely proud. The U.S. Virgin Islands has the capacity to train students to become tradesmen and business owners. Our youth need more career opportunities, especially those who do not choose the path of attending a university. This funding will revive CTEC programs and place our youth's futures back in their hands."

In addition to Act #8434, Mr. James also sponsored Bill No.33-0361, now Act No. 8429, which amended title 14 Virgin Islands code, chapter 23, section 486, relating to penalties for knowledge of sexual abuse of a minor, and provides that perpetrators pay a fine or are imprisoned in addition to counseling, rather than in lieu of. It also increases the fines from \$2,000 to \$2,500.