

Image not found or type unknown

DJ Avalanche: Honoring a Virgin Islander's Global Impact with Keys to the Virgin Islands

Entertainment / **Published On April 27, 2023 07:26 AM /**

Ernice Gilbert **April 27, 2023**

Image not found or type unknown



Gregory "DJ Avalanche" Hodge.

One of the Caribbean's top deejays is a Virgin Islander, and a bill aimed at honoring him with the official keys to the territory — a top honor for Virgin Islanders excelling and bringing high recognition to the USVI — passed in the Senate Committee on Government Operations, Veteran Affairs and Consumer Protection on Tuesday.

Sponsored by Senator Javan James, [Bill No. 34-0062](#) is "a resolution honoring and commending Gregory Hodge, better known as DJ Avalanche for his outstanding contributions as a disk jockey, radio talk show host, and entertainer and presenting to him the Official Key to the Virgin Islands."

The honor, which is still going through the approval process, comes on the heels of Mr. Hodge's successful 2023 carnival season in Trinidad and Tobago, where the Soca hit song he produced "Hard Fete" by Bunji Garlin, [won Trinidad's coveted Road March title](#). It was the first time that a Virgin Islands-produced rhythm had won this title in Trinidad and represented a monumental and historic achievement for Mr. Hodge. The achievement also placed the U.S. Virgin Islands among a rare group of countries to have contributed to a Road March song in Trinidad.

Senator Javan James described Mr. Hodge as having "global impact" with his musical talents. "You are our national treasure and we're not going to wait until something bad happens to you or you're on your death bed to honor you, we're doing it here today," Mr. James said. "And I hope and pray that with this new title that you can utilize it strategically and effectively to continue to put the Virgin Islands on the map."

Division of Festivals Director, Ian Turnbull, who is currently managing the 2023 St. Thomas Carnival, praised Mr. Hodge. "I have had the distinct honor of knowing Gregory Avalanche Hodge. Our friendship, partnerships and mutual endeavors has given me a front seat to the exceptional talent that is Avalanche. As a consummate professional and creative genius, Gregory Hodge has brought international recognition to not only himself but to the Virgin Islands and the people of the Virgin Islands," he said.

Mr. Turnbull described Mr. Hodge as a genius-level deejay, producer and marketing strategist. "His talent has made him an easily identifiable brand as he understands the vibrational depths of using music as a connection point for people of varying backgrounds," Mr. Turnbull said.

For his part, Mr. Hodge received the honor with grace, stating, "I am extremely humbled and grateful and appreciative to even be in the position here, because everything I do is out of an act of love."

Mr. Avalanche, age 43, said he developed a love for music and entertainment at a very young age while attending the Lew Muckle Elementary School on St. Croix. "That love for music spills over into everything I do. It spilled over to the point where everywhere I go I want to show not only my love for the music, but the love for the music that I have from my home, which is the Virgin Islands," said Mr. Hodge, a native Virgin Islander whose father was born in Tortola and mother in Antigua. "So I've made it my own personal mission to just showcase the love that comes from the music from the Virgin Islands."

Mr. Hodge spoke of some of the artists that have inspired him, including Milo and the Kings and Imaginations Brass, to the more recent phenoms such as Jam Band, and "everyone that contributed to Virgin Islands culture."

The resolution will go through the Committee on Rules and Judiciary, then the full Senate before heading to Governor Albert Bryan's desk, who is expected to sign the measure into law.