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Ariel Smith, Yvette Ross Edwards, Harold Willocks, Anna Wallace: Senators Approve Key Nominations

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Attorney Ariel Smith

The 35th Legislature convened in regular session on Wednesday, June 14, with several high-profile nominations on the table for consideration. The session was marked by strong support for local talent, with a particular emphasis on the crucial need for their expertise and commitment to the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Attorney Ariel Smith was nominated for the post of Attorney General, while Yvette Ross Edwards was nominated to the bench of the Superior Court in the St. Croix district. Judge Harold Willocks is being renominated to the Superior Court in St. Croix, while Anna Wallace has been tapped to join the Virgin Islands' Territorial Park Board of Trustees.

Senator Franklin Johnson set the tone of the session, voicing strong support for most nominees but withholding endorsement for one due to personal reasons. While he didn't name the nominee, he assured that the individual was indeed prepared and capable for the position. "I'm not saying this person is not prepared and capable to do the job. I just cannot support it, for my personal reason," Johnson said.

Donna Frett-Gregory, in her address, extended heartfelt endorsement for Virgin Islander Yvette Ross Edwards, and the other nominees. She expressed particular excitement for Ariel Smith, praising her credentials and dedication to the Virgin Islands. "She is more than qualified. But you know what really touched me, she actually served as a paralegal. So it means that Ariel Smith actually went through the ranks and she understands the process," Frett-Gregory enthused.

Senator Milton Potter echoed similar sentiments, supporting all the nominees while paying special tribute to Smith. "Attorney Smith is solid, she's determined, she's always engaged, and we are very fortunate to have her in U.S. Virgin Islands in such a very important post," said Potter. Additionally, Potter congratulated Anna Wallace on her appointment to the Virgin Islands Territorial Park Board of Trustees and affirmed the appointments of Yvette Ross Edwards and Judge Willocks.

All the nominations passed unanimously except for Yvette Ross Edwards, who received a dissenting vote from Johnson.

In response to her approval as Attorney General Nominee, Smith thanked the senators, her family, coworkers, and the people of the Virgin Islands. She pledged to serve the people and deliver to the best of her abilities. "I am going to do the good work for the people that the Virgin Islands need, and I can assure you that I will do my very best," said Smith, adding, "Thank you again for your support. And I appreciate the opportunity."