

Legislature of the Virgin Islands

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The Honorable
Angel Bolques, Jr.
Senator-At-Large
35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands

CHAIRMAN
Committee on Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, & Parks

VICE-CHAIRMAN
Committee on Economic Development & Agriculture

MEMBER
Committee on Rules & Judiciary
Committee on Homeland Security, Justice & Public Safety
Committee on Housing, Transportation, & Telecommunication
Subcommittee on Energy & Infrastructure Development



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MEDIA PRESS RELEASE

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Senator Angel Bolques Jr. Chairs Hearing on Youth and Elderly Services, Issues Subpoena to VIGL Operations LLC

(St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands) — Today, Senator Angel Bolques Jr. chaired a Committee on Culture, Youth, Aging, Sports, and Parks hearing on Friday, August 30, 2024, at 10:00 AM at the Frits E. Lawaetz Legislative Conference Room on St. Croix. The hearing was convened to receive testimony and updates regarding the operations and services provided by the Department of Human Services, Lutheran Social Services, St. Croix Foundation for Community Development (KIDS COUNT DATA BOOK), and the Paradise48 Film Festival.

At the outset of the hearing, the Committee, led by Senator Bolques Jr., moved to issue a subpoena to VIGL Operations LLC. This decision followed numerous attempts by the Committee to engage VIGL Operations LLC, in hearings, which were met with no clear response as to why they could not attend the requested hearings. Senator Bolques Jr. expressed his gratitude to the Committee members for their support in issuing the subpoena while making it clear that he took no satisfaction in this recourse. He emphasized that accountability and transparency are essential in addressing our territory's concerns, specifically for VIGL Operations LLC. "Despite our repeated efforts to have VIGL Operations LLC participate in our hearings, we have received no response. This subpoena is necessary to ensure that the Committee obtains the information required to make informed decisions for the benefit of our territory," stated Senator Bolques Jr.



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During the hearing, Senator Bolques Jr. also provided remarks on the contributions of the testifiers:

"I want to commend Lutheran Social Services, especially for the incredible work they are doing with Head Start and elderly services. These programs are vital to the well-being of our residents, and I am grateful for their dedication," said Senator Bolques Jr. "Regarding the Department of Human Services, I appreciate their efforts and dedication to serving our senior citizens and youth. However, there are several significant challenges that need to be addressed. I look forward to seeing solutions implemented to resolve these issues and improve services across the board for our youth and aging populations."

Reflecting on the St. Croix Foundation for Community Development presentation, Senator Bolques Jr. remarked, "I am truly impressed by the work of the KIDS COUNT Data Book team, led by Deanna James. The data they provide is crucial for shaping policies that will benefit our children and families. I look forward to continued collaboration between the St. Croix Foundation and the Government of the Virgin Islands (GVI) to utilize this valuable resource."

Additionally, Senator Bolques Jr. commended Laurika Jude, Founder of the Paradise48 Film Festival, stating, "I want to commend Laurika Jude for her vision in creating an entertainment and film hub for local Virgin Islanders. This initiative provides a fantastic opportunity to tell the Virgin Islands story through the lens of our own talent and creativity. Laurika has a bright future ahead, and her work is an inspiration to us all."

In closing, Senator Bolques Jr. emphasized the significance of the hearing, saying, "Today's hearing was an important step in understanding the current state of various youth and elderly services and programs, as well as youth challenges and opportunities in relevant industries within our territory. I am encouraged by the dedication and commitment shown by all our testifiers, and I am optimistic about the future of our community as we continue to work together to address these challenges. Our collective efforts are key to enhancing the quality of life for all Virgin Islanders."

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