

(Bill 3863)

No. 2375

(Approved December 24, 1968)

To Create the Virgin Islands Port Authority; To Authorize the Issuance of Bonds for the Port Authority, and for Other Purposes.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

Section 1. A new chapter 9 is added to Title 29 of the Virgin Islands Code, as follows:

Chapter 9. Virgin Islands Port Authority

Subchapter 1. Declaration of Policy and Definitions

§ 501. Declaration of policy

(a) The powers conferred by this chapter are for public uses and purposes and are proper governmental functions for which public money may be expended, private property may be acquired, by eminent domain or otherwise, property may be exchanged, leased, mortgaged, assigned, sublet, or sold, and bonds or other obligations may be issued pursuant to section 8(b) of the Revised Organic Act of the Virgin Islands, as amended, or any other such authority as may hereafter be conferred by Federal Law, or by the laws of the Virgin Islands.

(b) The provisions enacted in this chapter are hereby declared to be necessary in the public interest, and the facilities herein authorized are declared to be public improvements and public undertakings.

§ 502. Definitions

(a) The term "Authority" shall mean the Virgin Islands Port Authority created by this chapter.

(b) The term "Board" shall mean the Governing Board of the Authority.

(c) The term "Bonds" shall mean the bonds, temporary bonds, refunding bonds, debentures, notes, interim bonds, receipts, certificates, or other evidences of indebtedness or obligations which are authorized to be issued by this chapter, but shall not include the debts or accounts incurred in the usual course of business for expenses of the Authority.

(d) The term "Holder of bonds" or "Bondholders" or any similar term shall mean any person who shall be the bearer of any outstanding bond or bonds registered to bearer, or not registered, or the registered owner of any outstanding bond or bonds which at the time shall be registered other than to bearer.

(e) The term "Federal agency" shall mean the United States of America, the President or any department thereof, or any corporation, agency or instrumentality heretofore or hereafter created, designated, or established by the United States of America.

(f) "Air terminals" shall mean developments consisting of runways, hangars, control towers, ramps, buildings, structures, parking areas, improvements, facilities or other real and personal property necessary, convenient or desirable for the landing, taking off, accommodation and servicing of aircraft of all types, including but not limited to airplanes, airships, dirigibles, helicopters, gliders, amphibians, seaplanes, or any other contrivance now or hereafter used for the navigation of or flight in air or space, operated by carriers engaged in the transportation of passengers or cargo, or for the loading, unloading, interchange or transfer of such passengers or their baggage, or such cargo, or otherwise for the accommodation, use or convenience of such passengers, or such carriers or their employees or of the persons visiting the airports, or for the landing, taking off, accommodation and servicing of aircraft owned or operated by persons other than carriers, as well as property acquired by the Government of the Virgin Islands to be used for air facilities.

(g) "Marine terminals" shall mean developments consisting of one or more public piers, wharves, docks, bulkheads, slips, basins, sidings or other buildings, structures, equipment, facilities or improvements, or other real or personal property, necessary or convenient to the accommodation of steamships, tugs, freighters, boats or other sea going vessels and their cargoes or passengers.

(h) "Industrial, commercial, residential and recreational development" shall mean developments, consisting of warehouses, quarries, cement block plants, sewage disposal plants, public dumps, parking areas, wholesales and retail outlets, hotels, motels, apartments, guesthouses, restaurants, office buildings, and related activities.

(i) "Facility" shall mean an air terminal, marine terminal or an industrial, commercial, residential and recreational development, or any two or more of them collectively.

(j) Words importing the singular number shall include the plural number and vice versa, and words importing persons shall include firms, partnerships of all kinds and corporations.

Subchapter II. Virgin Islands Port Authority

§ 503. Creation of Virgin Islands Port Authority

(a) The Governor of the Virgin Islands, the Director of the Budget, three members to be appointed by the President of the Legislature, and four other persons, not more than two of whom shall be employed by the Government of the Virgin Islands or by the Government of the United States, are hereby established a body corporate and politic constituting a public corporation and autonomous governmental instrumentality of the Government of the Virgin Islands, by the name of the "Virgin Islands Port Authority."

(b) Three of the members shall be appointed by the President of the Legislature, not more than two such members shall be a resident of the same District. The term of office of each such member shall be two years and each shall be eligible for reappointment. Any person appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the term for which a predecessor was appointed shall be appointed only for the remainder of such term.

(c) The four persons, at least two of whom shall not be employed by the Government of the Virgin Islands or by the Government of the United States, shall be appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Legislature, and two shall be residents of the District of St. Thomas-St. John, and two shall be residents of the District of St. Croix. Such persons shall be appointed for a term of three years, except that any person appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the term for which a predecessor was appointed shall be appointed only for the remainder of such term. Each such appointed member shall serve until the appointment and qualification of his successor.

(d) Governmental members of the Authority shall be entitled to no compensation for their service as members. Nongovernmental members shall be entitled to compensation at the rate of \$20.00 per day or fraction thereof spent in the work of the Authority. All members shall be entitled to reimbursement for, or per diem in lieu of, necessary travel expenses.

(e) The Authority hereby created is and shall be a governmental instrumentality subject, as provided for herein, to the

control of the aforementioned members, acting in their capacity as members of the Governing Board thereof, but it is a corporation having legal existence and personality separate and apart from the Government and the officers controlling it. The debts, obligations, contract, bonds, notes, debentures, receipts, expenditures, accounts, funds, facilities, and property of the Authority shall be deemed to be those of said Authority and not to be those of the Government of the Virgin Islands, or any office, bureau, department, agency, commission, municipality, branch, agent, offices or employee thereof.

§ 504. Governing Board and other personnel of Authority

(a) The powers of the Authority shall be exercised by a Governing Board consisting of the members of the Authority acting as a board. Within one hundred and twenty (120) days after this chapter becomes effective, the Board shall meet at the call of the Governor and organize, elect a Chairman, Vice Chairman, and, as soon as practicable, shall appoint an Executive Director of the Authority who shall be authorized to attend all meetings of the Board but shall not be entitled to vote.

(b) Five members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of organizing the Authority and conducting the business thereof and for all other purposes, and all action shall be taken by a vote of the majority.

(c) The Board shall appoint in addition to the Executive Director of the Authority, an Assistant Director for Marine Activity, an Assistant Director for Airport Facilities, and an Assistant Director for Industrial Development, and may appoint such other officers, agents, or employees, permanent or temporary, and by contract or otherwise may employ such consulting engineers, superintendents, managers, fiscal, legal and other technical experts, as it may deem necessary, and shall determine their qualifications, duties, tenure and compensation without regard to 3 V.I.C. chapter 25. The bylaws of the Authority may provide for the delegation to its Executive Director or its other officers, agents or employees of such of the powers and duties of the Authority as the Board may deem proper.

(d) The Executive Director shall be appointed by the Board exclusively upon the basis of merit as determined by technical training, skill, experience, and other qualifications best suited to carrying out the purposes of the Authority. The Executive Director

shall be removable by the Board but only for cause and after notice and an opportunity to be heard.

§ 505. Powers of Authority

The purposes of the Authority shall be to establish, acquire, construct, develop and improve, own, operate and manage any and all types of air terminals, marine terminals and industrial, commercial, residential and recreational developments, and to make available the benefits thereof in the widest economic manner, thereby promoting the general welfare and increasing commerce and prosperity. The Authority is granted and shall have and may exercise all rights and powers necessary or convenient for carrying out the aforesaid purposes, including but without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the following:

- (1) to have perpetual existence as a corporation;
- (2) to adopt, alter, and use a corporate seal which shall be judicially noticed;
- (3) to make, and from time to time modify, and repeal, bylaws, rules and regulations, not inconsistent with this chapter, providing for the internal organization and management of the Authority, for the administration of its affairs and operations, and for carrying into effect the powers and purposes of the Authority;
- (4) to sue and be sued in its corporate name;
- (5) to make contracts and to execute all instruments necessary or convenient in the exercise of any of its powers;
- (6) to acquire by any lawful means (except by exercise of the power of eminent domain), own, hold, develop, improve, redevelop, enlarge, extend, repair, maintain, use and operate any property or interest therein; and to sell, lease, exchange, transfer, assign, mortgage, pledge or otherwise dispose of, or encumber, such property or any interest therein. In no case shall the Authority have the power to sell, lease, assign, mortgage, pledge or otherwise dispose of or encumber, any real property without the approval of the Legislature;
- (7) to acquire through condemnation real property and any other property or rights necessary for carrying out the purposes of the Authority when the approval of the Governor and the Legislature has been obtained prior to bringing any action for condemnation;

(8) to borrow money, make and issue bonds of the Authority for any of its corporate purposes, and to give security therefor as provided for in subchapter III of this chapter;

(9) to make and issue bonds for the purpose of funding, re-funding, purchasing, paying, or discharging any of the outstanding bonds or obligations issued or assumed by it;

(10) to accept grants or loans from, and enter into contracts, leases, agreements, or other transactions with, any Federal agency, the Government of the Virgin Islands, or political subdivisions thereof, and to expend the proceeds of any such grants or loans for any of its corporate purposes;

(11) to invest funds in United States obligations or other securities approved for investment for the Government of the Virgin Islands;

(12) to determine, fix, alter, charge, and collect reasonable rates, fees, rentals and other charges for the use of the facilities of the Authority, or other services or commodities rendered or furnished by it, which shall be at least sufficient, together with all other available moneys, revenues, income, appropriations, and receipts of the Authority from all sources, for the payment of the expenses of the Authority incurred in the conservation, development, improvement, extension, repair, maintenance, use and operation of its facilities and properties, for the payment of the principal of and the interest on its bonds and for fulfilling the terms and provisions of such covenants as may be made with, or for the benefit of, the purchasers or holders of any bonds of the Authority; Provided, That in fixing rates, fees, rentals, and other charges, the Authority shall have in view the encouragement of the widest economically possible diversified use of its facilities consistent with sound fiscal management; and in this connection it is the intention of the Legislature that in fixing such rates, fees, rentals and other charges the Authority shall take into account the respective expenses, as hereinbefore enumerated in this subparagraph, for the operations of its facilities; Provided, further, That initially, the rates, fees, rentals and other charges for the use of the facilities transferred hereunder existing and in force and effect on the effective date of this chapter shall continue in force and effect and that, thereafter, before changes in the general rate structure for the use of its facilities are made, or, in cases where the Board shall decide to make such changes and

deems the immediate effectiveness thereof to be necessary, then within a reasonable time after such changes are made, a public hearing shall be held with respect thereto before the Board or before such hearing officer or officers as the Board may designate to give interested persons an opportunity to advise the Board of their views and of evidence in support thereof, and upon such hearing the Board, pursuant to the powers, duties, and obligations vested in it by this chapter, may alter, suspend, or revoke such changes;

(13) to have complete control and supervision of facilities and properties constructed or acquired by it, including the power to determine the character of and necessity for all expenditures and the manner in which they shall be incurred, allowed and paid, and such determinations shall be final and conclusive for all purposes;

(14) to prepare, or cause to be prepared, plans, designs, specifications and estimates of costs for the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, extension, improvement, enlargement or repair of any facility, and from time to time to modify such plans, designs, specifications and estimates;

(15) to acquire in accordance with subsection (6) hereof, produce, impound, develop, treat, hold, use, transmit, distribute, supply, exchange, sell, rent and otherwise dispose of equipment, and/or such other things, supplies and services as the Authority shall deem necessary, proper, incidental, or desirable in connection with its activities under this chapter;

(16) to construct or reconstruct any facility, and any additions, improvements and extensions thereto, by contract or contracts and/or under, through, or by means of its officers, agents, and employees;

(17) to do all acts or things necessary or desirable to carry out the powers granted to it by this chapter or by any other Act of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands;

(18) to participate in the programs of any Federal agencies in the fields of its authorized activities and, consistent with this chapter, to do any and all things necessary to secure participation in such programs and the cooperation of such agencies in achieving the policies and purposes of this chapter.

Subchapter III. Bonds of the Authority

§ 506. Authorization of issuance; security, tax exemption; terms and conditions; etc.

(a) By authority of the Government of the Virgin Islands under section 8(b) (i) of the Revised Organic Act of the Virgin Islands, as amended, which is hereby granted, the Authority may issue and sell bonds from time to time and have outstanding at any one time, exclusive of bonds issued solely for the purpose of exchanging the same in return for the cancellation of bonds either issued by the Authority or assumed by it, bonds not in excess of sixty-five million dollars, in aggregate principal amount, in addition to all sums that the Legislature of the Virgin Islands has authorized or may authorize separately for particular purposes; Provided, however, That re-funding bonds of the Authority issued solely for the purpose of applying the proceeds thereof to the payment for, or purchase of, bonds issued by the Authority or assumed by it, shall not be included in computing any such limitation until six (6) months after their sale; Provided, further, That of the total amount of bonds which may be outstanding at any one time hereunder, not less than thirty million dollars shall be available exclusively for facilities on the Island of St. Thomas, not less than thirty million dollars shall be available exclusively for facilities on the Island of St. Croix, and not less than five million dollars shall be available exclusively for facilities on the Island of St. John; and Still Further Provided, That before any facility shall be financed by the issuance of bonds hereunder such facility shall be authorized by Act of the Legislature.

(b) Payment of the bonds of the Authority may be secured by a pledge of or lien on all or any part of its properties, contracts, gross or net rates, fees, revenues, other income or bond proceeds to which the rights of the Authority then exist or may thereafter come into existence, or by pledge of or lien on any loan, grant, or contribution, or parts thereof, from any Federal agency, the Government of the Virgin Islands or any other source. It is the intention hereof that any pledge of revenues or other monies, or of a revenue-producing contract or contracts made by the Authority shall be valid and binding from the time when the pledge is made; that the revenues, or other monies or proceeds of any contract or contracts so pledged and thereafter received by the Authority shall

immediately be subject to the lien of such pledge without any physical delivery thereof or further act; and that the lien of any such pledge shall be valid and binding as against all parties having claims of any kind in tort, contracts or otherwise against the Authority irrespective of whether such parties have notice thereof. Neither the resolution nor any other instrument by which a pledge is created need be recorded.

(c) In accordance with section 8(b) of the Revised Organic Act of the Virgin Islands, as amended, the bonds of the Authority shall be exempt as to principal and interest from taxation by the Government of the United States, or by the Government of the Virgin Islands, or by any state, territory, or possession, or by any political subdivision of any state, territory or possession, or by the District of Columbia.

(d) Bonds of the Authority shall be authorized by resolution or resolutions of the Board, and shall comply with all pertinent provisions of the Revised Organic Act of the Virgin Islands, as amended, or such other provisions of applicable Federal law as may be in effect at the time. Except as otherwise provided for by said Act or other Federal law, and all laws of the Virgin Islands, bonds of the Authority may be issued in one or more series and shall bear such date or dates, mature in such amounts and at such time or times, bear interest at such rate or rates not exceeding 6 per centum per annum, payable semi-annually, be in such denomination or denominations, be in such form, either coupon or registered, carry such conversion or registration privileges, have such rank or priority, be executed by such members or officers in such manner, be payable in such medium of payment, at such place or places, may be declared or become due at such time before the maturity date thereof, may be authenticated in such manner and upon compliance with such conditions, and may contain such other terms and covenants as such resolutions or its trust indenture may provide.

(e) The bonds shall be sold in such manner as permitted by the Revised Organic Act of the Virgin Islands, as amended or other applicable Federal laws or the laws of the Virgin Islands, at such price as the Authority may determine.

(f) In case any of the members or officers of the Authority whose signatures appear on any bonds or coupons shall cease to be such members or officers before the delivery of such bonds,

such signatures shall, nevertheless, be valid and sufficient for all purposes, the same as if such members or officers had remained in office until such delivery. Any provisions of any law to the contrary notwithstanding, any bonds, issued by the Authority pursuant to this chapter shall be negotiable for all purposes, subject only to the provisions of bonds for registration.

(g) Neither the members of the Authority nor any person executing the bonds shall be liable personally on the bonds or be subject to any liability by reason of the issuance thereof.

(h) In any suit, action or proceeding involving the validity or enforceability of any bond of the Authority or the security therefor, any such bond reciting in substance that it has been issued by the Authority to aid in financing a facility as defined in this chapter, shall be conclusively deemed to have been issued for such purpose, and the facility shall be conclusively deemed to have been undertaken, constructed or acquired in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

§ 507. Powers of Authority with respect to bonds

In any resolution or resolutions authorizing the issuance of bonds, the Authority may contract with the holders of the bonds to undertake and obligate itself of such commitments, as long as the bonds are outstanding and unpaid, as are deemed by the Board to be necessary and appropriate for the protection of the bondholders and the marketability of the bonds, and may specifically in addition to any other provisions—

(a) covenant as to the disposition of the entire gross or net revenues and present or future income of the Authority including the pledging of all or any part thereof to secure payment of the bonds and the interest thereon;

(b) covenant against making, permitting or suffering any pledge or other lien on all or any part of its receipts, revenues or other income, or real or personal property, to which its right or title then exists or may thereafter come into existence; covenant with respect to limitations on any sale, lease or other disposition of the Authority or any part or parts thereof; and covenant as to what other or additional debts or obligations may be incurred by it;

(c) covenant as to the bonds then or thereafter to be issued as to the issuance of such bonds in escrow or otherwise, as to the use and disposition of the proceeds thereof, and as to the limita-

tions on the issuance of additional bonds; covenant against extending the time for the payment of its bonds or interest thereon; and covenant for redemption of the bonds and provide for the terms and conditions thereof;

(d) covenant as to the rates, fees, rentals, and other charges to be fixed and collected, the amount to be raised each year or other period of time thereby, and as to the use and disposition to be made thereof;

(e) create or authorize the creation of special funds or reserves for moneys held for construction or operating costs, debt service, reserves, or other purposes; and covenant as to the use, disposition and investment of the moneys held in such funds;

(f) covenant as to the use, maintenance and replacement of any or all of its real or personal property, the amount and kind of insurance to be carried thereon and the use and disposition of insurance moneys;

(g) prescribe the procedure, if any, by which the terms of the bonds, resolution, or any other contract with the bondholders may be modified, the amount of bonds, the holders of which must consent thereto, and the manner in which such consent may be given;

(h) covenant as to and prescribe the events of default and terms and conditions upon which any or all of its bonds shall become or may be declared due before maturity, and as to the terms and conditions upon which such declaration and its consequences may be waived;

(i) covenant as to the rights, liabilities, powers and duties arising upon the nonperformance by the Authority or any of its covenants, conditions, or obligations, including the right and remedies of bondholders which may be in addition to remedies specified in this chapter;

(j) vest in a trustee or trustees the right to enforce the payment of the bonds or any covenants securing or relating to the bonds and the right, in the event of a default by the Authority, to take possession of and use, operate and manage the Authority or any part or parts thereof or any funds connected therewith, and to collect the rates, fees, revenues, or other income arising therefrom and to dispose of such moneys in accordance with the agreement of the Authority with the holders of the bonds; provide for the powers and duties of such trustee or trustees which may be a national banking association or a bank or trust company organized

under the laws of the United States or of the Virgin Islands or any state, and limit the liabilities thereof; and provide the terms and conditions upon which the holders of the bonds or any proportion of them may enforce any covenant or rights securing or relating to the bonds; and

(k) exercise all or any part or combination of the powers herein granted; make covenants and to do any and all such acts and things not inconsistent with this chapter as may be necessary and desirable in order to secure its bonds, or as may tend to make the bonds more marketable notwithstanding that such covenants, acts or things may not be enumerated herein.

§ 508. Right to receivership upon default

(a) The Authority is authorized to covenant for the right to receivership upon default as hereinafter set forth in paragraphs (b) to (f) inclusive, or to limit such right by definition of default or otherwise, in its agreement with the bondholders.

(b) In the event that the Authority shall default in the payment of the principal of, or interest on, any of its bonds after the same shall become due, whether it be a default in the payment of the principal and interest or in the payment of interest only at maturity or upon call for redemption, and such default shall continue for a period of thirty (30) days, or in the event that the Authority or the Board, officers, agents, or employees thereof shall default on any agreement made with the holders of the bonds, any holder or holders of the bonds (subject to any contractual limitation as to a specific percentage of such holders), or trustee therefor, shall have the right to apply in an appropriate judicial proceeding to any Court of competent jurisdiction in the Virgin Islands for the appointment of a receiver of the facilities, the income or revenues of which are pledged to the payment of the bonds so in default, whether or not all the bonds have been declared due and payable and whether or not such holder, or trustee therefor is seeking or has sought to enforce any other right or to exercise any remedy in connection with such bonds. Upon such application and showing the court may appoint, and if the application is made by the holders of twenty-five (25%) per centum in principal amount of such bonds then outstanding or by trustee for holders of bonds in such principal amount, shall appoint a receiver of such facilities.

(c) The receiver so appointed shall forthwith, directly or by his agents and attorneys, enter into and upon and take possession of

such facilities and may exclude the Authority, its Board, officers, agents, and employees and all persons claiming under them, wholly therefrom and shall have, hold, use, operate, manage, and control the same, and, in the name of the Authority or otherwise, as the receiver may deem best, shall exercise all the rights and powers of the Authority with respect to such facilities as the Authority itself might do. Such receiver shall maintain, restore, insure and keep insured, such facilities and from time to time shall make all repairs necessary or proper for the conservation of the facilities, shall establish, levy, maintain and collect such rates, fees, and other charges in connection with such facilities as such receiver may deem necessary, proper and reasonable, consistent with the purposes of the receivership and the purposes of this chapter, and shall collect and receive all income and revenues and deposit the same in a separate account and apply the income and revenues so collected and received in such manner as the court shall direct.

(d) Whenever all that is due upon the bonds, and interests thereon, and under any of the terms of any covenants or agreements with bondholders shall have been paid or deposited as provided therein, and all defaults in consequence of which a receiver may be appointed shall have been cured and made good, the Court may, in its discretion and after such notice and hearing as it deems reasonable and proper, direct the receiver to surrender possession of such facilities to the Authority, the same right of the holders of the bonds to obtain the appointment of a receiver to exist upon any subsequent default as hereinabove provided.

(e) Such receiver shall act, in the performance of the powers hereinabove conferred upon him, under the direction and supervision of the Court and shall at all times be subject to the orders and decrees of the Court and may be removed thereby. Nothing herein contained shall limit or restrict the jurisdiction of the Court to enter such other and further orders and decrees as such Court may deem necessary or appropriate for the exercise by the receiver of any functions specifically set in this chapter.

(f) Notwithstanding anything in this section to the contrary, such receiver shall have no power to sell, assign, mortgage, or otherwise dispose of any assets of whatever kind or character belonging to the Authority and useful for its activities, but the powers of any such receiver shall be limited to the operation and maintenance of the facilities of the Authority, and the collection

and application of the income and revenues therefrom and the Court shall not have jurisdiction to enter any order or decree requiring or permitting said receiver to sell, mortgage, or otherwise dispose of any such assets.

§ 509. Remedies of bondholders

(a) Subject to any contractual limitations binding upon the holders of any issue of bonds, or trustees therefor, including but not limited to the restriction of the exercise of any remedy to a specified proportion or percentage of such holders, any holder of bonds, or trustee therefor, shall have the right and power, for the equal benefit and protection of all holders of bonds similarly situated—

(1) by mandamus or other suit, action, or proceeding at law or in equity to compel the Authority and its Board, officers, agents, or employees to perform and carry out its and their duties and obligations under this chapter and its and their covenants and agreements with bondholders;

(2) by action or suit in equity to require the Authority and the Board thereof to account as if they were the trustees of an express trust;

(3) by action or suit in equity to enjoin any acts or things which may be unlawful or in violation of the rights of the bondholders; and

(4) to bring suit upon the bonds.

(b) No remedy conferred by this chapter upon any holder of the bonds, or any trustee therefor, is intended to be exclusive of any other remedy, but each such remedy is cumulative and in addition to every other remedy, and may be exercised without exhausting and without regard to any other remedy conferred by this chapter or by any other law. No waiver of any default or breach of duty or contract, whether by any holder of the bonds, or any trustee therefor, shall extend to or shall affect any subsequent default or breach of duty or contract or shall impair any rights or remedies thereon. No delay or omission of any bondholder or any trustee therefor to exercise any right or power accruing upon default shall impair any such right or power or shall be construed to be a waiver of any such default or acquiescence therein. Every substantive right and every remedy, conferred upon the holder of the bonds, may be enforced and exercised from time to time as

often as may be deemed expedient. In case of any suit, action or proceeding to enforce any right or exercise any remedy shall be brought or taken and then discontinued or abandoned, or shall be determined adversely to the holder of the bonds, or any trustee therefor, then and in every such case the Authority and such holder, or trustee, shall be restored to their former positions and rights and remedies as if no such suit, action, or proceeding had been brought or taken.

§ 510. Bonds of Authority legal investments for public or private funds

The bonds of the Authority shall be lawful investment, and may be accepted as security, for all fiduciary, trust and public funds, the investment or deposit of which shall be under the authority or control of the Government of the Virgin Islands or any officer or officers thereof.

§ 511. Exemption of Authority from judicial process and taxes

(a) All property including funds of the Authority shall be exempt from levy and sale by virtue of an execution, and no execution or other judicial process shall issue against the same nor shall any judgment against the Authority be a charge or lien upon its property; Provided, however, That this subsection shall not apply to or limit the right of bondholders to pursue any remedies for the enforcement of any pledge or lien given by the Authority on its rates, fees, revenues, or other income or any other funds.

(b) The purpose for which the Authority is created and shall exercise its powers being public purposes, the property of the Authority, its income and its activities shall be exempt from all taxes and special assessments of the Virgin Islands or any political subdivision thereof. In lieu of taxes, the Authority may agree to make such payments to the Virgin Islands or any political subdivision thereof as it finds consistent with the obligations of the Authority and the achievement of the purposes of this chapter.

Subchapter IV. Assistance of Government of the Virgin Islands

§ 512. Assistance of Government of the Virgin Islands

(a) For the purpose of aiding the Authority in carrying out the purposes of this chapter, the Governor of the Virgin Islands

with the approval of the Legislature, may at the request of the Authority and upon such terms as shall be determined—

(1) dedicate, sell, convey, or lease any interest of the Government in any property or grant easements, licenses or any rights or privileges therein to the Authority;

(2) cause services of the character which the Government is otherwise empowered to render to be furnished to the Authority.

(b) Any sale, conveyance, lease or agreement provided for in this section may be made without appraisal, public notices, advertisement or public bidding, notwithstanding any other laws to the contrary.

Subchapter V. Other Purposes

§ 513. Moneys and accounts of Authority

(a) All moneys of the Authority shall be deposited in qualified depositories for funds of the Government of the Virgin Islands, but they shall be kept in separate accounts in the name of the Authority. The disbursements shall be made by it pursuant to regulations and budgets approved by the Board. Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection (a) the Authority shall have power to contract with the holders of any of its bonds as to the custody, collection, investment and payment of any moneys of the Authority, or any moneys held in trust or otherwise for the payment of bonds or in any way to secure bonds, and deposits of such moneys may be secured in the same manner as moneys of the Authority.

(b) The Authority shall account to the Government of the Virgin Islands in accordance with applicable law for all funds which the Government may furnish to the Authority, by loan or grant. The Authority shall also account to any Federal agency, if and in the manner required, for any funds that it may have received from any such agency.

(c) The Authority shall establish an accounting system for the proper statistical control and record of all expenses and income belonging to or managed or controlled by the Authority. Subject to agreements with bondholders, said system shall, insofar as advisable, segregate the accounts for different classes of operations, facilities, and activities of the Authority; Provided, That from time to time the Authority shall have its accounts and books,

including its receipts, disbursements, contracts, leases, sinking funds, investments and any other matters which relate to its financial condition examined by an independent accountant who shall report thereon to the Board of the Authority and to the Legislature.

§ 514. Competitive bidding

All purchases and contracts for supplies or services, except for personal services, made by the Authority, including contracts for the construction of facilities of the Authority, shall be made after advertisement for bids sufficiently in advance of opening bids for the Authority to secure appropriate notice and opportunity for competition; Provided, That where the expense estimated to be necessary in connection with the purchase or work does not exceed two thousand five hundred (2,500) dollars the same may be carried out without advertisement for bids. Advertisements for bids shall not be required, however, when—

(1) an emergency requires immediate delivery of the materials, supplies, equipment, or performance of the services; or

(2) repair parts, accessories, or supplemental equipment or services are required for supplies or services previously furnished or contracted for; or

(3) professional, financial (including financial printing) or other expert services or work are required and the Authority shall deem it best in the interest of good administration that contracts therefor be made without such advertisement; or

(4) prices are noncompetitive because there is only one source of supply or because regulated under law; in such case the purchase of such materials, supplies, or equipment or procurement of such services, may be made in the open market in the manner usual in commercial practice. In the comparison of bids and the making of awards, due consideration shall be given to such factors (in addition to whether the bidder has complied with the specifications) as the bidder's ability to perform construction work of the kind involved in the construction contract under consideration; the relative quality and adaptability of materials, supplies, equipment, or services; and the time of delivery or performance offered. The Authority may prescribe rules and regulations for the submission of bids.

§ 515. Contribution to Employees Retirement System and Government Insurance Fund; unemployment compensation coverage

(a) All officials and employees of the Authority shall be covered by and subject to the Employees Retirement System of the Virgin Islands and the Workmen's Compensation Act. The Authority shall contribute to the Retirement System of the Government of the Virgin Islands its share of the cost of the retirement of the officials and employees on the basis of semi-annual billings as determined by the Division of Personnel, Government of the Virgin Islands, and the contribution of officials and employees for retirement shall be deducted from the salaries in the same manner as in the case of regular employees of the Government of the Virgin Islands and shall be paid semi-annually to the Retirement Fund of the Government of the Virgin Islands. The Authority shall also contribute to the Government Insurance Fund, on the basis of annual billings as determined by the Commissioner of Finance for the benefit payments made from such fund on account of the Authority's employees. The annual billings shall also include a statement of the fair portion of the cost of the Government Insurance Fund, which shall be paid by the Authority into the Treasury of the Virgin Islands as miscellaneous receipts.

(b) For purposes of unemployment compensation, the Authority shall be deemed an employing unit as defined in 24 V.I.C. § 302(j) (i), and the Authority shall make payments to the Unemployment Compensation Subfund and the Unemployment Compensation Administration Subfund in lieu of contributions in the same manner provided for the Government of the Virgin Islands by 24 V.I.C. § 308(d).

§ 516. Reports

The Authority shall submit to the Legislature and to the Governor of the Virgin Islands, as soon as practicable after the close of each fiscal year of the Government of the Virgin Islands (1) its complete budget, a financial statement and complete report of the business of the Authority for the preceding fiscal year, and (2) a complete report on the status and progress of all of its facilities and activities since the creation of the Authority or the date of its last such report. The Authority shall also submit to the Legislature and to the Governor, at such other times as may be required, official reports of its business and activities under this chapter.

§ 517. Agreements of the Government of the Virgin Islands

The Government of the Virgin Islands does hereby pledge to, contract and agree with, any person, firm or corporation, or any Federal, Virgin Islands or state agency, subscribing to or acquiring bonds of the Authority or of the Government of the Virgin Islands issued for the purposes of this chapter, that it obligates itself not to limit or alter the rights or powers hereby vested in the Authority or the Government, as the case may be, until all such bonds at any time issued, together with the interest thereon, are fully met and discharged. The Government of the Virgin Islands does further pledge to, contract and agree with, any Federal agency that in the event any such agency shall construct, extend, improve, or enlarge or contribute any funds for the construction, extension, improvement, or enlargement of, any facilities, the Government of the Virgin Islands will not alter or limit the rights or powers of the Authority in any manner which would be inconsistent with the continued maintenance and operation of such facilities or the extensions, improvement, or enlargement thereof, or which would be inconsistent with the due performance of any agreements between the Authority and any such Federal agency; and the Authority shall continue to have and may exercise all rights and powers herein granted so long as the same shall be necessary or desirable for the carrying out of the purposes of this chapter and the purpose of any Federal agency in constructing, extending, improving or enlarging, or contributing funds for the construction, extension, improvement or enlargement of, any facilities.

§ 518. Injunctions

An injunction shall not be granted to prevent the application of this chapter or any part thereof.

§ 519. Lack of jurisdiction of other agencies

No officer, board, commission, department or other agency or political subdivision of the Virgin Islands shall have jurisdiction over the Authority in the management and control of its properties and facilities, or any power over the regulation of rates, fees, rentals and other charges to be fixed, revised and collected by the Authority, or any power to require a certificate of convenience or necessity, license, consent, or other authorization in order that the Authority may acquire, lease, own and operate, construct, maintain, improve, extend, or enlarge any facility.

§ 520. Inconsistent provisions of other acts superseded

Insofar as the provisions of this chapter are inconsistent with the provisions of any other Act of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands, the provisions of this chapter shall be controlling and no law heretofore or hereafter passed governing the administration of the Government of the Virgin Islands or any parts, office, bureaus, departments, commissions, municipalities, branches, agents, officers, or employees thereof shall be construed to apply to the Authority unless so specifically provided but the affairs and business of the Authority shall be administered as provided herein.

§ 521. Separability of provisions

If any provisions of this chapter or the application of such provisions to any person or circumstances shall be held invalid, the remainder of the chapter and the application of such provisions to persons or circumstances other than those as to which it shall have been held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

Section 2. (a) Effective upon the date of approval of this Act, and until such later date as fixed by the Legislature for the coming into existence of the Virgin Islands Port Authority pursuant to section 5 hereof,

- (1) all revenues received from the operation of airports and covered into the Marine and Aviation Fund;
- (2) all monies payable into the Special Airport Fund; and
- (3) all fees or other charges imposed under the provisions

of 33 V.I.C. section 49;

—shall be payable to and collected by the Virgin Islands Airport and Industrial Resources Agency, deposited in the special fund designated the Marine and Aviation Fund, and available for all authorized uses and purposes of the said Agency.

(b) Effective simultaneously with the coming into existence of the Virgin Islands Port Authority as above determined, the provisions of section 49, Title 33 of the Virgin Islands Code are repealed; Provided, however, That all rates, fees or other charges imposed for the use of facilities and in force and effect on such date shall continue in force and effect until changed by the said Authority as elsewhere provided in this Act.

Section 3. (a) The title to all property of the Government of the Virgin Islands administered by the Virgin Islands Airport and

Industrial Resources Agency and the Marine Division, Department of Commerce, and to all property on the Island of St. Croix acquired in accordance with that certain Agreement of February 8, 1962, ratified and adopted by Act No. 814, approved February 20, 1962, and all personnel, records, contracts, deeds, leases, subleases, mortgages, rights, franchises and unexpended balances of appropriations and funds of the Virgin Islands Airport and Industrial Resources Agency, the Marine Division of the Department of Commerce, all balances in the Marine and Aviation Fund and in the Special Airport Fund, and any other property that can be identified as airport property, former Submarine Base property, and all public docks, piers, wharves, or bulkheads are hereby transferred to the Virgin Islands Port Authority established under section 1 of this Act; Provided, That any personnel so transferred who are found to be in excess of the personnel required for the efficient administration of the functions of the Authority, shall be retransferred under existing law to other positions in the Government of the Virgin Islands; Provided, further, That the transfer of any real property or rights or interests therein to the Authority by this subsection shall not become final unless a complete appendix of all such property to be transferred, with appropriate maps, surveys and descriptions sufficient for proper identification thereof is submitted to and approved by the Legislature either in a regular or a special session.

(b) Any employee of the Government of the Virgin Islands transferred to the Virgin Islands Port Authority pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall be credited by the Authority with the amount of accumulated and current accrued annual leave to which he is entitled under law and for which leave such employee has not received lump-sum payment.

(c) In the establishment of sick leave and other benefits for officers and employees of the Authority, the Board shall credit employees transferred pursuant to the provisions of subsection (a) of this section with all accumulated sick leave, and shall provide such other benefits equivalent, insofar as practicable and consistent with sound fiscal management to the benefits to which the officers or employees of the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority are now or may hereafter be entitled.

(d) No employee transferred pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall be reduced in pay.

Section 4. All laws or parts of laws inconsistent or in conflict with any provisions of this Act are, to the extent of such inconsistency or conflict, repealed.

Section 5. This Act shall become effective immediately except that the provisions of sections 1 and 3 shall become effective upon such date as shall be fixed by the Legislature by law after the approval of the creation of the Virgin Islands Port Authority by the Secretary of the Interior pursuant to section 16(a) of the Revised Organic Act of the Virgin Islands, as amended, is received.

Approved December 24, 1968.

(BILL 3864)

No. 2376

(Approved January 8, 1969)

To Authorize the Participation of the Virgin Islands of the United States in the Inauguration of President Richard M. Nixon, To Make an Appropriation Therefor, and for Other Purposes.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

Section 1. The Governor of the Virgin Islands and the President of the Legislature are hereby authorized to arrange for appropriate representation and participation of the Virgin Islands in the inauguration of President Richard M. Nixon on January 20, 1969.

Section 2. There is hereby appropriated out of the General Fund in the Treasury of the Virgin Islands, fiscal year July 1, 1968, to June 30, 1969, the sum of \$17,000 for personal services, travel and transportation, and all other expenses, including the construction of an appropriate float, which sum shall be available to the Legislature for payment of all necessary expenses to carry out the provisions of this Act.

Approved January 8, 1969.

(BILL 3865)

No. 2377

(Approved January 10, 1969)

To Further Amend the Composition of the Virgin Islands Law Enforcement Commission.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

Section 1. Section 2, Title 3 of the Virgin Islands Code is amended by changing subsection (c) (1) thereof, to read as follows:

“(c) The Board shall be composed of nineteen members as follows:

“(1) as ex officio members, the Attorney General of the Virgin Islands, who shall also serve as Chairman of the Board, the Commissioner of Public Safety, the Commissioner of Social Welfare, the Commissioner of Education, the Presiding Judge of the Municipal Court, the Chairman of the Virgin Islands Parole Board, the Executive Secretary of the Virgin Islands Commission on Human Resources, the Director of the Division of Special Projects within the Office of the Governor, established by 3 V.I.C. § 22, the Executive Secretary of the Virgin Islands Commission on Youth, the Chief Probation Officer of the Virgin Islands (or the designee of any of the foregoing when such designation is approved by the Governor), and the respective Chairmen of the St. Croix, St. Thomas and St. John Citizens Advisory Committees on Law Enforcement, and the persons elected by the highest number of votes to the Board of Education in St. Croix, St. John and St. Thomas, respectively, at the most recently conducted election; and”.

Approved January 10, 1969.

(BILL 3873)

No. 2378

(Approved January 10, 1969)

To Amend Act No. 2225 (Bill No. 3662), Seventh Legislature, Eighth Special Session 1968, Relating to the Designation and Redesignation by Name of Public Facilities in the Virgin Islands.