



A FEDERAL STRATEGY FOR EQUITY,
GROWTH, AND SELF-DETERMINATION
IN THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

Janelle K. Sarauw

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Janelle K. Sarauw

“This platform is not a list of promises.
It is a governing strategy rooted in federal
leverage, long term advocacy, and the
understanding that real progress is built through
persistence, relationships, and results.”

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ABOUT THE CANDIDATE

Janelle K. Sarauw

BIOGRAPHY

Janelle K. Sarauw is a public servant who is not afraid to stand alone when the people's interests are at stake. She asks the hard questions. She challenges broken systems. And she fights, relentlessly, for the Virgin Islands to be heard, respected, and treated with dignity.

Born and raised on St. Thomas to Levron and Carla Sarauw, Janelle is a proud product of the Virgin Islands public school system and a graduate of Charlotte Amalie High School.

As a scholar she achieved academic distinction, completing a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a concentration in Global Governance, a second major in Interdisciplinary Studies of Social Science, and a minor in History. She later advanced her scholarship by earning a Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership, along with a Certificate in Servant Leadership, grounding her public service in both rigorous political study and values-based, people-centered leadership.

Janelle returned home to teach U.S. History at her alma mater, investing in the next generation. She later served as Coordinator for the Department of Sports, Parks and Recreation and as Chief Researcher and Special Projects Director in the Office of the Lieutenant Governor. As an adjunct professor of Political Science at the University of the Virgin Islands, she challenged students to think critically about democracy, power, and their responsibility to shape the Territory's future.

In 2017, the people elected her to the 32nd Legislature of the Virgin Islands. She would go on to serve three consecutive terms. As a Senator, Janelle Sarauw became synonymous with preparation, precision, and principled courage. She pressed leaders and agencies for answers, demanded transparency, and refused to allow the Virgin Islands to be sidelined in its own recovery. Her legislative record reflects vision, accountability, community development, and measurable results.



But titles do not define
Janelle Sarauw.
Character does.

Beyond policy and politics, Janelle remains deeply rooted in community. She serves as an Elite Coach for Boomers Volleyball Academy, mentoring student-athletes who compete nationally and earn placement at Division I and academically competitive universities. She is a proud culture bearer, co-founded the Sky-High Volleyball Club, served on the Board of United Way St. Thomas–St. John, and held leadership roles within the Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals.

Her leadership has earned national recognition, including being named to NBC Out's Pride 30 and receiving Florida Atlantic University's Distinguished Alumna Award. But titles do not define Janelle Sarauw. Character does.

Janelle Sarauw is sharp, principled, and prepared. She leads with courage. The courage to confront injustice, to demand accountability, to insist on good governance, and to fight for fair treatment for the Territory.

Her mission remains clear: to be an unwavering voice for the people of the Virgin Islands, to secure the respect and resources the Territory deserves, and to ensure that our home is not merely represented, but powerfully, unapologetically championed.

Janelle K. Sarauw

LEGISLATIVE EXPERIENCE AND CREDENTIALS

Janelle K. Sarauw personifies leadership that is fearless in inquiry, disciplined in execution, courageous in championing just causes, and uncompromising in her commitment to transparency and good governance.

As a community activist, scholar, educator, and three-term legislator, she has consistently challenged status quo systems while delivering measurable, results-driven outcomes for the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Education

- Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership, with a Certificate in Servant Leadership
- Bachelor of Arts in Political Science (Concentration: Global Governance); second major in Interdisciplinary Studies of Social Science; minor in History

Recognition

- NBC Out's Pride 30 (2018)
- 35 Under 35 Emerging Leaders (2021)
- Distinguished Alumna Award (2019), Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, Florida Atlantic University
- Inductee, Leon Charney Diplomacy Hall of Fame

Professional Experience

- Senator, Legislature of the United States Virgin Islands (32nd, 33rd, and 34th Legislatures)
- Chief Researcher and Special Projects Director, Office of the Lieutenant Governor
- Coordinator, Virgin Islands Department of Sports, Parks and Recreation
- U.S. History Teacher, Virgin Islands Department of Education (Charlotte Amalie High School)
- Adjunct Lecturer of Political Science, University of the Virgin Islands

IMPACT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Government Operations

WAPA Board Bill Bill 34-0026/8472

Established minimum qualifications for WAPA board members, improving governance and accountability at the territory's utility authority.

PSC Bill Bill 34-0021/8471

Restructured the Public Services Commission as a semiautonomous agency and authorized WAPA to hire a turnaround management firm to address chronic operational failures.

PSC Board Bill Bill 34-0025/8452

Set minimum qualifications for Public Services Commission members, raising the standard of regulatory oversight for utility services.

VIVIS Bill 34-0096/8550

Created the Virgin Islands Virtual Information System, expanding digital access to government services and information for residents.

Transfer on Death Bill 33-0068/8250

Created a simplified process for transferring vehicle ownership after death, sparing families the cost and delay of probate proceedings.

Health, Hospitals, And Human Services

Pharmaceutical Assistance Program Bill 33-0094/8253

Expanded the territory's pharmaceutical assistance program to cover residents with cancer and degenerative diseases.

Governmental Operations & Consumer Affairs

Women, Children, and Families Act Bill 33-0103/8369

Secured parental leave for government employees, paid time off for school visits, postpartum and healthcare protections for incarcerated women, corporal punishment prohibition in schools, and mandatory discharge planners at healthcare facilities.

Justice

Senior Justice Bill Bill 34-0076/8468

Granted seniors and terminally ill residents priority scheduling in civil court proceedings, ensuring timely access to justice.

Disaster Recovery And Infrastructure

Gas Station Moratorium Bill 34-0010/8442

Imposed a five-year moratorium on new gas station construction, directing land use policy toward sustainable development priorities.

Workforce Development

State Apprenticeship Program Bill 32-0179/8063

Modernized apprenticeship standards in the USVI, improving the pipeline for skilled workforce development across trades.

Education

Corporal Punishment Ban in Schools Bill 34-0097/8516

Eliminated corporal punishment in Virgin Islands schools, aligning the territory with modern child welfare and educational standards.

Culture

Division of Festivals Bill 32-0308/8153

Established the Division of Festivals within the Department of Tourism, institutionalizing cultural heritage programming and creating economic opportunities for local artists and vendors.

Rules And Judiciary

Constitutional Convention Bill 34-0153/8681

Established the Sixth Constitutional Convention of the USVI Islands, advancing the territory's pursuit of greater self-governance.

Committee On The Whole

Cannabis Expungement Bill 34-0344/8679

Provided for the expungement of marijuana-related criminal records, delivering retroactive justice to residents affected by prior cannabis convictions.

Adult Use Cannabis Bill 34-0345/8680

Expanded cannabis legalization from medical to adult use, positioning the Virgin Islands to develop a regulated industry and new revenue stream.

Committee On Finance

Stenographer Scholarship Bill 34-0283/8689

Created a dedicated scholarship for Virgin Islands stenography students, investing in a critical but underserved court and government services workforce.

Environmental Protection

Toxic Sunscreen Ban Bill 33-0043/8185

Banned the sale of sunscreens containing chemicals harmful to coral reefs.

Plastic Straw Ban Bill 32-0220/8133

Extended the plastic bag ban to include disposable straws, reducing single-use plastic waste in USVI waters.

A hand holding a small flag with an eagle and the letters 'V' and 'I' in front of the US Capitol dome. The background is a blue-tinted image of the US Capitol dome and a hand holding a small flag with an eagle and the letters 'V' and 'I'.

I understand what it means to govern in a system where resources are constrained, federal policies are not built with us in mind, and the margin for error is small.

Janelle K. Sarauw

SECTION 1

Defending Democracy and Full Political Rights

Janelle's goal is simple: equal voice, equal rights, and equal standing under federal law. She will lead a direct and sustained fight for full democratic participation. This includes advancing civil rights strategies to challenge unequal federal treatment. Coalitions across territories will be built, and the diaspora will be activated.

CHALLENGE

For more than one hundred years, Virgin Islanders have been denied full democratic participation. We cannot vote for President, and we lack voting representation in Congress. The Insular Cases continue to justify unequal treatment under federal law.

SOLUTION

A Coordinated Federal Civil Rights Strategy

ACTION

- Introduce legislation to expand the practical authority and procedural influence of the Delegate, recognizing existing committee voting rights while addressing limitations in final passage
- Advance congressional hearings examining the continued application of the Insular Cases
- Build a unified coalition across U.S. territories
- Partner with the Congressional Black Caucus to elevate territorial disenfranchisement as a civil rights issue
- Activate the Virgin Islands diaspora to advocate within their congressional districts



Healthcare in the Virgin Islands must be equitable, stable, and built for our realities. Janelle will pursue aggressive action to secure fair healthcare funding and access. This includes protecting Medicaid, strengthening hospitals, and expanding veteran services. Long-term care infrastructure will be prioritized so residents do not have to travel abroad for care.

When the federal Medicaid cap runs out, the bills don't disappear. Our hospitals are forced to absorb the loss.

Janelle K. Sarauw

SECTION 2

Healthcare, Veterans Care, and Public Health Equity

CHALLENGE

The Virgin Islands faces structural inequities in Medicaid and Medicare, while recent federal actions have reduced Medicaid and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program support.

Hospitals operate under financial strain, and veterans continue to face barriers to accessing consistent, high-quality care.

The territory also faces a growing gap in long-term care infrastructure for seniors. There is limited access to assisted living and continuing care facilities, placing increased pressure on families and the healthcare system, and forcing many residents to seek care off-island.

SOLUTION

Immediate Federal Defense and Structural Reform

ACTION

Protect and Expand Federal Health Funding

- Oppose further reductions to Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program at the federal level
- Eliminate the Medicaid cap and transition to a needs-based funding structure
- Secure appropriations for hospital stabilization and workforce development
- Mandate full inclusion of territories in federally funded healthcare benefits

Modernize Reimbursement and Ensure Equity

- Advance a Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act rebase to modernize hospital reimbursement formulas
- Require parity in Medicare, Medicaid, and federally regulated reimbursement models for U.S. territories
- Ensure federal payment models reflect island cost structures, including shipping, taxes, and supply chain realities
- Address unintended impacts of the Medicare Drug Price Negotiation Program on territory pharmacies and healthcare providers

Strengthen Healthcare Delivery Systems

- Expand federal support for pharmacy-based care, including test and treat services and chronic disease management

- Increase federal funding for mental health and substance use programs
- Strengthen public health data systems, reporting infrastructure, and territorial inclusion in federal health surveillance systems
- Address environmental health risks impacting long-term public health outcomes

Expand Access to Care and Long-Term Services

- Expand access to Veterans Affairs services within the territory
- Leverage Medicaid and Medicare policy to support long-term care services and ensure reimbursement reflects the cost of care in insular areas
- Advocate for federal funding and policy support to expand assisted living and continuing care facilities through HHS and HUD programs
- Use federal relationships and public-private partnerships to attract investment in senior care infrastructure so residents can age with dignity at home

Oversight and Federal Accountability

- Conduct oversight of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, and Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure equitable implementation of federal programs in the Virgin Islands



SECTION 3

Cost of Living, Energy, Infrastructure, and Housing

Janelle's goal is a more affordable, reliable, and liveable Virgin Islands. Her approach focuses on lowering costs by addressing structural challenges. This includes stabilizing energy, strengthening infrastructure, and accelerating housing delivery. Federal oversight will be used to demand accountability and performance.

CHALLENGE

The cost of living in the Virgin Islands is driven by energy instability, high shipping costs, housing shortages, and aging infrastructure.

The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority continues to face operational failures despite billions in federal funding, while affordable housing remains limited due to post hurricane displacement and slow deployment of federal resources.

SOLUTION

Structural Cost Reduction Through Federal Policy and Oversight

ACTION

Energy Stability and Infrastructure Accountability

- Secure federal funding for grid modernization, renewable energy, and battery storage
- Conduct aggressive federal oversight of FEMA funded infrastructure projects, including those tied to the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority
- Oppose federal takeover while demanding strict accountability, performance benchmarks, and operational reform

Shipping, Freight, and Supply Chain Reform

The cost of shipping to the Virgin Islands drives nearly every aspect of the cost of living. Addressing this requires targeted federal policy reform and oversight.

- Advocate for reforms or targeted exemptions under the Jones Act to increase competition and reduce freight costs
- Increase the federal customs threshold requiring a broker from \$2,500 to at least \$20,000 to reduce unnecessary costs on businesses and residents

- Strengthen federal oversight of shipping practices to ensure fair pricing, transparency, and accountability among carriers
- Advocate for expanded direct shipping routes to improve reliability, reduce delays, and stabilize supply chains

Housing and Community Development

- Accelerate the deployment of Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery funds
- Expand access and equitable treatment under the Housing Choice Voucher program
- Support the development of affordable and disaster-resilient housing
- Advance federal funding strategies to expand senior housing, assisted living, and continuing care communities

Transportation and Economic Infrastructure

- Expand federal investment in ports, roads, and inter-island transportation to reduce costs and improve economic efficiency



SECTION 4

Economic Diversification, Labor, and Workforce Strategy

The goal is sustainable growth that creates jobs and expands opportunity. A targeted strategy will diversify the Virgin Islands economy beyond tourism. Federal support will be expanded for technology, agriculture, renewable energy, and cultural industries. Workforce development will align directly with real economic opportunities.

CHALLENGE

The economy remains overly dependent on tourism while labor shortages and federal policy shifts create additional strain.

SOLUTION

Federal Alignment for Sustainable Growth

ACTION

- Expand access to Small Business Administration, United States Department of Agriculture, and Department of Commerce programs
- Invest in renewable energy, technology, agriculture, and cultural industries
- Address regional labor realities, including guest worker programs and Caribbean workforce dynamics
- Advocate for federal immigration policies that reflect the needs of island economies
- Align workforce development funding with economic diversification priorities
- Develop and advocate for federal incentive programs to support the return of diaspora professionals to the Virgin Islands, including workforce placement, housing support, and tax aligned initiatives



SECTION 5

Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food Security

Food security will be treated as a priority, not a vulnerability. The territory will move toward a stronger, more self-sufficient local food system. Farmers and fishermen will be supported, with protections against unfair competition. Federal programs will be fully leveraged to expand production and infrastructure.

CHALLENGE

Heavy reliance on imported food, combined with reductions to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, threatens food security. Local farmers and fishermen face regulatory imbalance and infrastructure limitations.

SOLUTION

A Federal Food Security and Production Strategy

ACTION

- Defend and strengthen Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits
- Ensure full participation in United States Department of Agriculture programs
- Expand crop insurance to include tropical crops and hurricane risk
- Secure funding for irrigation, water systems, and agricultural infrastructure
- Develop cold storage, processing, and distribution systems
- Protect local fisheries from unfair import competition
- Strengthen oversight of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Marine Fisheries Service
- Require the Caribbean Fishery Management Council to establish a Virgin Islands office staffed by Virgin Islanders
- Ensure equitable representation for the Virgin Islands in federal fisheries governance
- Expand food security education and programming

Territories are often underfunded or inconsistently included in federal programs, resulting in outdated infrastructure, gaps in broadband access, and limited career pathways.

Janelle K. Sarauw

SECTION 6

Education, Youth Investment, Public Safety, and Special Needs

Education will be an important cornerstone of Janelle's work. Equitable funding and stronger pathways for youth success will be advanced. This includes modern schools, workforce training, and support for teachers. Public safety will emphasize prevention, intervention, and coordination, alongside expanded services for individuals with special needs.

CHALLENGE

Educational systems in the Virgin Islands continue to experience inequities in federal funding and limited alignment with workforce demands. Territories are often underfunded or inconsistently included in federal programs, resulting in outdated infrastructure, gaps in broadband access, and limited career pathways.

At the same time, rising crime and gun violence, particularly among youth, present a growing public safety concern. Federal resources for prevention and intervention are not always fully leveraged in the territory.

There is also a lack of comprehensive data, federally supported assessments, and sustained services for individuals with autism and other special needs.

SOLUTION

Use Federal Education, Justice, and Health Systems to Drive Outcomes

As a Member of Congress, I will secure equitable access to federal education funding, strengthen federally supported public safety strategies, and expand services for individuals with special needs through legislation, appropriations, and oversight.

ACTION

- Secure increased and equitable access to funding through the United States Department of Education, including Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act
- Advocate for full funding under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to strengthen special education services
- Expand access to the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act to build workforce aligned training programs
- Advance federal appropriations for school modernization and broadband expansion through the Federal Communications Commission and Department of Education
- Support federal programs that incentivize teacher recruitment and retention in insular areas
- Secure funding through the United States Department of Justice for youth violence prevention and intervention programs
- Strengthen coordination with federal law enforcement agencies, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
- Expand access to public safety grants through the Office of Justice Programs
- Secure funding through the Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Education to assess autism and special education needs
- Expand federal support services for individuals and families with autism and developmental disabilities
- Align Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funding with education systems to create pathways to employment



SECTION 7

Environment, Marine Economy, and Climate Resilience

Our focus is to protect our islands while building a competitive blue economy. Federal investment will be directed toward environmental protection and coastal resilience. This includes climate adaptation, water security, and coral reef restoration. The marine economy will be developed as a driver of sustainable growth.

CHALLENGE

The Virgin Islands faces escalating climate threats, including coastal erosion, coral reef degradation, water insecurity, and increased storm intensity. Despite being on the front lines of climate change, the territory faces barriers accessing federal environmental funding due to complex application processes, delayed disbursement, and inequitable treatment in federal programs.

At the same time, the Virgin Islands has not fully leveraged its marine economy. While tourism is heavily dependent on marine assets, there has been limited federal investment in developing unique, sustainable attractions that differentiate the territory within the Caribbean.

Federal regulatory decisions impacting fisheries and marine resources are often made without adequate Virgin Islands representation, resulting in policies that do not fully reflect local realities.

SOLUTION

Leverage Federal Environmental and Economic Policy to Build a Resilient and Competitive Blue Economy

As a Member of Congress, I will secure federal investment, reform access to funding, and ensure territorial representation in environmental and marine governance systems.

ACTION

- Secure federal funding through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of the Interior for coastal protection, coral reef restoration, watershed management, and water infrastructure projects
- Advocate for the designation of the Virgin Islands as a federal pilot site for climate adaptation and renewable energy innovation, unlocking targeted federal investment and technical support
- Streamline territorial access to federal environmental grants by advancing legislative and administrative reforms that reduce application and compliance barriers for insular areas
- Align federal environmental funding with infrastructure, energy, and economic development priorities to ensure coordinated investment
- Secure federal appropriations to design and construct an underwater sculptured garden as a marine tourism asset, positioning the Virgin Islands as a leader in sustainable tourism innovation in the Caribbean
- Support federal funding for the Department of Tourism to promote marine-based attractions globally through coordinated marketing initiatives
- Strengthen federal oversight of marine resource management policies to ensure that regulations issued by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Marine Fisheries Service reflect the economic and cultural realities of the Virgin Islands



SECTION 8

Disaster Preparedness and Health System Resilience

Disaster readiness for the Virgin Islands must include healthcare. Janelle will work to embed island realities into federal emergency systems so care does not stop when a storm hits. This includes continuity requirements for pharmacies, dialysis centers, and clinics, alongside expanded federal stockpiles for medications and supplies. The territory will be fully integrated into federal emergency health planning so residents are protected before, during, and after a disaster.

CHALLENGE

The Virgin Islands remains highly vulnerable to natural disasters, yet federal emergency systems do not always account for the continuity of healthcare and pharmaceutical access in insular areas.

SOLUTION

Strengthen Federal Disaster Readiness for Critical Health Systems

As a Member of Congress, I will ensure that federal disaster policy fully incorporates the realities of island healthcare delivery and the vulnerability of supply chains.

ACTION

- Advocate for federal continuity of care requirements for pharmacies, dialysis centers, and healthcare facilities during disasters
- Expand federal stockpiles and rapid deployment systems for medications and medical supplies to the territories
- Ensure full integration of the Virgin Islands into federal emergency health response planning and execution

A woman with glasses and a microphone, with a US flag in the background.

The Virgin Islands is frequently excluded, underfunded, or inconsistently treated in federal legislation and agency implementation.

Janelle K. Sarauw

SECTION 9

Federal Accountability, Housing, and Structural Equity

The Virgin Islands can expect to be treated fairly in federal programs and funding. Full inclusion, equitable resources, and timely delivery will be enforced. Housing recovery and development will be accelerated through oversight and policy reform. The focus is accountability, equity, and results that people can see.

CHALLENGE

The Virgin Islands is frequently excluded, underfunded, or inconsistently treated in federal legislation and agency implementation. This results in reduced access to critical programs, delayed funding, and inequitable outcomes compared to the states.

At the same time, the territory faces a severe affordable housing crisis driven by post hurricane displacement, rising construction costs, limited housing inventory, and delays in federal disaster recovery funding. Programs such as Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery and Housing Choice Vouchers have not been fully optimized to meet the territory's needs.

SOLUTION

Institutionalize Territorial Inclusion and Enforce Federal Accountability

As a Member of Congress, I will focus on embedding territorial equity into federal law while using oversight authority to ensure agencies deliver results.

ACTION

Institutionalize Territorial Equity

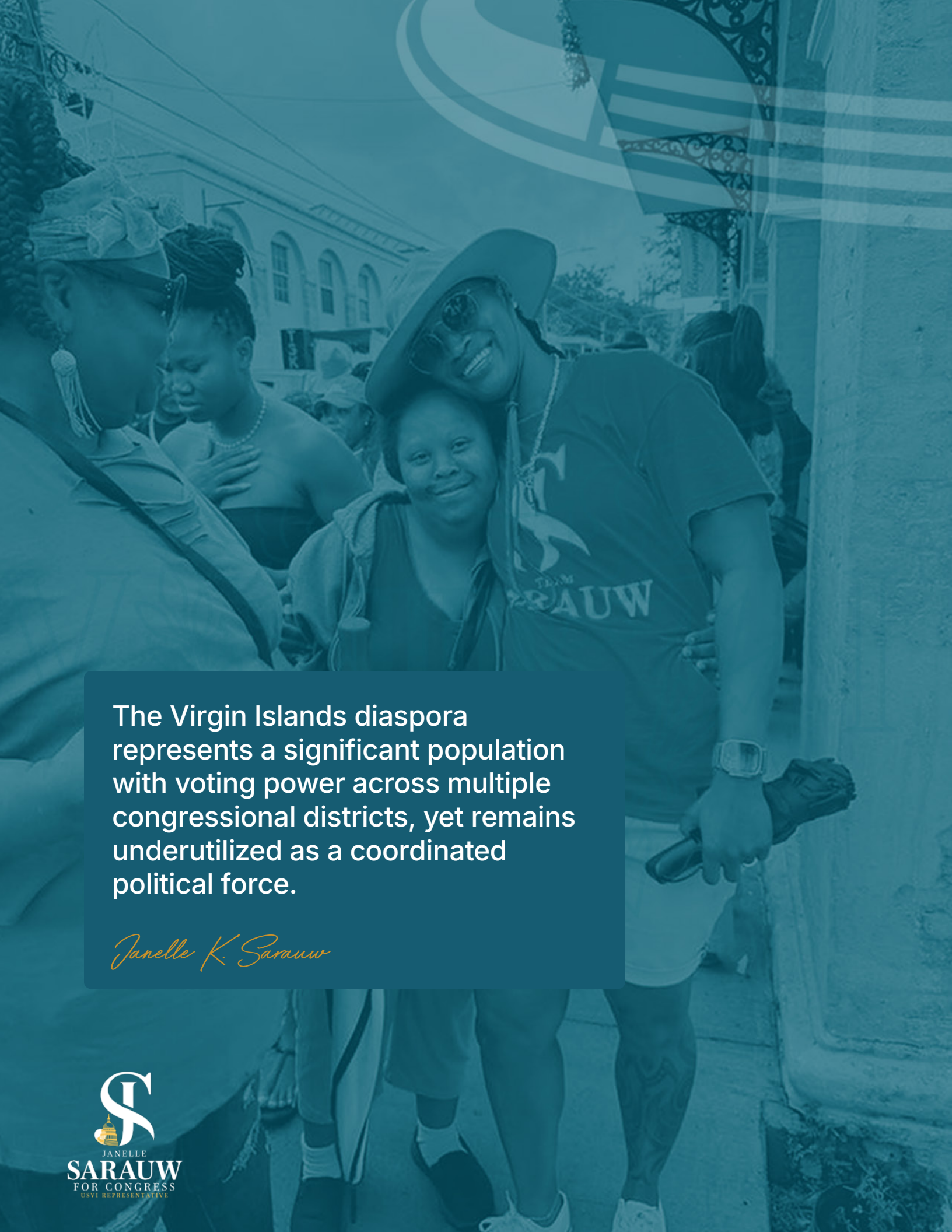
- Introduce legislation requiring automatic inclusion of U.S. territories in all federal programs unless explicitly excluded by statute
- Pursue committee assignments with jurisdiction over appropriations, infrastructure, and housing to directly influence federal funding decisions

Strengthen Oversight and Accountability

- Conduct aggressive oversight of federal agencies, including HUD and FEMA, to ensure timely and effective deployment of funds
- Request targeted Government Accountability Office reviews to identify funding disparities, program access gaps, and implementation failures in the territories
- Establish measurable federal benchmarks for funding allocation, program access, and performance outcomes
- Require transparency in how federal funds are allocated, disbursed, and utilized in the Virgin Islands
- Advance accountability mechanisms when federal agencies fail to properly implement programs in U.S. territories

Expand Housing Access and Recovery

- Secure increased funding and flexibility within Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery programs to accelerate housing recovery
- Advocate for expansion and equitable treatment under the Housing Choice Voucher program
- Advance federal policies that support disaster resilient housing construction and reduce barriers to rebuilding in insular areas



The Virgin Islands diaspora represents a significant population with voting power across multiple congressional districts, yet remains underutilized as a coordinated political force.

Janelle K. Sarauw

SECTION 10

Diaspora Engagement and National Influence

Virgin Islanders will be seen and heard. The diaspora will be organized into a coordinated political force. Structured advocacy will be built across key states and congressional districts. Our collective voice will extend beyond the territory and into Congress nationwide.

CHALLENGE

The Virgin Islands diaspora represents a significant population with voting power across multiple congressional districts, yet remains underutilized as a coordinated political force.

Without structured engagement, the territory loses opportunities to influence federal policy through mainland advocacy.

SOLUTION

Build a Coordinated National Advocacy Infrastructure

As a Member of Congress, I will formalize and activate the Virgin Islands diaspora as an extension of the territory's political influence.

ACTION

- Establish a Virgin Islands Diaspora Council to coordinate advocacy efforts across key states and congressional districts
- Develop structured engagement strategies to connect diaspora communities with federal policy priorities affecting the territory
- Encourage diaspora-led advocacy with Members of Congress to build support for legislation impacting the Virgin Islands
- Partner with national organizations and caucuses to elevate Virgin Islands issues within broader federal policy discussions
- Utilize diaspora networks to amplify federal funding priorities, disaster recovery needs, and economic initiatives

SECTION 11

Fair Revenue, Economic Justice, and the Rum Cover Over

Our resources are worth more. Outdated federal revenue policies must be modernized. This includes reforming the rum cover over to reflect today's economic realities. Transparency and accountability will ensure revenues support retirement systems, infrastructure, and long-term growth.

CHALLENGE

The rum cover over remains fixed at 13.25 per proof gallon, a rate that has not been adjusted to reflect inflation, rising production costs, or current market conditions.

While the rate has been extended and made permanent, its real value has declined significantly over time, limiting its effectiveness as a revenue tool. Additionally, the structure has incentivized agreements that do not always produce broad-based economic benefits.

SOLUTION

Modernize Federal Tax Policy to Reflect Economic Reality

As a Member of Congress, I will pursue structural reform of the rum cover over through federal tax legislation and oversight.

ACTION

- Introduce legislation to replace the fixed 13.25 per proof gallon rate with a dynamic formula tied to inflation, production value, and market conditions
- Advocate for the inclusion of periodic review mechanisms within federal law to ensure the rate remains aligned with economic realities
- Reframe the rum cover over as a federal economic policy issue requiring modernization, rather than a static territorial benefit
- Promote transparency and accountability in the allocation and use of rum cover over revenues
- Prioritize the use of funds for Government Employees Retirement System stabilization, infrastructure investment, and economic diversification
- Conduct oversight of agreements tied to rum production to ensure they produce measurable economic return for the people of the Virgin Islands



Locking the Virgin Islands into 13.25 today is the equivalent of locking wages decades ago while the cost of living continues to rise.

Janelle K. Sarauw



SECTION 12

Self-Governance and the Sixth Constitutional Convention

Janelle will actively advocate at the federal level to advance a Virgin Islands constitution. The process will be guided through Congress with early identification of barriers. Transparency and public engagement will remain central throughout. The goal is greater self-governance shaped by the will of the people.

CHALLENGE

The Virgin Islands has made multiple attempts to adopt a constitution, yet none have been successfully approved. The absence of a constitution limits the territory's ability to define its governance structure and assert greater local autonomy.

Because any proposed constitution must be reviewed and approved by Congress, the process is inherently dependent on federal engagement.

SOLUTION

Provide Active Federal Leadership and Navigation of the Constitutional Process

As a Member of Congress, I will serve as a direct advocate and facilitator throughout the federal review process.

ACTION

- Engage directly with congressional leadership and relevant committees to guide the constitutional review process
- Identify and address potential federal concerns early in coordination with local leaders and delegates to the convention
- Advocate within Congress for respect of the will of the people of the Virgin Islands
- Ensure transparency by providing consistent public updates on the status of the review process
- Maintain sustained engagement throughout all phases of congressional consideration to prevent delays or procedural breakdowns



THE HONORABLE
Janelle K. Sarauw

THE BOTTOM LINE

Ready For The Work

The Delegate does not cast a final vote on the House floor, but influence is built through legislation, funding, negotiation, and oversight.

This platform reflects a disciplined, realistic, and aggressive federal strategy.

I am prepared to do that work.

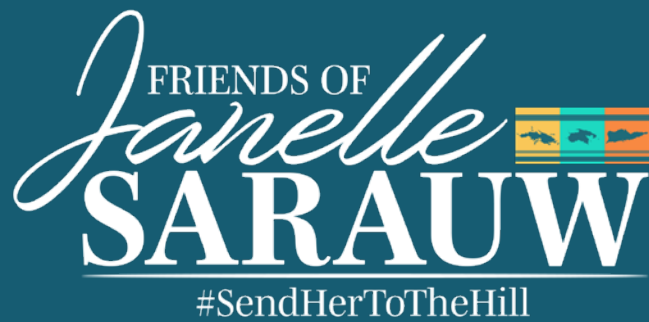
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