

SENATORS HOST TOWNHALL MEETING TO DISCUSS THE PROPER DISPOSAL OF DEBRIS AND WASTE POST-HURRICANE IRMA AND HURRICANE MARIA

Date : November 6, 2017

St. John – Members of the 32nd Legislature, led by Sen. President Myron Jackson, hosted a Town Hall Meeting at the Cleone Henrietta Creque Legislative Conference Room to meet with representatives from the Virgin Islands Waste Management and FEMA to discuss post-hurricane burning of debris and trash and preserving valuable timber that can be re-used to promote culture in the Territory.

“This discussion is continued around the disposal of the waste. It is important that salvage our local resources that came as a result of two Category 5 hurricanes. Proper disposal of this debris and waste can lead to economic growth in terms of using the materials to provide jobs for local craftsman, carpenters, and farmers,” said Sen. Jackson. “There is an environmental concern in the preservation and conservation of our antiques. Burn and mulch of heritage woods, these resources have a rightful place in our culture and society.”

Similarly, a St. John Resident stated that the wood should be preserved. “The Canep Tree is one of the strongest wood in the Territory. The wood can be made into a board that is thirty-six inches wide. Instead of disposing of it, cut it down by six inches and make it into plywood. These woods can be used as timber and lumber. That’s just one way to recycle it.”

Rich Kremlin, Chairman of V.I Waste Management stated that this Town Hall Meeting is conducted in hopes of determining a cost-effective solution to waste disposal. All compost can be re-used locally. Soil from the run-offs can be used to fertilize and replenish soil used for farming. Debris can be used to revitalize the Wood Craft Industry.

A representative from the Environmental Protection Agency stated that EPA will provide air monitoring for particulates and matter throughout trash removal process. “PM 2.5 and PM 10 are two particulates that are examined closely during incineration of smoke. The smaller the particulates the more likely it can pass through the lungs and cause respiratory problems. Therefore, we will monitor disposal very closely.”

Sen. Marvin Blyden asked, “How were the location of waste disposal sites on St. John determined?” Eric Cheng, Project Manager of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said, “It was a challenge to make this decision because of the limited options. However, the best space for waste disposals on St. John is Sussanaberg and Coral Bay.”

However, residents of St. John opposed using Coral Bay as a waste disposal site.

“I reside in Coral Bay and I am very concerned about burning waste in that area. Residents are already exposed to compose from Tortola and now waste disposal is happening at Coral Bay. I am opposed to this agreement because Coral Bay is the hub of our community,” said a concerned resident.

Senators present are Myron Jackson, Brian Smith, Janette Millin Young, Tregenza Roach, Marvin Blyden, and Dwayne DeGraff.

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