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Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning


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Committee on Culture, Sports, Parks, and Youth
Committee on Government Operations, Veterans Affairs, and Consumer Protection

MILTON E. POTTER

Senator, 35th Legislature of the United States Virgin Islands

TO: Kurell Hodge, J.D.

FROM: Milton E. Potter 

DATE: May 22, 2023

SUBJECT: May 15, 2023 Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning Committee Report

The attached report of the Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning is submitted pursuant to the Rules of the 35th Legislature of the Virgin Islands.

COMMITTEE REPORT – Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning: May 15, 2023

The Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, and Planning was called to order at 9:54am by Committee Chairman, Senator Milton Potter. The meeting was held in the Earle B. Ottley Legislative Chambers on St. Thomas, VI, to consider the following:

To receive a status updates on all anticipated, and underway, disaster recovery – related projects, programs, and the status of federal funding, specifically pertaining to the Virgin Islands Office of Management and Budget, the Virgin Islands Department of Public Works, and The Territorial Hospitals Redevelopment Team.

Invited Testifiers:

The Honorable Derek Gabriel, Commissioner
Virgin Islands Department of Public Works

Jenifer O'Neal, Director
Virgin Islands Office of Management and Budget

Darryl Smalls, Executive Director,
Virgin Islands Territorial Hospitals Revitalization Team

Committee Members in attendance:

Senator Diane T. Capehart (Tardy)
Senator Alma Francis Heyliger (Tardy)
Senator Kenneth L. Gittens (Tardy)
Senator Marise L. James
Senator Franklin D. Johnson (Tardy)
Senator Carla J. Joseph
Senator Milton E. Potter

Non-Committee Members in attendance

Senator Ray Fonseca
Senator Donna A. Frett-Gregory

Public Affairs / Media:

Omari Hicks
Chaunte Herbert
Jonelle Jackson
Melissa Gustave
Alwyn Baptiste
Winston Nugent
Alvin Burke
Bernard Matthew
Eustace Browne
Barry Leerdam
Africah Harrigan
Jamal Potter

Clerked by: Pauline Dawes

Counsel: Amos Carty, Jr.

Reporters: Nadine Williams, Tricia Sealey, and. Nataya Melchoir Munez

Sergeant-At-Arms/Security: Delvin Fleming

Ms. Jenifer O'Neal, Director of the Office of Management and Budget gave her opening statement. In Director O'Neal's opening statement, she provided the committee and update on the status of various federal funds that have been made available to the territory primarily as a result of the hurricanes of 2017, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Derek Gabriel, Commissioner of the Virgin Islands Department of Public Works, followed Ms. O'Neal with his opening statement. In Commissioner Gabriel's opening statement, he updated the committee on the status of DPW disaster-recovery projects planned, in-progress, and completed.

Mr. Darryl Smalls, Executive Director of Facilities and Capital Development for the Virgin Islands Territorial Hospitals Revitalization Team concluded the opening statements by giving his opening statement. During his opening statement, Commissioner Gabriel updated the committee as to the status of efforts to repair and/or rebuild the territory's primary public health care facilities. The Committee then conducted a seven-minute round of questioning.

At the conclusion of the first round of questioning, the committee went directly into a four-minute round of questioning.

Senator Milton E. Potter adjourned the meeting at 2:02pm