



**THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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Governor Bryan Contacts Congressional Leaders To Request Additional Federal COVID-19 Relief

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — In his continuing efforts to lobby the federal government for help in the Territory’s fight against COVID-19, Governor Albert Bryan Jr. sent a letter to Congressional leaders requesting additional federal assistance for the U.S. Virgin Islands.

In a letter to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer, Governor Bryan requested a number of items, in addition to the emergency measures he requested from the Congressional leaders on April 8.

“The U.S. Virgin Islands is uniquely dependent on tourism. The devastating impact of the pandemic across our entire tourism sector – cruise ship arrivals, airline passengers and traffic, resorts and hotels, restaurants, and all related services – has been an enduring disaster without apparent end,” Governor Bryan wrote in the letter.

“Further, the cruise ship lockdown has now been extended to an additional 100 days,” he wrote.

The Governor said to overcome this disaster, the USVI needs and requests a cash infusion through:

- Cancellation of Community Disaster Loans from Hurricanes Irma and Maria (\$300 million)

- An increase in CARES Act funding through a change in the set-aside for the insular areas (\$206 million)
- Waiving the local cost-share for Hurricanes Irma and Maria (about \$500 million) and the current COVID-19 disaster declaration (TBD)
- Cancellation of the Unemployment Trust Fund Debt (about \$60 million)

Governor Bryan also requested:

- Full reimbursement of federal tax provisions imposed on the USVI by the CARES Act; Earned Income Tax Credit; Child Tax Credit; and other federal enactments paid by local treasury through the Mirrored Tax Code
- Equal treatment and reimbursement to local hospitals equivalent to that provided to hospitals in the States
- Promotion of investment in the Territory as a path to economic stability and sustainability
- Forgiveness of SBA loans from Hurricanes Irma and Maria
- Enhanced funding and resources for border patrol and protection to stop the porous entry of high-risk COVID-19 undocumented immigrants through the Territory

“We need to put more money back into the Territory. We are trying all sources for possible rescue from this incredible crisis that is not our making or the result of our decision-making: Governor Bryan wrote to the Congressional leaders. “I urge and thank you for favorable action on these requests to benefit the people, businesses and government of this U.S. Territory.”

Congress currently is considering another national stimulus bill to supplement the COVID-19 assistance provided through the \$2.2 trillion CARES Act.

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