



THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
GOVERNMENT HOUSE

Charlotte Amalie, V.I. 00802
340-774-0001

May 21, 2018

VIA MESSENGER

The Honorable Myron D. Jackson
Senate President
Thirty Second Legislature of the Virgin Islands
Capitol Building
St. Thomas, VI 00802

OFFICE OF THE
SENATE PRESIDENT
18 MAY 22 AM 11:52
SENATOR
MYRON D. JACKSON

Re: Governor's Action on Bills numbered 32-0207 and 32-0209

Dear Mr. President:

I write to advise you that, pursuant to Section 9(d) of the Revised Organic Act of the Virgin Islands of 1954 as amended, I have today acted on the following legislative bills.

I have approved Bill No. 32-0207, an Act ratifying the Governor's approval of Major Coastal Zone Permit No. CZX-29-17 (L&W) issued to Limetree Bay Terminals, LLC.

I have vetoed Bill No. 32-0209, an Act amending title 19 Virgin Islands Code, part II, chapter 16, subchapter I, section 243, subsection (e) to change who is to serve in the capacity of the chairperson on the Virgin Islands Government Hospitals and Health Facilities Corporation and to designate the Commissioner of Health to serve as the chairperson of the St. Croix District Board for two years during the rebuilding process of the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center.

More work is needed to revolutionize the way the Territory's hospitals are administered and optimize the federal funding available for the rebuilding of the hospitals than simply substituting cabinet members as chairpersons to the hospital board. Although I share the Legislature's confidence that the Director of Management and Budget and the Commissioner of Health are more than qualified to lead the Territorial Board and St. Croix District Board, respectively, in the modernization of the Territory's hospitals and healthcare system, various conflicts of interest may arise.

The Department of Health through its Commissioner is responsible for the oversight of the emergency management functions for both hospitals. A dual role as the Chairman of the Board

Governor Kenneth E. Mapp's Letter to Senate President Myron D. Jackson
Re: Governor's Action on Bills numbered 32-0207 and 32-0209
May 21, 2018
Page 2 of 2

for the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital St. Croix District Board presents a possible conflict of interest as the board chairperson works in collaboration with the board of directors as a policy maker to oversee the operations and develop policies to govern the affairs of the hospital. In addition, the Department of Health is also responsible for the regulatory functions of the hospital. How will objectivity be maintained in executing the required roles of the Commissioner of Health and that of the chairperson of St. Croix District Board?

Rather than focusing solely on the rebuilding of one hospital, the Governor Juan Luis Hospital, as this bill does, it is imperative that we take a holistic approach to both hospitals. I will soon be submitting legislation to consolidate the hospital boards. Having three boards overseeing the administration of the Territory's hospitals is counter-productive and inefficient. We must develop a model for oversight of the hospitals during the hurricane recovery and beyond while at the same time developing the healthcare model for the Virgin Islands to meet the healthcare needs our residents across the continuum of care. Our residents and visitors deserve state-of-the-art health care facilities and hospitals. We can meet this critical need with comprehensive and carefully drafted legislation to streamline the administration of the Territory's hospitals.

As always, thank you for your continued work on behalf of the people of the Virgin Islands.

Sincerely,


Kenneth E. Mapp
Governor

Enclosures