GOVERNMENT HOUSE
UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 15, 2022
Press Contact
Richard Motta
340-474-2399
www.vi.gov
richard.mottajr@go.vi.gov

Governor Bryan Submits Proposal to Increase Funding Available for Repayment of Retroactive Wages

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — On Monday, August 15, Governor Albert Bryan Jr. submitted a proposed measure to the 34th Legislature to increase the amount of funding available from $25 million to $40 million for repayment of the retroactive wages to government employees.

The Governor said that updated revenue forecasts enabled him to increase the amount of money to be available to repay the long-awaited wages. The government's current obligation for repayment of retroactive wages is about $175 million, and Governor Bryan's proposal would reduce that amount by $40 million.

"In my last State of the Territory Address, I made a commitment to call for the appropriation of at least $25 million per year each year to address retroactive wages owed to government employees. On July 12th I submitted legislation to the 34th Legislature to effectuate the first such payment. I am working closely with Senate President Donna Frett-Gregory and Senate Vice President Novelle Francis who have championed this cause and are supporting me in this endeavor," Governor Bryan said Monday. "However, in looking at our projected revenues and expenditures, I sent correspondence to the Legislature earlier today asking for that appropriation to be changed to $40 million.

"While there are still other pressing obligations that need to be met, the pressures of inflation are being borne disproportionately by our residents living on fixed incomes," Governor Bryan said. "So, this opportunity to pay back wages to those workers who are retired or near retirement is timely. There is little that we can do to reduce gas and food prices. We don't control federal monetary policy or the global events that are driving inflation across the nation. We can however give priority to investing local resources back into our people when opportunities such as this present themselves."

The Governor said the meticulous planning and sound budgeting practices of the Bryan-Roach Administration since it has been in office is responsible for funding that has allowed the Government of the Virgin to honor its financial obligations to the people of the Virgin Islands, such as repayment of the retroactive wages; bringing income tax returns current; paying the GVI's debt to the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority; and restoring solvency to the Government Employees' Retirement System.

"It was not easy, and it did not happen overnight. It took meticulous planning and sound budgeting, and it also took making this government's revenue generating-operations more efficient," Governor Bryan said.

The Bryan-Roach Administration is investing in the Territory's people, infrastructure and future through transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in the government and ensuring that recovery projects are completed as quickly as possible. Visit transparency.vi.gov.

###