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Governor Bryan Statement on Limetree Refinery Announcement To Layoff 271 Workers, Suspend Plans to Restart Refinery Operations

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS— Governor Albert Bryan Jr. issued the following statement concerning Limetree Bay Refining's announcement to suspend the restart of refinery operations and layoff 271 employees:

"Our administration continues to maintain its position of supporting a restart in refinery operations that fully considers the health and safety of St. Croix residents and the employees within the refinery, and we have worked hard with the refinery, its investors, and the EPA to avoid this outcome.

"Unfortunately, recent events have culminated in the refinery representing that they cannot maintain the current workforce until there is greater certainty regarding the timing of their restart.

"As a former Labor Commissioner during the closure of the HOVENSA Refinery, I witnessed firsthand the anxiety and economic turmoil experienced by the families affected, and I remain hopeful that we can arrive at a quick resolution to the issues standing in the way of the safe restart of the refinery for their sake and for that of the vendors who directly and indirectly benefit from the refinery.

"This announcement is not something our administration wanted or hoped for, but it is certainly something for which we are prepared. Our Department of Labor has already activated its rapid response teams to help affected workers transition to new employment and or connect them with unemployment benefits."

"We always knew the refinery could not continue to be the sole lynchpin of our private sector industry and are continuing the work to diversify our private sector through investments in the marine industry, a 20-year economic development strategic plan, and the establishment of a catalyst fund to support small businesses through loans, grants, and credit-backing."

The Bryan-Roach Administration is committed to transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in the government and ensuring that recovery projects are completed as quickly as possible. Visit transparency.vi.gov

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