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Governor Bryan Sends Down Supplemental Budget Request Amid Positive Revenue Projection

Appropriations earmark funding for lighting on Melvin Evans Highway; furniture and equipment for Youth Rehabilitation Center; direct funding for GERS, among other initiatives

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS – Governor Albert Bryan Jr. has submitted to the 34th Legislature a supplemental budget request seeking to appropriate $24,423,321 from the General Fund of the Fiscal Year budget to be distributed to 13 Government of the Virgin Islands (GVI) agencies and departments.

According to his transmittal letter to Senate President Donna Frett-Gregory, the funds would be used to pay for outstanding Worker's Compensation payments, judgments, and other claims owed to vendors, to repair and enhance a number of parks and other areas within the Territory, and to purchase a new office on the island of St. Croix for the Lt. Governor's Office.

"The Bryan-Roach Administration has been very austere with its expenditures, and as a result, our revenue remains strong despite the setbacks and economic hardships brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic," Governor Bryan said. "While we find ourselves in this budget-positive position, we have an opportunity to make a number of upgrades and enhancements throughout the Territory."

Of the $24.4 million appropriation, the Governor has earmarked:

- $1.5 million for lighting improvements on Melvin Evans Highway.
- $1.8 million for roadside brush-clearing Territorywide.
- $1 million to renovate the restroom facilities in Downtown Charlotte Amalie.
- $117,000 for thermoplastic pavement markings.
- $300,000 to improve the Eastern Cemetery crypt on St. Thomas.
- $1 million for furniture, equipment and maintenance of the Youth Rehabilitation Center and Group Home.
- $1.5 million for repair of the Frederiksted Waterfront and revitalization of Midre Cummings Park.
- $350,000 for lighting improvements on Strand Street in Frederiksted.

Governor Bryan also has allocated $10 million in direct funding to go to the Government Employees Retirement System.

The Governor's supplemental budget request comes as Office of Management and Budget Director Jenifer O'Neal is projecting a $71 million surplus in the FY 2021 budget, based on projected revenues from GVI agencies that were presented earlier this week at the 2021 Spring Revenue Estimating Conference on St. Thomas.

In her Revenue Forecast before the presentations by the 18 agencies and departments reporting their revenue projections to Governor Bryan and Lt. Governor Tregenza A. Roach Esq., Director O'Neal projected a 2021 Total Gross Revenue of $909,023,773, compared with the legislative appropriation of $838,933,534.

"As a result of our administration's efforts, the Government of the Virgin Islands can make good on longstanding obligations and realize additional revenue without having to add fees or raise taxes," Governor Bryan said, specifically noting the administration's repayment of the 8% wage cuts.

"After nine years of all kinds of different schemes to pay back the 8 percent owed to government employees, this administration is in a financial position make those employees whole," the Governor said.

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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