Government of the United States Virgin Islands

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For Immediate Release:

Building the Fleet of the Future: Historic Procurement of 23 Electric Vehicles Catalyzes Territorial Electrification Efforts



U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS— The developed world is the midst of a transportation renaissance not seen since the Ford Model T first rolled off the assembly line in 1908. Currently, every major automaker in the world has begun diversifying vehicle offerings away from exclusively internal combustion engines and shifting to mass producing all-electric vehicles. The Virgin Islands will not be late to the global Transportation Electrification party following the Central Government and VIWAPA taking delivery of the largest bulk procurement of electric vehicles in the Virgin Islands history. In total 23 base-level Tesla Model Ys and Model 3s will joining the fleet and begin navigating the roads across the territory. The vehicles will be positioned across multiple agencies with 15 vehicles assigned to the central government and 8 vehicles joining the VIWAPA fleet. As a result of this procurement, The Virgin Islands Energy Office will possess the first exclusively electrified fleet within the GVI. The VIEO intends to utilize the electrified fleet to demonstrate the viability of fully EV fleets within the territory through a wide variety of educational campaigns.

Under the Bryan-Roach administration the VIEO and VIWAPA have sought out and been awarded over **$2 million dollars** in federal grants thru the US Department of Interior Energizing Insular Communities fund to enable innovative procurements that will catalyze the electrification of the government fleet vehicles and provide a robust network of strategically located charging stations. This federal funding support has bolstered the GVI's bulk buying power which created access to electric vehicle supply chain in a high demand market. In the near future the goal will be to enhance the local supply chain of vehicles in the territory, not just for government procurement but for consumer adoption as well.

The Virgin Islands remote island location increases our exposure to the risks of the volatile fuel commodity market both through the

cost of the raw material and the logistics cost to deliver it to our shores. With price at the pump exceeding $6.00 per gallon across the territory in recent months, the real world effects of being beholden to a singular commodity to meet our transportation needs have already taken form.



This historic procurement and transition is as much economic as it is innovative. While it is expected that some may question the investment in electric vehicles, which historically carry a higher sticker price, the Virgin Islands Energy Office has prioritized due diligence in objectively quantifying the cost-benefit of this investment. Through an engagement with Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Secunda Family Foundation, and the Electrification Coalition the VIEO has been developing a Territory-wide transportation electrification road map which includes economic analysis of converting vehicles across the GVI fleet. The results of the analysis confirmed that despite the current cost of electricity in the territory the acquisition and operation of electric vehicles can offer significant savings in vehicle ownership when compared to traditional gas vehicles. These savings are realized through the combination of the lower fueling cost electrical charging and the significantly reduced maintenance needs and cost.

Under Bryan-Roach administration the Virgin Islands Energy Office, Department of Property and Procurement, and the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority have been strategically preparing the Virgin Islands for a sustainable transportation transformation, and the recent surges in fuel cost have further emphasized the need to expedite this transition. As a remote island nation, reducing the dependence of imported and volatile fossil fuels is critical to bolstering economic and societal sustainability.

