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Everyone Should Pitch in for Successful Reopening on Territory to Leisure Travelers on June 1, Says Tourism Commissioner Joseph Boschulte

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USVI Tourism Commissioner Joseph Boschulte By. DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

Departemnt of Tourism Commissioner Joseph Boschulte is calling for all hands on deck across the Virgin Islands in order for the reopening of the territory to leisure visitors to be safe and successful.

Delivering closing remarks during a meeting of the Virgin Islands Legislature's Committee on Culture, Historic Preservation and Aging this week, Mr. Boschulte said for the reopening on June 1 to be seamless, "We need everybody to collaborate and work as we have been doing in our community, which is (demonstrated) by our COVID-19 success rate."

The commissioner, who was confident that the territory is prepared for the reentry of leisure guests, said the government cannot be solely responsible for powering up the Virgin Islands' economy, while maintaining a safe and healthy environment.

He saluted Dept. of Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion for leading the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) mitigation process while the borders of the Virgin Islands remained open during the pandemic. "We have to remember that this is a public health emergency, and we are guided by the professional judgment of the Department of Health," he stated. "Commissioner Encarnacion and her team have expertly created the infrastructure and capacity the Territory now has to prevent, screen, test and treat as we adjust to the COVID-19 'new normal.'"

Stating that the decision to reopen was a multifaceted one, Mr. Boschulte thanked Governor Albert Bryan, the team at the Office of the Governor, Members of the Legislature, other government departments, the Virgin Islands Hotel and Tourism Association and the business and local communities for contributing to overarching policy and best practices to reduce the risk of COVID-19, according to D.O.T.

The results are comprehensive health and safety guidelines that provide guidance to visitors and tourism stakeholders, the Dept. of Tourism said.

A series of informational flyers have already been posted to www.usviupdate.com, where detailed health and safety guidance for service providers will also be updated. "We have a commitment to protect our residents' safety, well-being, and livelihoods, and we want our visitors to have full assurance that they can feel safe during their stay," said Mr. Boschulte.

The commissioner thanked Senator Myron Jackson and the Committee on Culture, Historic Preservation and Aging for their oversight; convening the hearing to discuss COVID-19 protocols for reopening the historic towns of Charlotte Amalie, Christiansted, Frederiksted and Cruz Bay to visitors; and addressing the overall readiness of the Territory.