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Averil George Named DHS Commissioner Nominee; Taxpayers to Receive \$10 Million Refunds

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Governor Albert Bryan and DHS Commissioner Nominee Averil George at Gov't House in St. Thomas on Monday. By. GOVERNMENT HOUSE, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

Governor Albert Bryan announced on Monday the nomination of Averil George as the new commissioner of the V.I. Department of Human Services during his weekly briefing at Government House on St. Thomas. The nomination comes after [Kimberley Causey-Gomez's resignation as the commissioner](#) amidst criticism over her management of the department.

“Averil brings a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to our community, making her the ideal candidate to lead this critical agency,” stated Governor Bryan. Expressing her gratitude, Ms. George thanked the governor and acknowledged former Commissioner Kimberley Causey-Gomez

for ensuring a seamless transition.

In addition to the nomination, the governor announced the distribution of \$10 million in income tax refunds, which he said should already be in recipients' mailboxes. These refunds are intended for taxpayers who adhered to the filing deadline of April 18, 2022.

The Consortium confirmed the resignation of Causey-Gomez in August, which came on the heels of pointed Senate criticism that charged her with inefficiencies in managing the sprawling department.

The governor named Ms. Causey-Gomez as commissioner [in April 2019](#). At the time, she was described as someone with a "proven record as an effective leader," who would "effectuate the changes needed to stabilize DHS and ensure the efficient delivery of services for our young children, seniors, and residents with disabilities who rely on the department." Mr. Bryan further stated that Ms. Causey-Gomez came equipped with the "intimate knowledge of the department from her experience there" and was ready "to hit the ground running."

However, her tenure as commissioner faced many challenges. One significant issue was the [death of young Aaron Benjamin Jr.](#), which led to [sharp criticism](#). The department had failed the boy, whose father had made many appeals to the DHS regarding mistreatment that his children faced from their mother and her boyfriend.