

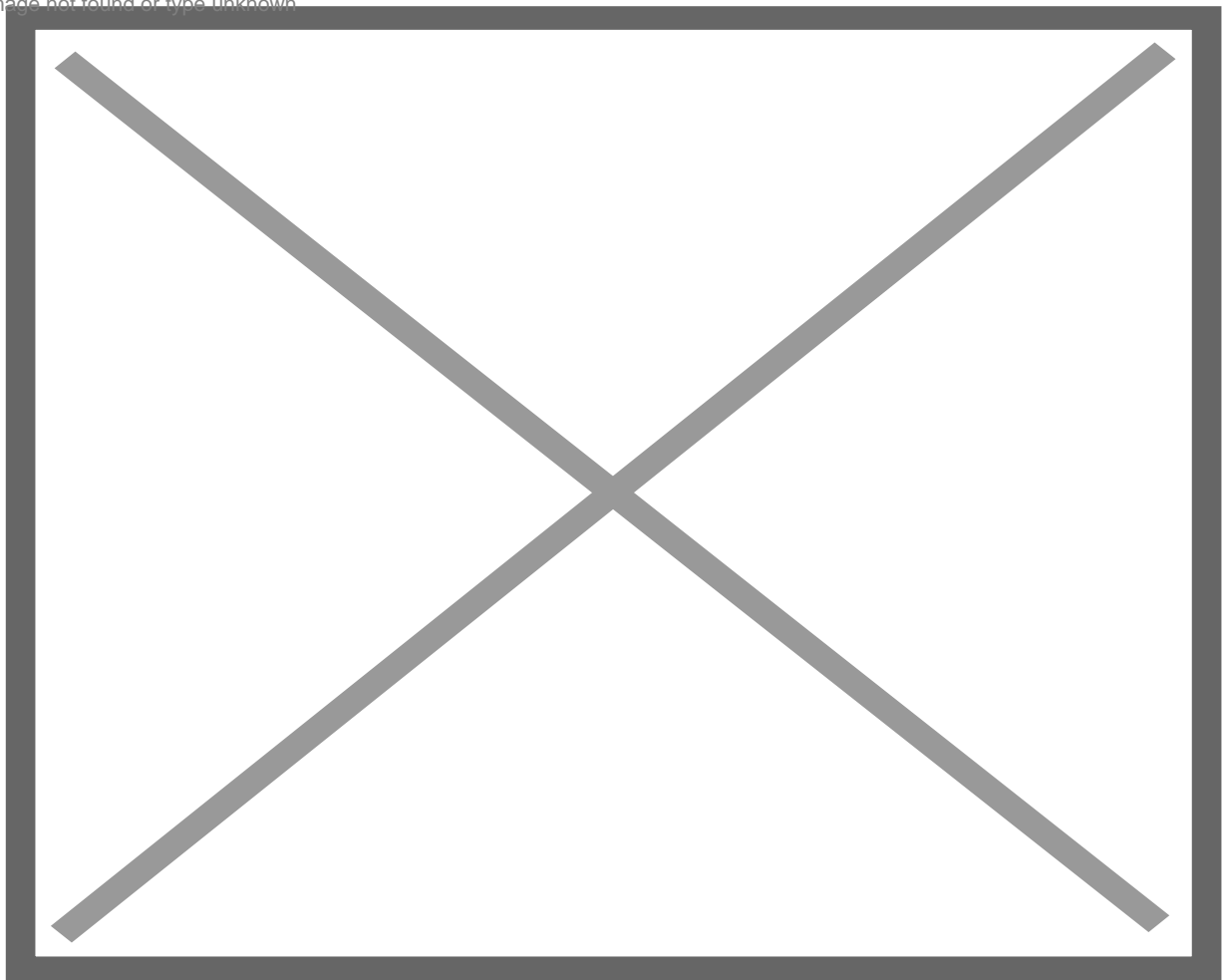
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While Bryan Warns St. Croix Vendors Against Bottled Water Price Hikes, Bolques Calls for DLCA Price Freeze

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Senator-at-large Angel Bolques Jr. on Tuesday urgently called for a price freeze on all water sales on St. Croix amid the ongoing water contamination issue. During a press briefing on the same Tuesday, Governor Albert Bryan Jr. addressed the situation, saying, “We are asking water vendors to maintain reasonable prices on this essential commodity.”

The governor warned against exploiting the situation, asserting, “We will not hesitate to penalize and punish anybody who has taken advantage of our residents in this current situation because it’s very serious.”

While Mr. Bryan made an appeal to retailers, Mr. Bolques sought a more direct intervention from the executive branch. “Given the critical importance of water to human survival and health, I am calling on Governor Albert Bryan Jr. to direct the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs to institute a price freeze on all water sales on the island of St. Croix,” the senator stated in his press release. “This price freeze should encompass bottled water, water hauled for human consumption, and water filtration products.”

Mr. Bolques emphasized the necessity of this action to guarantee equitable access to safe water for all St. Croix residents, particularly seniors who, he said, “may be experiencing heightened anxiety and vulnerability due to this water crisis.”

Highlighting the essential right of St. Croix residents, Mr. Bolques added that they deserve “peace of mind regarding their fair access to clean and affordable drinking water,” a goal he believes a Dept. of Licensing and Consumer Affairs-imposed pricing freeze would achieve.

Pledging cooperation, the senator echoed Governor Bryan’s promise of a collaborative solution to St. Croix’s water issues, vowing to collaborate with his fellow legislators and the executive branch to overcome the Water and Power Authority’s present challenges.