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Governor Bryan Addresses Cash Flow Concerns: Government Not Broke

Governor confirms temporary cash shortage, assures no cause for alarm

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Governor Albert Bryan Jr. By. V.I. LEGISLATURE

Despite confirming that “we’re down to two [or] three days cash,” Governor Albert Byran Jr. has made it abundantly clear that “the government isn’t broke.” Instead, he told reporters that current cash flow issues are characteristic of this time of year.

Concerns remain on when the government will be able to pay outstanding debts to several vendors, an issue that Mr. Bryan says he is well aware of. Nevertheless, he assured his constituents that there is “absolutely no reason for alarm,” and expects that cash flow troubles will

be done and dusted in the coming weeks. “We fully expect that our revenue collection will align with our projections in the next month or two as we've been doing every single year since the administration started,” stated the governor.

Mr. Bryan [had sought at least \\$50 million](#) through an amendment to the [current line of credit](#), but the measure was not brought to the floor during the last Committee of the Whole in December.

Referring to the current state of affairs as a “short-term problem,” Governor Bryan says his administration remains resolute on identifying a solution and is currently working with the 35th Legislature to do just that. According to the governor, there are at least three available options, including establishing an entirely new line of credit with the banks based on the justification that “this is something that all governments have.”

Other options, which also require the backing of the Senate, include a loan from the government’s rainy-day fund. “We have over \$20 million in our personal rainy day fund ... to make sure that the government [has] money for days like these,” he explained.

Conversely, the governor stated that the Legislature may also approve the use of funds from the existing \$100 million line of credit earmarked for recovery purposes. “We could just add a clause to say you can use \$20 to \$50 million of this for short-term expenses,” he suggested.

Referring to the cash flow problems as “irritating, annoying and debilitating to the vendors,” Mr. Bryan suggested that legislation may be brought forward during next week’s meeting of the Senate Committee of the Whole “so we can get something passed.”

The territory's lamented that current cash flow problems are only exacerbated by inherited debts. Prior administrations, he said, failed to pay several obligations including those to the GERS. “We’re trying to pay 40-year-old debts such as retroactive wages,” remarked Mr. Bryan, saying that his administration continues to “try to be a responsible government by putting money in the hands of the people where it belongs.”

In the interim, Mr. Bryan promised Virgin Islanders that his administration is “focusing on developing a long-term solution to stabilize our finances, especially during periods when our government expenses outpace our revenue collection.”