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Senate Forms Special Committee on Abandoned Properties in Virgin Islands

Initiative seeks to restore derelict buildings and enhance community development

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An announcement from Senator Novelle Francis on Friday afternoon informed that a legislative subcommittee has been formed “to review and formulate a strategy to address the proposed Virgin Islands Abandoned and Derelict Real Property Conservatorship Act,” which had been presented to the legislature by Governor Albert Bryan Jr.

The draft bill, which Governor Bryan has made a legislative priority in his second term, aims to revitalize the territory’s historical towns by [creating a legal framework](#) for derelict and abandoned properties to come under the stewardship of a court-appointed conservator, who would make improvements to the property in order to restore it to a usable state.

However, the bill from Government House has been pre-empted by lawmakers, as senators have already “submitted drafting requests for similar pieces of legislation to the Legislature’s Office of Legal Counsel,” according to Senator Francis’ announcement.

The newly-formed subcommittee, the senate president said, “gives us an opportunity to develop a comprehensive, Senate-led approach to definitive legislation to address the territory’s abandoned and derelict properties in ways that respect both our community and development,” Senator Francis said.

Apart from Senator Francis, members of the subcommittee include Senators Milton Potter, Kenneth Gittens, Alma Francis Heyliger, and Donna Frett-Gregory.

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