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Bryan Says AG's Office Isn't Only Gov't Arm That's Churned Leaders

In addressing AG turnover, Bryan references similar shifts in leadership within Finance and Property & Procurement departments

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Governor Albert Bryan, Jr. By. GOV'T HOUSE

Governor Albert Bryan on Monday said the dismissal of Attorney General Ariel Smith was predicated on "differences of approach," a response that lacked detail as he continues to face scrutiny over the firing of yet another AG. Ms. Smith was let go after just under a year in office.

Ms. Smith was tapped as the territory's Attorney General after the sudden departure of her predecessor for the post. Denise George was fired on [New Year's Eve in 2022](#), just after news broke that she had filed a massive lawsuit against JPMorgan Chase, the largest bank in the

country, reportedly without first informing the governor. That lawsuit would ultimately lead to a [\\$75 million settlement](#) from JPMorgan, reached a month before the trial was scheduled to begin.

With a second attorney general following Ms. George out the door at the V.I. Department of Justice in such quick succession, even as the department grapples with major cash flow issues, reporters were not satisfied with the governor's terse response. Asked a second time for details on the decision-making process behind Ms. Smith's firing, however, Governor Bryan was equally as non-committal. "We have a difference of approach," he said in response to the Consortium. "When I part ways with someone is when philosophically, they're not aligned with what I think the administration should be aligned with."

Earlier in the Q&A segment, he stated, "I don't really like to discuss when we separate with individuals...we just have a difference of opinion on matters."

The governor noted that there had been churn in other cabinet positions during his tenure in office. "We had three finance commissioners as well too...we had two property and procurement commissioners too." He noted that members of the public often call for the dismissal of high-ranking public officials that they perceive to be ineffective in their jobs, but "when I do make a decision...people balk about it."

Governor Bryan praised Ms. Smith for her efforts on behalf of the administration, but mused that perhaps she was not the right fit for the job.