

logo not found or type unknown

## Watch: Bryan Calls For Urgent Funding for WAPA During Special Press Briefing

**With WAPA under financial strain, Governor Bryan to champion resolution of unpaid dues by government entities**

Government / **Published On April 22, 2024 06:18 AM /**

Ernice Gilbert **April 22, 2024**

Image not found or type unknown



WAPA's Richmond Power Plant. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

**Last updated at 12:47 p.m. on Monday, April 22, 2024:** *Following today's press briefing, Mr. Bryan told the Consortium that [he had sought to call the Senate into session](#), but opted to declare a state of emergency due to the urgency of the matter.*

**Original Story:** Governor Albert Bryan will host a special press briefing on Monday at 10:00 a.m., where he is expected to seek Senate approval for millions in funding for the V.I. Water and Power Authority, which is struggling to make debt payments, according to people with knowledge of the matter.

The governor told the Consortium Saturday that the press conference will focus on energy, and that the funding sought by WAPA isn't new money, but rather what is owed to the authority. "The government just needs to pay the bill," he said, referring to several government agencies that owe WAPA millions, including the hospitals and the V.I. Waste Management Authority. "WAPA isn't asking any more money, just for the government to pay the bills."

WAPA CEO Andrew Smith has made several attempts for at least \$7 million from the government, according to people with knowledge of the matter, but has met resistance.

The press briefing is coming on the heels of the authority's rationing of power across the islands, in what WAPA has blamed on bad weather and "[unforeseen circumstances](#)." According to informed sources, these unforeseen circumstances relate to WAPA's inability to meet financial obligations to some of its suppliers, including payments to Aggreko LLC for use of its propane operating units.

The Senate Committee on Budget, Appropriations and Finance has scheduled an emergency meeting on Wednesday to discuss "the current financial crisis of the V.I. Water and Power Authority resulting in territory-wide power outages," according to the legislative calendar. Mr. Smith, Office of Management and Budget Director Jenifer O'Neal, and Finance Commissioner Kevin McCurdy are all scheduled to appear, as are the CEOs of the Juan F. Luis and Schneider Regional hospitals, Douglas Koch and Tina Commissiong. Waste Management Authority CEO Roger Merrit has also been summoned to testify before the committee on April 24.