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Francis Heyliger Vows to Overturn Governor's Vetoes on WAPA Bills

Senator cites "disregard for collaborative governance" as motivation for seeking legislative override

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Senator Alma Francis Heyliger By. V.I. LEGISLATURE

“I pledge to lead the charge in pursuing overrides,” said Senator Alma Francis Heyliger on Monday, in a press statement condemning Governor Bryan’s recent vetoes of the three WAPA-related measures to come out of the 35th Legislature’s recent [emergency session](#) at the end of April.

The vetoes, [according to Governor Bryan](#), were because each of the bills that were sent up for his consideration were either redundant, ineffective, or an unacceptable curtailment of executive

power.

Lawmakers, as can be expected, disagreed with that perspective. Governor Bryan's stance was "quite sad," Senator Gittens said shortly after news of the vetoes broke.

Francis Heyliger, in Monday's press statement, said that the governor was demonstrating a "disconcerting pattern of disregard for collaborative governance and accountable leadership" in his reluctance to accede to the remedies crafted by lawmakers to address "the protracted crisis at WAPA."

According to Francis Heyliger, Governor Bryan's "refusal to consider any solutions beyond cash infusions and appropriations perpetuates a cycle of unaccountability that harms the people of the Virgin Islands." She pointed to the recent 12-hour blackouts as proof that the continued propping up of WAPA with no-strings-attached allocations is not a viable solution.

Arguing that Mr. Bryan is blocking efforts to hold WAPA and himself accountable for the use of public funds, and is indeed usurping legislative authority, Francis Heyliger said that she will attempt to convince her colleagues to override the vetoes at the next opportunity.

Having passed with the votes of 12 senators, the veto overrides are not expected to encounter significant difficulty. In a conversation with Consortium journalists, Francis Heyliger indicated that she has already begun canvassing her colleagues for support, and has already received positive responses from a number of her fellow lawmakers.