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Christiansted Bypass Renamed After Longtime DPW Veteran Behind Point Udall, St. John Roundabout, and Long Bay Projects

Aloy "Wenty" Nielsen's contributions celebrated, including work on Point Udall and St. John Roundabout

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Tuesday's road-naming ceremony, coming as it did during National Public Works Week, could not have been better timed, as the man in the spotlight has dedicated much of his adult life to this very field of service.

Aloy "Wenty" Nielsen, according to Department of Public Works Commissioner Derek Gabriel, has had "his fingerprints all over the Department for over 30 years." And now, the lookout on the Christiansted Bypass bears his name.

Mr. Nielsen's legacy of service in helping to create public infrastructure has spanned all three islands. Mr. Gabriel named the construction at Point Udall on St. Croix, a roundabout on St. John, and the Long Bay Revitalization on St. Thomas as just three of many examples.

"It's really the volume of work over his lifetime is what we're really honoring," said Jomo McClean, DPW's Highway Program Management and MC for the ceremony. "Without his vision, his patience, his leadership, you know, maybe we would not be here today," Mr. McClean continued, noting how Mr. Nielsen's key role in fostering a positive relationship with key federal partners has allowed the department access to funds for larger projects such as the very bypass that now bears his name.?

According to Senate President Novelle Francis, Mr. Nielsen's work on the bypass was that of a "quiet superhero, working behind the scenes tirelessly to get the job done." His persistence through "decades of delay and setbacks," Mr. Francis said, helped ensure that the Christiansted Bypass project would come to fruition.?

Meanwhile, Lieutenant Governor Tregenza Roach remarked on the noticeable shift in focus when it comes to choosing who to honor and recognize in the territory. "We're now witnessing, not a renaming but the naming for the first time of structures for people who are relevant and have provided so much value to this territory," he said. "Even better, we are naming places and locations for people who are alive," he continued, noting that the community now has the pleasure of seeing them respond to the honor bestowed on them for their service.

?Indeed, seeing his name on the sign erected at the bypass "fills me with humility and joy," said Mr. Nielsen during his remarks to the small crowd of officials and well-wishers who gathered to witness this naming ceremony. "I really like the sound of that," he joked, after testing out the new name – the Aloy "Wenty" Nielsen Bypass. Recounting the history of the bypass from its origins in a 1972 study, Mr. Nielsen called the project "a testament to the power of persistence and cooperation."?

He recalled the initial suspicions of the public, a sentiment which transformed over time once the bypass began improving the lives of St. Croix residents. In his remarks, Governor Albert Bryan Jr. admitted to being among the doubters. "I used to be one of those people that used to say it'll never happen, but now we're seeing things come to fruition through determination," he said.

However, like with Governor Bryan, "what was once met with skepticism is now embraced by residents and business owners alike, easing traffic woes and preserving the charm of historic Christiansted," Mr. Nielsen declared. Even so, the impact of the bypass went deeper than just a traffic solution, he added. "It became a hub for recreation, with folks using it for exercise and leisure, showcasing the unexpected versatility of infrastructure," Mr. Nielsen said, driving his point home. Senator Francis in his remarks testified to the veracity of Mr. Nielsen's claims, noting that he has enjoyed lunch at the bypass several times.

Though filled with pride at the successful project that was named in his honor, Mr. Nielsen told the audience that the glory did not just belong to him alone. "It's a testament to the dedication of all those who work tirelessly to make this project a reality."?

The Aloy "Wenty" Nielsen Bypass, said Mr. Nielsen, "not only connects us physically but also symbolizes the spirit of progress and cooperation in our community."