

GVI Fellows Program Under Scrutiny as Participant Calls Finance Commissioner's Testimony False

Finance Commissioner Kevin McCurdy faces pushback after a fellow publicly refutes his claim that all program participants would be hired, prompting lawmakers to seek verification

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Finance Commissioner Kevin McCurdy testified before the Committee on Budget Appropriations & Finance on Tuesday, Sept. 3rd, 2024. By. V.I. LEGISLATURE

After his positive assertions regarding the GVI Fellows program were almost immediately rebutted by a participant on social media, lawmakers asked Finance Commissioner Kevin McCurdy to verify the statements he was making under oath.

[Launched in November 2021](#), the program aims to recruit young people into public service, giving them opportunities to learn and be paid while being trained.

During testimony before the Committee on Budget, Appropriations and Finance on Tuesday, Mr. McCurdy updated lawmakers on the program for budding professionals, saying that “cohort two will successfully finish the program on September 6, with all participants being hired.” According to one fellow, however, that portion of the finance commissioner’s testimony was an “extreme lie,” according to Devin Boyd, a member of the current cohort of fellows.?

Mr. Boyd shared the livestream of the meeting almost immediately after Mr. McCurdy’s reportedly inaccurate comments, saying that “our two-year tenure was cut months short and we were fed lies that the current administration would hire us 20 GVI Fellows that would be losing their positions early.”

According to Mr. Boyd, the promises of employment never came to pass. “None of us have been contacted about at least a courtesy interview,” he wrote. He says current plans are to fly out of the territory following his anticipated last day on Friday.

Word of Mr. Boyd’s contrary account to Mr. McCurdy’s rosy characterizations reached lawmakers before the meeting’s lunch break, prompting Senator Kenneth Gittens to seek clarity from the finance commissioner. Weeks before, Mr. Gittens attempted to pass [legislation relating to acts of perjury](#) before the Legislature. “When words such as ‘all’ come about, those are words that cause pause for me,” he said. “I’m looking at where you stated that Cohort Two will successfully finish the program on September 6...with all participants being hired....“Were all participants hired?” he asked pointedly.

Acting Director of the Office of Management and Budget Kimika Woods answered in Mr. McCurdy’s stead. “As far as I am aware they are,” she told Senator Gittens. Then, she modulated downwards from the absolute confidence her colleague had previously expressed. To her knowledge, OMB “has been having conversations.” When Senator Gittens asked Mr. McCurdy directly for verification of his assertion, the commissioner countered, “I believe that’s what Director Woods is doing.”?

That did not satisfy the lawmaker. “I ask direct questions to the people who make the statements,” said Senator Gittens, asking again for a response from Mr. McCurdy who provided testimony on behalf of the finance team. “Were all hired, or will they be hired?” he asked, informing Mr. McCurdy and Ms. Woods that he received “information differently.” Again, it was Ms. Woods who replied “yes.”

Before moving on to other lines of questioning, Senator Gittens advised the financial team that “at least one of those cohorts has already stated that they have not. So I’ll ask you to verify that.”?