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'We Don't Want' Illegal Immigrants Who Commit Crime in USVI, Bryan Says; ICE Raids Haven't Yielded Significant Deportations

Bryan stated that ICE enforcement in the USVI has not led to a significant increase in deportations. While he believes the agency is targeting criminal offenders, he acknowledged growing fears among both documented and undocumented immigrants.

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Janeke Simon **February 14, 2025**

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ICE raids on the US mainland.

Governor Albert Bryan Jr. shared insights from a recent meeting with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials, stating that "they've not really had any more deportees, any significant jump in deportees since they've been doing the checks."

The governor made these remarks during a Public Finance Authority board meeting earlier this week, where he discussed ongoing recovery efforts following a presentation by Adrienne Williams-Octalien, director of the Office of Disaster Recovery.

Addressing public concerns, Governor Bryan said the territory is cooperating with federal immigration authorities. "A lot of people think we don't support ICE. We've actually been to DC every year of our administration asking for more support," he stated. Recent guidance from the governor's office instructs local officials [not to aid federal authorities](#) with immigration enforcement activities.

While recognizing that many undocumented immigrants integrate into the community and live otherwise law-abiding lives, Governor Bryan expressed concerns about criminal elements. "There is an element of that community that is into the drugs and the guns and the trafficking and the human trafficking. We don't want that in our Virgin Islands," he declared.

Governor Bryan noted that ICE's enforcement actions primarily target criminal offenders, but acknowledged the broader impact on the community. "I think that's what they're mainly focused on," he said, referring to the agency's priorities. However, he lamented the wider repercussions, stating, "Parents are afraid to send their kids to school now, and workers are afraid to come out who are not documented – some even who are documented [are] afraid to come."

Recognizing that the current tight labor market could complicate recovery efforts, Governor Bryan indicated that his administration will monitor developments closely. "It's going to be interesting to see how the immigration story plays out here in the next couple of years," he remarked.