

logo not found or type unknown

## Elderly Man, in Fear For His Life, Gives Thousands of Dollars to Alleged Extortionist; Police Arrest Suspect

**Police say the 60-year-old victim was coerced into withdrawing thousands of dollars under threats of violence from Jose Bermudez, who allegedly demanded recurring payments tied to a disputed vehicle sale. Bermudez now faces multiple felony charges.**

Crime / **Published On May 22, 2025 05:05 PM /**

Staff Consortium **May 22, 2025**

Image not found or type unknown



**Mugshot of Jose Bermudez. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.**

ST. CROIX — A man is facing serious charges after allegedly coercing an elderly resident into repeated, unwanted financial transactions under threats of violence.

According to the V.I. Police Department, the incident came to light on Monday when an officer on foot patrol near the Christiansted Credit Union was approached by a man seeking help. The 60-

year-old, who police said “appeared to be in distress and was visibly shaken,” told the officer that an individual known as “Papi”—later identified as Jose Bermudez—had brought him to the bank and demanded \$1,000, threatening to “damage” him if he refused.

The man told police that Bermudez was waiting outside in a blue Nissan Versa, which he described to the officer. Spotting the vehicle circling the credit union several times, the officer radioed for backup. Eventually, the driver approached the officer, claiming someone inside the bank had bought a truck from him and now refused to pay. The man then returned to his car and drove off.

Responding officers intercepted the vehicle on Company Street near Luncheria Bar and Restaurant, where the driver was confirmed to be Jose Bermudez.

The elderly man recounted to officers that the ordeal began that same morning around 8:00 a.m., when Bermudez appeared at his home as he was leaving for work. Bermudez allegedly demanded money again, threatening to “damage” him if he did not comply. The man said he felt so intimidated that he wrote a \$1,000 check, dated May 21, and was preparing to cash it at the credit union when police intervened.

According to the victim, the threats and demands had begun in March when he was first introduced to Bermudez. The two initially discussed the sale of a truck for \$1,500 and a trailer for \$4,000. The man said he made it clear he was not interested in purchasing the trailer due to a lack of funds.

Days later, Bermudez allegedly returned and urged him to take out a loan to buy the vehicle. The man told police he borrowed \$3,000, using half to purchase the truck. A bill of sale for the vehicle was shown to officers. He emphasized that the trailer was never part of the agreement.

Despite this, Bermudez reportedly returned to demand more money—for the trailer and for his sick brother in Atlanta, the man said. Under pressure, he was taken to the credit union and withdrew \$2,000, providing police with a bank statement showing a \$2,680 withdrawal that day.

The pattern reportedly continued throughout March and April, with the man producing bank statements reflecting at least three additional withdrawals totaling \$980. He told police that Bermudez threatened violence each time he hesitated or considered reporting the matter.

In one particularly troubling incident, the victim said Bermudez came to his home, removed the registration sticker from the truck he had sold him, placed it on his own vehicle, and left.

Bermudez was arrested following the traffic stop and charged with extortion, kidnapping for extortion, and disturbance of the peace by threats. Unable to post the \$75,000 bail, he was remanded into custody to await his Advice of Rights hearing.

Court records confirm that Bermudez appeared before Magistrate Yolán C. Brow Ross. However, as of Thursday morning, details of the hearing had not been made available. His next court appearance is scheduled for June 11.