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Virgin Islands' \$62.5M Clean Energy Grant Untouched by Federal Legislation

As federal legislation raises concerns elsewhere, the V.I. Energy Office confirms its \$62.5 million Solar for All ah We grant remains unaffected, with immediate EPA funding supporting hiring, consulting, and program development in its planning phase.

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The \$62.5 million Solar for All ah We (SAW) grant awarded to the Virgin Islands Energy Office by the Environmental Protection Agency remains unaffected by recent congressional action, according to a release issued Friday.

Despite the passage of a domestic policy bill in the U.S. House of Representatives on Thursday, the funds allocated to VIEO in December 2024 have not been rescinded. According to the release,

the funds “remain available for drawdown,” and VIEO is maintaining regular communication with the EPA.

Staff from VIEO and the EPA are in contact on at least a weekly basis, and regularly scheduled meetings are ongoing. The agency has detailed its intended use of the funds to the EPA, including covering the wages of several newly created positions to staff the SAW program. The release states that these staffing plans are actively underway, with onboarding expected to begin shortly for several critical roles.

According to the VIEO release, the Virgin Islands’ SAW Program “has the power to transform the territory’s residential energy landscape, addressing residents’ high electricity costs while creating new opportunities for energy resilience and reliable, affordable, clean power for communities most in need.”

The program will build upon the existing Solar Plus Financing pilot and aims to increase solar accessibility by offering residential-serving community solar to the territory’s most underserved residents. This approach seeks to expand access to affordable and reliable electricity.

Through the SAW program, VIEO said it will offer eligible applicants access to low-interest loans for residential rooftop and community solar projects that include battery storage. The EPA has made funds immediately available to support the early administrative aspects of the program's one-year planning period. These include the hiring of essential staff, such as the SAW program director, securing consulting services for program design, and developing the technical designs required for the five-year grant performance period.