

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Governor Bryan Pushes Back on Roach's Call to Rescind Raises, Cites Legislative Inaction and Legal Mandate

In a detailed statement, Governor Bryan defends the integrity of the V.I. Public Officials Compensation Commission and says the Legislature's failure to act allowed the raises to become law.

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Governor Alber Bryan Jr. By. GOV'T HOUSE.

Governor Albert Bryan Jr. has issued an official statement following an [announcement on Tuesday](#) by Lt. Governor Roach, who called on the governor to rescind salary increases implemented by the administration based on a recommendation from the V.I. Public

Officials Compensation Commission.

Mr. Roach has said he believes the commission was compromised by Mr. Bryan's [appointment of Haldane Davies](#)—who served as both chair and member of the VIPOCC—as director of the Bureau of Economic Research.

Below is the governor's full statement, issued Wednesday afternoon:

“The issue of public official compensation has long been a difficult and often contentious subject, which is why the Legislature chose to establish an independent body to take on the responsibility of addressing it fairly and transparently.

“Through Acts 7878 and 8384, the Legislature created the Virgin Islands Public Officials Compensation Committee and clearly outlined the roles and responsibilities of all branches of government in the process. The law also provided the Legislature with the authority to accept, amend, or reject the Committee’s recommendations. At the same time, it included a provision—added through amendment—that allowed those recommendations to take effect automatically if the Legislature took no action within 90 days. That provision was not imposed by the executive branch. It was drafted and passed by the Legislature.

“I believe in accountability, transparency, and following the law. In this case, the law was followed exactly as written.

“What is disappointing is that this matter has drawn attention away from the work this administration is doing every day to improve the lives of Virgin Islanders. We are tackling long-standing challenges, advancing infrastructure projects, expanding access to affordable housing, and keeping our commitment to pay long-overdue retroactive wages. That is where our focus should remain.

“It is equally disheartening to hear commentary that seeks to discredit the process and question the integrity of those who served on the Commission. The law called for nine members to be appointed—three by the Governor, three by the President of the Legislature, and three by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. These were Virgin Islands professionals who answered the call to serve in a process created to rise above politics. They carried out a difficult and thankless task, and their work should be respected. The Commission completed its report, submitted it to the legislature on August 13, 2024, in accordance with the law, and the legislature took no action within the time period mandated. Up to that point, there was no involvement from the Office of the Governor.

“There have also been unfair attempts to politicize the appointment of Dr. Haldane Davies, one of the Commission members, who now serves in this administration. Based on his educational background, work ethic, leadership qualities and professional experience, Dr. Davies was selected to fill the vacant position of Director of the Bureau of Economic Research. Notably, these same professional qualifications are exactly the reason he was chosen in 2022 by the then-senate president to serve on the compensation commission.

“The entire purpose of creating the VIPOCC was to prevent the kind of political maneuvering that occurred in 2006 with the passage of Act 6905, when the Legislature

increased salaries for the Governor by \$70,000; the Lieutenant Governor by \$50,000, and its own members by \$20,000 without public input or independent review. That moment called for reform, and the VIPOCC was the Legislature's solution.

"To now turn away from that reform and cast doubt on those who served in good faith is a step backward and suggests that we are willing to go back to a process that brought about Act 6905. It reflects a reluctance to take responsibility and a willingness to erode public trust for political convenience.

"I remain committed to doing the work the people elected me to do. That includes standing by the laws we enact, defending the integrity of public servants who serve with honor, and continuing to move the Virgin Islands forward through action, not distraction."

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