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Jenifer Matarangas-King Nominated as Commissioner of Tourism Following Boschulte's Departure

After decades in Virgin Islands telecommunications and public affairs, Jenifer Matarangas-King has been nominated to lead the DOT, bringing experience from Viya and legislative relations as she prepares to succeed outgoing commissioner Joseph Boschulte.

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Jenifer Matarangas-King.

ST. THOMAS — Governor Albert Bryan Jr. has named longtime Virgin Islands communications executive Jenifer Matarangas-King as his nominee for Commissioner of Tourism, following the departure of Joseph Boschulte, who led the department through a record-breaking era for the territory's visitor economy.

Governor Bryan praised Boschulte for his leadership, citing historic growth in airlift, cruise arrivals, hotel development, and inter-island travel. “Under his leadership, the Virgin Islands reached historic visitor numbers, strengthened partnerships with major carriers and cruise lines, and elevated our brand, not only in the sports world, but around the world,” he said.

Boschulte’s departure comes at a time of expansion within the tourism sector, and the governor noted the importance of continuity. “We’re going to be transitioning a smooth period where we could have Joe really continue to boost our tourism product as he pursues other priorities,” Bryan said.

Introducing Matarangas-King, Governor Bryan said, “Jenifer is a proud Crucian with more than 28 years of experience in communications, public affairs, and executive leadership... I have every confidence that she will lead this Department of Tourism with distinction... I know she will do well. She used to be my boss.”

Matarangas-King accepted the nomination with gratitude: “It is with deep honor and sincere gratitude that I accept the nomination to serve as the next commissioner of the USVI Department of Tourism. I am committed to working collaboratively... to continue to celebrate the spirit and the rich culture of our remarkable islands.”

Asked about her tourism policy priorities, Matarangas-King stated, “I would prefer not to make too many blanket statements, because I haven’t had a chance to go into the department and assess from what I know from outside.” She added, “I have been in organizations where people come in with set ideas about what to change before they even know what’s going on, and I would prefer not to do that.”

In explaining her qualifications, she shared: “In my previous role, I was with the company that’s now called ONE Communications, previously Viya, for 26 years... At one point I was director of business office, I was also president of cable TV from 2005 to 2010 in the USVI and the BVI... and for the last 15 years, I served as Vice President of Public Relations and Governmental Affairs.”

Matarangas-King holds degrees from Smith College and Howard University, including completed doctoral coursework, and has served on the St. Croix Hotel and Tourism Association board. “I don’t think I’m an unknown entity,” she told reporters.

Governor Bryan noted her past role in resolving a major labor strike at Innovative and overseeing the unification of broadband, cable, and telephone services. He also credited her with helping launch the MTV Caribbean channel TEMPO in the territory.

The administration expects Matarangas-King’s confirmation to proceed in the weeks ahead as tourism efforts continue to expand, including developments at Mahogany Run, the Carambola Golf Course, and initiatives aimed at improving local excursion infrastructure, water taxis, and direct flights to St. Croix.