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Bryan Administration Backs \$5 Million Racetrack Renovation to Revive Horse Racing on St. Croix

Governor Albert Bryan Jr. has thrown his support behind a \$5 million measure to repair and reopen the Randall “Doc” James Racetrack, pledging to end years of delays and restore horse racing as a cultural and economic mainstay on St. Croix.

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Governor Albert Bryan Jr. has announced Friday his administration’s full support for a measure before the Legislature that would allocate \$5 million toward renovations at the Randall “Doc” James Racetrack, with the goal of breaking nearly a decade of delays and restoring horse racing on the island.

The proposal, set to be taken up by lawmakers on Tuesday, October 7, would authorize the Department of Sports, Parks and Recreation to use the funds for immediate repairs. Planned work includes resurfacing the track and upgrading the paddock, both considered essential steps in making racing safe and operational once more.

“For too long, the people of St. Croix have been waiting to hear the sound of hooves pounding once again at the Randall Doc James Racetrack,” Governor Bryan said. “Horse racing was slowed by negotiations and agreements that did not deliver what had been expected. That reality left the industry in limbo, the track idle, and the community understandably frustrated. This administration is committed to breaking that cycle of delays. By supporting this measure, we are making clear that we are ready to act. Horse racing is not just a sport on St. Croix. It is a tradition, a livelihood, and a source of pride for our community.”

Horse racing has been absent on St. Croix since 2016, when agreements were pushed forward with promises of modernized facilities and fresh investment. Those contracts, however, became tied up in disputes that ultimately left the racetrack idle. Bryan said his administration has worked since taking office to resolve the uncertainty left by those arrangements.

“Resolving the challenges created in past years has not been easy,” he explained. “Leadership is about taking responsibility and driving solutions. By identifying available funds, placing this proposal before the Legislature, and making clear that we are ready to move, we are demonstrating that this administration is determined to restore horse racing. Horsemen, trainers, owners, and fans deserve more than words. They deserve action.”

Sports, Parks and Recreation Commissioner Vincent Roberts said his department is ready to begin as soon as the Legislature gives the green light. “This authorization will allow us to address the most urgent needs, making the racetrack surface safe and functional and bringing the paddock up to standard,” Roberts stated. “It is the first step in restoring an industry that has deep cultural and economic significance for St. Croix and the Virgin Islands.”

Governor Bryan noted that the effort is about restoring trust as much as rebuilding infrastructure. “We know the horse racing community has grown frustrated by years of promises without progress,” he said. “This measure is proof that we are serious about delivering results. By moving forward and investing in the future, we are signaling that horse racing will return to St. Croix. This is not talk. This is action.”