

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Bryan Travels to Washington to Advance H-2B Visas, Medicaid Equity, and Marine Industry Concerns

During meetings at the NGA Winter Meeting and the DOI Insular Areas Plenary, Governor Bryan is advocating for H-2B construction visas, Medicaid equity, restoration of the de minimis exemption, and relief from BVI charter yacht fee increases.

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Governor Albert Bryan Jr. speaks with U.S. Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum during a meeting in Washington, D.C., as part of discussions on federal priorities affecting the U.S. Virgin Islands. By. GOV'T HOUSE.

Governor Albert Bryan Jr. is in Washington, D.C., this week to represent the U.S. Virgin Islands at two major federal gatherings, as his administration advances a series of priorities tied to recovery, economic stability, and long-term growth, according to Government House.

The administration said the governor is attending the National Governors Association's annual Winter Meeting and the 2026 Interagency Group on Insular Areas Senior Plenary Session at the U.S. Department of the Interior. The trip is intended to strengthen federal partnerships and press issues central to the territory's continued recovery and development.

"Washington is where decisions are made that shape how fast we rebuild and how fairly the Virgin Islands is treated under federal policy," Governor Bryan said. "We are going to make our case clearly and directly, because our recovery and our residents cannot afford delays, uncertainty, or unequal treatment."

While in Washington, the governor is scheduled to meet with White House Administration officials at the U.S. Department of State and the White House. Government House said those discussions will focus on several priorities, including the need for H-2B visas for skilled construction workers to support rebuilding efforts and keep major projects moving, Medicaid equity to strengthen health care access and ensure fair federal support, and restoration of the de minimis exemption to prevent additional costs tied to low-value shipments and routine imports that affect residents and local businesses.

The administration also said the governor will raise concerns about recent British Virgin Islands charter yacht fee increases, which Government House said threaten regional marine tourism and place new burdens on an industry that supports Virgin Islands jobs and small businesses.

Lieutenant Governor Tregenza A. Roach, Esq., will serve as acting governor while Governor Bryan is off-island. Government House said the governor is scheduled to return to the territory on February 28.