

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Gun Owners Group Says Bryan Firearms Ban Targets Law-Abiding Residents, Raises Civil Rights Concerns

Gun owners group says Governor Albert Bryan Jr.'s executive order restricts licensed carriers without security infrastructure, raises constitutional concerns tied to ongoing DOJ lawsuit, and calls for analysis, funding plan and stakeholder input.

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The Virgin Islands Safe Gun Owners organization is raising strong objections to Governor Albert Bryan Jr.'s executive order [banning guns in most cases in government buildings territory-wide](#), arguing that the measure restricts licensed firearm holders while failing to meaningfully improve security it seeks to strengthen.

In a press release issued Tuesday, VISGO said the order broadly prohibits licensed firearm owners from carrying firearms or ammunition in government buildings and interior offices across the territory. While the group stated it supports safe workplaces, it contends the policy lacks the infrastructure needed to ensure security.

VISGO described the measure as a “paper ban” implemented without a secured-entrance plan, metal detectors, or a funding strategy.

“Governor Bryan has not made government buildings safer; he has made law-abiding citizens more vulnerable. A paper ban without secured entrances, metal detectors, or meaningful screening is not public safety. It is public vulnerability — and it is not common sense, practical, or responsible,” said Kosei Ohno, lead at VISGO.

The organization also challenged how the administration has characterized the policy, rejecting descriptions such as “common sense,” “practical,” or “responsible.” VISGO stated that such terms do not address constitutional requirements or prevent illegal firearms from entering unsecured buildings.

The order comes as the Government of the Virgin Islands is defending a civil-rights lawsuit filed by the U.S. Department of Justice. According to VISGO, the lawsuit alleges that the territory’s firearms licensing practices violate Second Amendment rights. A key issue in the case involves official discretion, including how the Police Commissioner determines what constitutes “good reason,” “proper reason,” or who qualifies as an “improper person.”

VISGO said the appropriate response to the lawsuit should be compliance, transparency, and objective standards, rather than policies that rely on discretionary approvals.

“Arbitrary discretion by the Police Commissioner is one reason the Government is now facing a federal civil-rights lawsuit. The Administration should be fixing that problem, not recreating it through another discretionary waiver process,” Ohno said.

The organization outlined several concerns with the executive order, including its scope and impact. VISGO argued that the policy primarily affects licensed firearm owners who already follow the law, while doing little to deter illegal firearms or repeat offenders.

The group also warned that the measure could create a false sense of security, stating that without screening systems, controlled access, trained personnel, and funding, posted restrictions alone cannot prevent weapons from entering government buildings.

VISGO further emphasized that the order’s reach is particularly broad in the Virgin Islands, where government employment accounts for roughly one-third of total nonfarm employment. Because of this, the organization said, the policy affects not only government workers but also contractors, licensees, business owners, and residents who must enter government offices for services or business.

The organization also raised concerns about the designation of government spaces as “sensitive places.” VISGO said the order extends beyond courthouses and controlled-access locations to include offices, lobbies, corridors, work areas, and adjacent interior spaces, without what it described as the historical analysis required under *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v. Bruen*.

VISGO further argued that the executive order repeats the same issues of discretionary authority that are at the center of the federal lawsuit. According to the group, the order introduces a waiver process controlled by the Attorney General and Police Commissioner, allowing access to be determined through discretionary decisions.

Stakeholders were not meaningfully consulted before the policy was issued, including firearm instructors, security professionals, licensed gun owners, and affected workers, according to the release.

In its statement, VISGO called on the administration to produce several items before implementing restrictions on law-abiding firearm owners. These include a historical-tradition analysis under Bruen, building-by-building security assessments, and a comprehensive funding plan for security infrastructure such as metal detectors and trained personnel.

The group also called for clear, objective standards governing restrictions and waivers, an analysis of how many people would be affected, and a compliance plan addressing the issues raised in the federal DOJ lawsuit.

VISGO urged Governor Bryan to suspend or rescind Executive Order No. 546-2026 and engage stakeholders before implementing policies that limit constitutional rights.

The organization said it will continue monitoring the positions of gubernatorial and senatorial candidates on Second Amendment issues, due process, public safety, and government accountability. It also stated that it is prepared to meet with the governor and invited him to attend its next meeting to hear directly from residents and stakeholders.

VISGO concluded that the territory should focus on enforcement against violent criminals, illegal firearms, and repeat offenders rather than what it described as symbolic measures.