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Donna Christian-Christensen Endorses Delia Smith for Delegate to Congress

Former Delegate Donna M. Christian-Christensen, who served nine consecutive terms and was the first woman to hold the seat, endorsed Delia Smith, citing her character, federal experience and commitment to serving Virgin Islanders effectively in Congress.

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From left to right, Donna M. Christensen and Delia Smith.

Former Congresswoman Donna M. Christian-Christensen, who represented the U.S. Virgin Islands in the U.S. House of Representatives for nine consecutive terms, has endorsed Delia Smith in the Democratic primary for Delegate to Congress, according to a release issued Tuesday from Smith's campaign.

Dr. Christensen's tenure remains the longest unbroken service of any delegate in the territory's history, and she was the first woman to hold the seat.

"You're asking, who is Delia Smith? Well, let me tell you. Delia is a St. Johnian, a wife, mother, and grandmother who has spent her entire adult life serving the people of the Virgin Islands. Her impeccable character and integrity are exactly what we need, and they are what earned her the historic position of United States Attorney. In that office, she showed the courage to take on even the hardest fights and win along with the ability to build relationships and earn the respect of colleagues on both sides of the aisle. Through her work, and as a lifelong resident, she knows us and the challenges we face firsthand. But to me, her most important quality is her unquenchable passion for service not to herself, not to donors, not to special interests, but to all of us, the people of the Virgin Islands," said Dr. Christensen.

The campaign framed the Delegate to Congress seat as one that depends heavily on trust, relationships and sustained advocacy because the office does not carry a vote on final passage in the House. And it argued that Smith is suited to the office because of her background as a former United States Attorney, her experience representing the United States in federal court, and her understanding of the federal statutes and appropriations process tied to the territory's funding lifelines.

The campaign also said Smith has built working relationships across the federal government and both political parties, and described her as bringing command of federal law and process, integrity that earns colleagues' trust, and independence to put the Virgin Islands first.

"To receive the endorsement of Dr. Christian-Christensen is the honor of this campaign," said Delia Smith. "She carried our territory's voice to Washington with dignity for eighteen years, and she understood that this seat is not about the title — it's about results: the funding we secure, the programs we protect, and the respect we command. That is the standard I intend to meet."

Dr. Christian-Christensen urged Virgin Islanders to support Smith in the Democratic primary.

"She is mature, she is competent, and she is committed to giving us the highest quality of representation. On August 1st, vote #2 — Delia Smith for Delegate to Congress."

Smith is a former United States Attorney and Democratic candidate for Delegate to Congress from the U.S. Virgin Islands. According to the release, she began her career as a secretary in the Attorney General's Office while putting herself through the University of the Virgin Islands. She was later recruited to serve as an Assistant U.S. Attorney with the Department of Justice and rose through the ranks to lead that office, becoming the first Black woman and the first native Virgin Islander to serve as United States Attorney for the District of the Virgin Islands.

The campaign said that as the territory's chief federal prosecutor, Smith built a record of reading federal law closely and holding federal agencies to their commitments.

Her priorities include protecting the territory's Medicaid funding, including increasing the 83 percent federal match, and collaborating to complete long-term-care and health-facility rebuilding that storm recovery has left undone.