

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Violet Tops St. Croix Senate Primary as Four Incumbents and Three Non-Incumbents Fill Top Seven

Kurt Violet led the St. Croix Democratic Senate primary with 3,539 votes, while Kenneth Gittens, Clifford Joseph, Nemmy Williams-Jackson, Lisa Charles, Hubert Frederick and Jose Besse Gonzalez secured the remaining six qualifying positions on Saturday.

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Senator Kurt Violet secured a decisive first-place finish in the St. Croix Democratic Senate primary Saturday, leading a field in which four sitting lawmakers and three non-incumbent candidates occupied the seven positions needed to advance to the November general election.

[Unofficial territorial results](#) released by the Elections System at 8:46 p.m. showed Mr. Violet receiving 3,539 votes, placing him 862 votes ahead of Senate Vice President Kenneth “Kenny” Gittens, who finished second with 2,677.

Senator Clifford A. Joseph placed third with 2,445 votes, followed by Nemmy Williams-Jackson with 2,200 and Lisa J. Charles with 2,026.

Senator Hubert L. Frederick finished sixth with 2,013 votes, only 13 behind Ms. Charles. Jose “Besse” Gonzalez secured the seventh and final qualifying position with 1,707 votes.

Lynda “Nikki” Brooks finished eighth with 1,548 votes, leaving her 159 behind Mr. Gonzalez at the cutoff. Dwight “Mike” Cartier received 625 votes, Omar B.U. Henry received 515, and another 145 selections were recorded for write-in candidates.

The results remain unofficial and are subject to the Elections System’s canvassing and certification process. Certification of the primary election results is scheduled for August 11, with the general election set for November 3.

The results preserve a strong incumbent presence within the Democratic slate while introducing three candidates who are not members of the current Legislature.

Mr. Violet, Mr. Gittens, Mr. Joseph and Mr. Frederick are all members of the 36th Legislature. Mr. Violet serves as majority leader, while Mr. Gittens is Senate vice president. Mr. Joseph chairs the committee on Homeland Security, Justice and Public Safety, while Mr. Frederick chairs the Committee on Economic Development and Agriculture.

Ms. Williams-Jackson, Ms. Charles and Mr. Gonzalez would bring three non-incumbent Democratic candidates into the November contest if the unofficial order is certified.

Mr. Violet’s first-place finish continued his strong performance among St. Croix Democratic voters. He also led the district’s 2024 Democratic primary, when he received 1,233 votes. Mr. Joseph finished second in that contest, while Mr. Gittens placed fourth and Mr. Frederick fifth.

Saturday’s results moved Mr. Gittens into second place and placed Mr. Joseph third. Mr. Frederick remained among the qualifying candidates, while the departure of other current senators from the Democratic district contest created openings for candidates seeking to enter or return to the Legislature.

The St. Croix race included 10 Democratic candidates competing for seven nominations. Voters were permitted to select as many as seven candidates, meaning the 19,440 votes reported in the contest represent total candidate selections rather than the number of individual ballots cast in the district.

The territorial report did not provide a separate St. Croix turnout figure. Across all contests, however, the Elections System reported 9,991 ballots cast and overall turnout of 47.75 percent. Seventeen blank ballots were recorded territorywide.

Mr. Violet's 3,539 votes represented the largest total received by any legislative candidate in either district. Avery Lewis, who led the St. Thomas-St. John field, received 2,724 votes.

The 862-vote gap separating Mr. Violet from Mr. Gittens was also considerably wider than the margins between several candidates lower in the St. Croix rankings.

Only 13 votes separated Ms. Charles in fifth place from Mr. Frederick in sixth. The more consequential cutoff between Mr. Gonzalez and Ms. Brooks stood at 159 votes.

For the four incumbents, the outcome provides an opportunity to seek another term while defending their records in the current Legislature. For Ms. Williams-Jackson, Ms. Charles and Mr. Gonzalez, the results provide a path into a broader general-election field that will include candidates from outside the Democratic primary.

The November election will determine which seven candidates ultimately represent the St. Croix District in the 37th Legislature.