

The Virgin Islands Consortium

"Marijuana Is Not My Priority," Sen. "Positive" Nelson Says

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Senator Terrence "Positive" Nelson has been at the forefront of every legislation that involves marijuana--whether it is pushing for a hemp industry on St. Croix, the medicinal use of the drug or measures to decriminalize it. But, in a recent interview, the senator said that marijuana was not his priority.

Nelson, the founding member of the Virgin Islands Labor Union and a longtime educator, has been a senator for 10 years. He was questioned on his priorities, pointing out that, as a former teacher and founding member of a union, why hadn't he placed more effort into helping teachers with their wages, and making sure the unions represent employees fairly. To that, Nelson said his fight for teachers and other important issues was ongoing;

however, the media has chosen to focus on his marijuana bills, clouding his other initiatives.

"Let me straighten you out," Senator Nelson began, "the marijuana issue is a hot topic, everybody is talking about it. It's not me, it's on the radio -- everybody's talking about it. That's what they have to the front. Twenty-three states have passed [marijuana bills] so it's a big issue, but it's not really my priority. Of course it's not."

Senator Nelson added that the controversy surrounding marijuana was not something he ever intended, as all along he only wished to place the topic before the people before any other step was taken.

"This whole marijuana business that's going all over the place [and has become] viral, what did I want," Nelson said, "I wanted to ask the people what they think about it before we took any initiative on it."

Nelson revealed that in the upcoming election, voters will get to cast their vote on allowing the medicinal use of marijuana in the Territory.

"That's on the ballot [and] the people are going to speak," he said.

He continued: "The initiative I pushed wasn't to legalize marijuana, it was to put a question on the ballot as to whether or not the people are interested in having medicinal marijuana authorized in the territory. My ultimate goal is what the people want. I asked the question first, if the people want it, they will get."

On a personal level, Nelson said he does not believe marijuana should be illegal. He ended the interview by jokingly stating that if the people of the Virgin Islands did not vote for it, he would move to Colorado.