

# The Virgin Islands Consortium

## Christensen To De Jongh: Declare Juan Luis A State of Emergency

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Delegate to Congress Donna Christensen is calling on Governor John P. de Jongh, Jr. to declare the situation at Juan F. Luis Hospital (JFL) a state of emergency, and is currently making her way to Washington, D.C. with the aim of getting aid to help weather the medical center's crisis.

The delegate said at least one federal agency was prepared to help, a development she is hoping will assure the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) that the Luis Hospital will get the money it needs to correct the many problems detailed in the agency's [122-page report](#).

"I spoke to the U.S. Department of Interior Insular Affairs officials and they are prepared to give the hospital some of the funding it needs," Christensen [said in a post on her website](#). "It is my hope that this will assure CMS that Luis Hospital will get the money they need to correct immediate problems and put them on a path to long term solutions." The delegate said she would ask the U.S. Department of Agriculture to prioritize JFL's High Energy Cost grant request, which would help with the hospital's costly WAPA bills.

Christensen also called on other federal entities to employ swift action.

"I am also calling U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell to ask that they treat this as the emergency that it is," the congresswoman said. "St. Croix has one hospital. People have no other alternatives, they cannot drive to another county or state to seek care."

Last week, [after CMS made known](#) its intent to cut ties with the Luis Hospital, Christensen said the V.I. Government and the hospital should "challenge" the decision, adding that JFL is St. Croix's only hospital, and such a move by CMS would only bring more hardship to patients.

"We cannot afford to have the funds that take care of our elderly who have no insurance terminated," Christensen said last week. "We believe that the JFL and the Government of the Virgin Islands should challenge this decision, which would seriously hurt our most vulnerable citizens."