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Bryan Says Arresting People Who Don't Quarantine for 14 Days is a Civil Rights Issue, and Challenged the Consortium to Find a State Where People Were Being Arrested. We Did.

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Ernice Gilbert **April 24, 2020**

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The Henry E. Rohlsen Airport on St. Croix By. VI PORT AUTHORITY

Governor Albert Bryan has been hesitant to arrest individuals who violate the 14-day quarantine in the territory, and on Monday challenged the Consortium to find anywhere in America where people were being arrested for breaking such orders. The 14-day quarantine is imposed on individuals coming into a country, state or territory after traveling from an area affected by the coronavirus.

The challenge to the publication came after this Consortium reporter asked the governor on Monday whether he planned to penalize people who come into the USVI via plane, urged to quarantine themselves for 14 days, yet have failed to do so and are seen moving about the community — potentially spreading the deadly virus to unsuspecting individuals.

To Mr. Bryan's challenge, Hawaii, the U.S. state that is located outside North America, and the only island state, has been arresting people for breaking the 14-day quarantine for a while now.

Just on Thursday in Hawaii, [visitors were arrested](#) for breaking the 14-day quarantine. A couple [was arrested on April 11](#) also for breaking the 14-day quarantine. And a man was arrested on April 2 [for doing the same](#).

States have also been arresting people for breaking stay-at-home orders. See some examples below:

In Hawaii, as of Wednesday, [15 people were arrested and 53 cited](#) for violations against the governor's stay-at-home order. Criminal charges were brought against two individuals.

[Three were arrested in Toledo, Ohio](#) for breaking the state's stay-at-home order.

There have also been arrests in [New York](#), [New Jersey](#), [Wisconsin](#), [Colorado](#), and many other states.

Mr. Bryan said he made clear weeks ago that violation of his order is punishable by fines and imprisonment, adding that the territory's attorney general published [a list that included the penalties](#).

However, there has been no arrests in the territory for people who break the 14-day quarantine or stay-at-home order, even though many people know of individuals who did not heed the government's call to stay at home after arriving into the USVI.

Mr. Bryan said it has been difficult to track individuals who break the 14-day quarantine. "We're no different than any other state in terms of our penalties for violating the stay-at-home order or violating a 14-day quarantine," he said. "The problem comes in tracking. I would like you to put forth evidence that anyone of those places who've actually arrested anybody for violating a 14-day quarantine. It's a civil rights issue. I mean how do you arrest somebody that you think may be sick? They, just like us are asking people to comply with the 14-day quarantine."

Mr. Bryan said that on average about 30 people come into the territory every day by travel on jets since the pandemic. There were others coming in via Puerto Rico on smaller carriers like Cape Air.

To make up for the difficulty in tracking individuals, the governor said the territory was in a "special situation" where people can be traced quickly.

"If they get a fever, they call into the Department of Health, within 24 hours we can lock them down and we can contact-trace very easily. That is why we have been so successful this far. I know some people think it's just luck, but actually we just have a real good Department of Health tracing system," the governor said.

He said the territory would be receiving additional resources from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to help with tracing.

Mr. Bryan said it's much easier to trace individuals in the territory because the only way into the islands is through air or by sea — unlike states with freeways connecting to other states.

Additionally, "we have the ability to call every single person who is diagnosed every single day until they're cleared," Mr. Bryan said.

The governor said the administration had some ideas on how people coming into the territory can be tracked, and that those ideas were being examined.

Mr. Bryan then pointed to Japan, where a tracker is placed on individuals who come into the country so that authorities could know where those individuals are at all times.

"I know that's unconstitutional," the governor said.