

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Senate Passes Amendment Forcing De Jongh To Only Spend 25% Of Executive Budget

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Senators of the 30th Legislature, on Tuesday night, passed measures that force the de Jongh Administration to only spend 25 percent of the Executive budget, leaving the governor to make do with \$2.25 million for fiscal year 2015.

The first amendment to the 2015 main budget, slashing the de Jongh Administration's spending money, was sponsored by at-large Senator Craig Barshinger. It cuts de Jongh's allocated budget of \$9 million to \$2.25 million. There was a defect with the bill, however, as it cuts the total annual budget of the Executive Branch, leaving the incoming administration with no money to function. Although the defect was glaring, senators opted to put up the measure for a vote anyway, and later, a more subdued amendment was

added.

Voting for and against the bill that would limit Gov. de Jongh's executive budget to \$2.25 million for fiscal year 2015, are as follows:

1. Senator Craig Barshinger — Yes
2. Senator Judi Buckley — No
3. Senator Diane Capehart — Yes
4. Senator Donald G. Cole — No
5. Senator Kenneth Gittens — Yes
6. Senator Clifford Graham — No
7. Senator Alicia "Chucky" Hansen — No
8. Senator Myron Jackson — Yes
9. Senator Shawn-Michael Malone — Yes
10. Senator Terrence "Positive" Nelson — Yes
11. Senator Nellie Rivera-O'Reilly — Yes
12. Senator Clarence Payne — Yes
13. Senator Tregenza A. Roach — Yes
14. Senator Sammuel Sanes — Yes
15. Senator Janette Millin Young — No

Barshinger's bill was subsequently one-upped by another amendment, this time sponsored by Sen. Clifford Graham, which sought to bar all outgoing executive branches from spending more than 25 percent of the allocated funds.

Criticizing Barshinger's efforts and lauding Senator Graham's, Senator Million Young said, "This bill is more universal than the one the body approved prior."

She added: "I think many of my colleagues approved the prior measure for just the outgoing administration, but this one is to ensure that any administration only uses 25 percent of their funding in a transition year."

Voting for and against the measure to bar outgoing administrations from spending more than 25 percent of the Executive Branch's budget, are as follows:

1. Senator Craig Barshinger — Yes
2. Senator Judi Buckley — Yes
3. Senator Diane Capehart — Absent
4. Senator Donald G. Cole — No
5. Senator Kenneth Gittens — Yes
6. Senator Clifford Graham — Yes
7. Senator Alicia "Chucky" Hansen — No
8. Senator Myron Jackson — Yes
9. Senator Shawn-Michael Malone — Yes
10. Senator Terrence "Positive" Nelson — Yes
11. Senator Nellie Rivera-O'Reilly — Yes
12. Senator Clarence Payne — Yes
13. Senator Tregenza A. Roach — No
14. Senator Sammuel Sanes — Yes
15. Senator Janette Millin Young — No

Graham said his amendment "made sense," arguing that "any administration could spend more than their share and leave the incoming administration holding the bag. It is really just the right thing to do."

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