

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Just In: At-Large Senator Sponsors Repeal of 'Streetlights Bill'

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Cynthia Graham **October 03, 2014**



Due to public outcry from a story *VI Consortium* broke on Tuesday night, At-Large Senator Craig Barshinger, just minutes ago, [posted in the comments section](#) of the *VI Consortium* website that he, along with Sen. Clarence Payne, is sponsoring a repeal of the measure the 30th Legislature passed on Tuesday night that gave WAPA the authority to bill customers for the usage of public streetlights. That bill was sponsored by St. Thomas senator, Clifford Graham.

Here are Barshinger's full comments:

The measure passed by the narrowest margin, 8 to 7. I'm sponsoring a REPEAL of this measure, along with senator Payne. The amendment as passed is flawed, because it allows WAPA to bill customers directly for streetlights, but it does not REDUCE the property taxes that were and are collected to fund them (a special fund of 4%). Rather than sponsor additional legislation to reduce the property tax by the required \$2 million per year, Clarence & I feel it is best to REPEAL and get input from the public about exactly how many street lights we need and who shall pay for them.

In the meantime, I have written to the Governor, urging him to line item veto this measure (30-1152), and to PAY the streetlighting bill from the proceeds of the property taxes, of which 4% are set aside by law for streetlighting. (The failure to pay has resulted in an outstanding debt to WAPA of \$11 million.)



Both Barshinger and Payne, along with six other senators, voted in favor of the bill on Tuesday night:

Senator Craig Barshinger — Yes

Senator Diane Capehart — Yes

Senator Donald G. Cole — Yes

Senator Clifford Graham — Yes

Senator Myron Jackson — Yes

Senator Shawn-Michael Malone — Yes

Senator Clarence Payne — Yes

Senator Janette Millin Young — Yes

Senator Judi Buckley — No

Senator Kenneth Gittens — No

Senator Alicia “Chucky” Hansen — No

Senator Terrence “Positive” Nelson — No

Senator Nellie Rivera-O'Reilly — No

Senator Tregenza A. Roach — No

Senator Sammuel Sanes — No

The *VI Consortium* will continue to follow this story and provide updates as they become available.

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