

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Budget Cuts Into Certain Gov't Agencies Too Deep, Director Says

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Budget Director Debra Gottlieb has called on the Senate's Post Auditor to request the revenue projections that the 30th Legislature relied on to fund the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget, stating that she has "grave concerns" about some of the provisions of the budget.

Gottlieb is concerned that deep cuts into the Bureau of Internal Revenue, Office of the Lieutenant Governor and the Virgin Islands Police Department budgets, will negatively affect the agencies and quell the progress they have made.

"My primary concern is the budget reductions that have been meted out to revenue-producing departments and agencies such as the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Lieutenant Governor's Office, as well as the Bureau of Corrections and the Virgin Islands Police Department both of which are operating under federal consent decrees," Gottlieb said.

"These reductions," she continued, "undermine the progress and successes that the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the Lt. Governor's Office, the Bureau of Corrections and the Virgin Islands Police Department have made to date."

The fiscal year 2015 budget of more than \$558 million, according to the Office of Budget Management (OMB), reduces the Virgin Islands Bureau of Internal Revenue by \$1,478,839, the the Lt. Governor's Office budget by \$111,496, and the Bureau of Corrections by some \$776,733.

The funding level to VIPD in the Miscellaneous Section of the Budget, specifically for the Excessive Force Consent Decree, also saw deep reductions of \$1 million.