

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Letters To The Editor: Dept. of Human Services Needs New And Effective Leadership

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An Open Letter to Governor and Lieutenant Governor Elect:

The Department of Human Services' (DHS) current leadership has failed miserably! As your administration prepares to organize its cabinet, the dedicated and hard-working employees of this department pleads with you to demand and accept the resignation of Christopher Finch, commissioner of Human Services, and his senior staff and management: Michal Rhymer-Browne and Carla Benjamin, assistant commissioners; Asiah Clendinen and Jason Williams, deputy commissioners; and all

administrators/directors, assistants, special assistants, assistant to the assistant, etc.

We ask that you tap on former commissioner, Mrs. Juel T.R. Molloy, to head the Transition Team for the Department of Human Services. Mrs. Molloy, during her tenure as DHS commissioner and later as the chief of staff for the Turnbull administration, worked very hard to bring DHS to the highest performance and services level. This resulted in DHS being recognized at the national level for excellence. These standards and performance levels have gone to the DOGS!

The employees' morale is at its lowest; service to the clients and the public are at their lowest. To wit, • DHS leadership has consistently failed to effectively communicate new initiatives, general information, etc., to employees • Senior citizen centers opened only two (2) days per week • Disabled and the elderly haven't received gas checks from the Energy Crisis Assistance Program in over a year • DHS unable to effectively implement Ombacare under the Medical Assistance Program • YRC is in disarray and extremely short-staffed of correction officers • The general public being short-changed on service programs

The list is long; however, we just wanted you, the new administration, to get the picture from us because you will not get the whole and true story from the DHS leadership. They will manipulate the facts.

Undoubtedly, the current leadership at DHS has been a dismal failure. They don't fit in your administration. It's a time to re-build DHS and this current crew needs to be sent home.

Submitted by: Concerned DHS Employees

NOTE: The *VI Consortium* spoke directly with employees of DHS to confirm the authenticity of the letter. Those employees say the letter was written as a collaborative effort and that about half of DHS employees--both on St. Croix and St. Thomas--share the views represented here. In addition, the employees say key personnel have been leaving DHS due to the challenges outlined in the letter.

Image Credit: Philanthropy Times

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