

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Nicholson-Doty Praised By Mapp For 'Fine Job' With V.I. Tourism

Business / **Published On January 29, 2015 02:46 PM /**

Ernice Gilbert **January 29, 2015**



It is sometimes seen as a sign of effective leadership when a new administration retains someone from a previous administration to continue heading an important government department. According to Governor Kenneth Mapp, Beverly Nicholson-Doty, Virgin Islands Department of Tourism commissioner, fits the bill. She served in the de Jongh administration and was also tapped by Mapp to head the department in his administration.

Mapp, during his first State of the Territory Address on Monday, lauded Nicholson-Doty, calling her efforts with the tourism department a "fine job."

"Let me publicly thank Commissioner of Tourism designee, Beverly Nicholson-Doty, for agreeing to remain on board and continuing the fine job she has been doing in the tourism industry for our territory," the governor said.

Mapp pointed out that he has had several work sessions with Nicholson-Doty to discuss the restructuring of the department, additional training, and re-positioning of some department staff.



industry, with emphasis on improving the land and sea, and increasing ship calls to St.

Beverly Nicholson-Doty, Virgin Islands

Department of Tourism Commissioner

Mapp added that Nicholson-Doty would lead his administration's efforts to increase land-based visits to the territory, and embark on initiatives to further cultivate sports, events, and heritage tourism on a grander scale.

The governor said this would be facilitated by improving the experiences tourists have while visiting the territory, and pointed out it was important to increase hotel development on St. Croix and St. Thomas, as the territory's tourism product continues to grow.

"Nearly 20 percent of our workforce is employed in the tourism industry," Mapp said. "Our challenge is to maintain our competitive edge in the market. To do this, we must greatly improve the visitor experience."

Speaking about the recent opening of Cuba as a travel destination, Mapp said he was confident the territory would retain its position as one of the Caribbean's top destinations.

The governor says he does not hold the view that the U.S. Virgin Islands would be threatened by the communist nation; instead, Mapp said, "I believe the opening up of Cuba will spur new business and tourism-related opportunities for the territory, given the proximity of Florida, Cuba, Hispaniola, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands in this region."

The governor highlighted the territory's "natural beauty" and "richness of culture" that he considered to be qualities already drawing visitors to the islands. However, he noted there are still serious threats challenging the stability of the territory's tourism product. Threats, he said, along with Nicholson-Doty, the administration intends to take head on.

"We cannot surrender our edge," Mapp said. "Taxi drivers, shop owners, government workers, residents, Crucians, St. Thomians, St. Johnians -- you and I must work together to create a competitive tourism advantage in the region that is second to none."

He added that if the territory's residents did not work together "to accomplish this, in the end, none of us will have any work at all. It's just that simple."