

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Gov. Mapp Sends Proposal To Senate Seeking \$1 Million For HOVENSA Litigation

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Governor Kenneth Mapp Wednesday forwarded a proposal to the President of the 31st Legislature Neville James seeking authorization and appropriation of \$1 million to retain counsel in the government's intended litigation against Hess Oil "to enforce the rights of the people of the Virgin Islands pursuant to the concession and Settlement Agreements entered into between Hess Oil, its related entities, and the U.S. Virgin Islands," according to Government House.

Mapp previously made mention of his intention to seek funds for the litigation process during his State of the Territory Address on Monday, Jan. 26, where he said market conditions forced both parties to take varying paths in their quest for a resolution.

"Our relationship, the territory's and Hess Oil, for the most part, has been a good one. But according to Hess, market forces have brought us to this point where we must part company," the governor said during his address.

"And, let us assume for the purposes of this discussion that the closure was solely driven by market forces," Mapp continued, "Hess Oil wants to leave and, frankly speaking, the people of the Virgin Islands aren't interested in forcing them to stay. In other words, as we say on the Big Island, it's time to turn a page. However, there must be an orderly exit, with Hess Oil fulfilling its obligations to the people of this territory."

Meanwhile, Monarch Energy Partners, a company [still interested](#) in purchasing HOVENSA, say its principals would be visiting St. Croix in the second week of February, as their company continued to "work behind the scenes" to purchase the refinery.

Elsewhere, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC), a U.S. government agency, [will start paying retirement benefits for more than 1,600 current and future retirees of HOVENSA](#) because the company has closed its operations and its pension plan has been abandoned as of Feb. 4, according to information reported on the [PBGC website](#).