

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Mapp Heads To New York With Tourism

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Governor Mapp left the territory on Monday for a trip to New York City, where he will participate in a media promotion tour with officials of the Virgin Islands Department of Tourism (DOT), and will appear in several television and radio interviews.

Government House did not give details about the governor's trip in relation to the television and radio stations where he will speak, nor was it made known what subjects will be highlighted as part of the promotion.

However, the governor is expected to speak highly of the territory and help advance DOT's mission to promote the Virgin Islands as a tourist destination to national and international audiences.

Tourism Commissioner-designee, Beverly Nicholson-Doty, [was recently approved](#) by the Senate's Rules and Judiciary Committee, chaired by Senator Kenneth Gittens. If confirmed by the full body, she will serve as commissioner of the department she lead during the John P. de Jongh administration.

At the hearing, Nicholson-Doty spoke about the territory's tourism product in prepared testimony.

"Tourism continues to be a primary economic driver for our territory and will be for the foreseeable future," she said, adding, "As an established destination in the region, facing a changing competitive landscape and increasingly demanding consumers, we must seek to change the barometer of success."

During his first State of the Territory address on Jan. 27, [Mapp 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.

"To working with our partners in the cruise industry, with emphasis on improving the visitor experience, transportation, both on land and sea, and increasing ship calls to St. Croix," he said.

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."