

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Mapp Administration To Start Issuing \$4.2 Million Monthly In Tax Refunds

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ST. CROIX -- Governor Kenneth Mapp said this afternoon on talk radio that his administration has advised members of the 31st Legislation of its decision to start delivering tax refunds to residents of the territory to the tune of \$4.2 million on a monthly basis.

The governor revealed his administration's intent during a wide-ranging interview with popular St. Croix radio personality Mario Moorehead on WDHP 1620 A.M., while discussing a myriad of issues facing the territory and how he plans to solve them.

"We came into the government and there were no tax refunds being issued," Mapp said. "We announced that we would start out by issuing tax refunds at \$500,000 a month -- we were able to move that to \$750,000 a month and we have brought that up to now a million dollars a month."

He added: "We advised the members of the legislature yesterday that our plan is to move that to \$4.2 million a month in terms of getting folks their tax refunds in the territory."

Previously, the governor said while his administration would lift the freeze on tax returns, refunds would not go out to everyone in tandem, but rather a trickle down approach would be enabled until the government had a better handle on its financial standing.

"Let me caution you that obviously we're going to begin with the oldest tax refunds that are due and owing, but this is not going to come out in droves, we're going to turn the faucet on, and as my commissioner of finance says to us, [we will] sprinkle them out," Mapp said [at a press conference held in Government House on St. Croix in February](#). "As the revenues come in and we get a greater hold on the financial condition, we will increase the amount of refunds that will be paid."

The governor's latest comments show that the administration has deeper knowledge of where it stands financially, which means more residents should start seeing refunds in their mailboxes.

Mapp touched on other matters as well, including the issue of 200 individuals who the governor said had been waiting more than a year to receive their retirement benefits, using the unfortunate situation to drive home his case for a restructuring of government.

"We have gone and dealt with the problem where 97 of them are now receiving their annuities," Mapp said in relation to the retirees, "and by May 15 the remaining 116 will receive their annuities."

The territory's leader then expounded upon his stance for government reforms, revealing that his administration is in the process of creating a task force that will be responsible for evaluating the various government agencies and identifying the areas where change is needed in order to make government more proficient.

"Our initial action and work is to really drive the reorganization of government," he said. "We're putting a task force together in the central government where we're going to create and construct language and send to the legislature on how we want to reformat the government, how we're going to take out individual CFOs from each department and agencies and create CFOs in terms of pods, so that we can tie the actions of the expenditure of government monies and the collection of government monies to the commissioner of finance and the budget director, and manage the financial system of the government as a government -- not as each department and agency."