

# The Virgin Islands Consortium

## Roach: Make Reckless Endangerment An Automatic Felony

VIC News / **Published On May 10, 2015 10:46 AM /**

John McCarthy **May 10, 2015**



ST. THOMAS – A senator wants stiffer penalties for people who use firearms recklessly in public.

Sen. Tregenza Roach said a bill will be drafted “that would make any act of reckless endangerment where a weapon is involved an automatic felony offense in the first degree.”

“I have discussed this proposed legislation with leading officials at the Department of Justice who have agreed that such a law would assist in the successful prosecution of this type of criminal activity and could lead to more convictions with the inclusion of an

additional felony charge in such incidents,” Roach said.

Roach said the broad daylight shooting that took place on the Charlotte Amalie waterfront area May 4 – one of the most crowded areas of St. Thomas at any given time – highlighted the need for the proposed legislation. The Monday morning shooting left 34-year-old Shane Heyliger of Altona and Welgunst dead.

“The recent acts of daylight shootings done without regard for the lives of innocent bystanders makes the bill even more critical and necessary,” he said.

The St. Thomas senator, who is an attorney by trade, said he “is hopeful that the bill will be drafted and assigned to the appropriate committee shortly.”