

# The Virgin Islands Consortium

## Mapp Administration Ready To Decrease Cabinet Members' Salaries After Democrats Failed 11 Nominees

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ST. THOMAS -- Governor Kenneth Mapp has expressed the willingness to compromise with Senate Democrats who, along with Sen. Tregenza Roach, failed 11 of the governor's cabinet nominees during a session at the Earl B. Ottley Legislative Hall on Thursday.

The desire to cooperate with Senate Democrats was revealed to *The Consortium* by two senators following the hearing, including the President of the 31st Legislature, Neville James.

“We received a call from the Acting Governor, Osbert Potter, and they forwarded documentation to us speaking of compromise, so we are now processing what they’ve offered us, and we have not adjourned the session — we stand in recess until the call of the Chair,” James said, adding that the session could continue as early as next week.

The understanding, James said, would include one of the senators on the prevailing side to make a motion for reconsideration of the Mapp nominees. He said Democrats made up their minds to stand against the salary increases because to approve raises during times of economic difficulty would send the wrong message to the territory’s residents.

Sen. Terrence “Positive” Nelson told *The Consortium* that a tentative date for the session’s continuation has been set for Tuesday, May 26. Nelson, a member of the Independent Citizens Movement, said while what unfolded on Thursday was partisan politics similar to what’s seen in the U.S., he commended the Democrats for sticking together and forcing compromise.

James, however, said the decision to fail the Mapp nominees was made in March, following a meeting with the governor on the matter.

“We made a decision from back in March that we (Senate Democrats) were not comfortable with the message that we would be sending to the public given the governor’s statement in the [State of the Territory Address](#), and his actions in giving raises, which were not consistent at a time when he stated that the territory was on the brink of financial collapse,” James said.

Yesterday’s “no” vote represents an embarrassing setback for the administration, forcing it to rethink its strategy of cooperation moving forward. But based on conversations *VI Consortium* had with senators, Mapp should have seen the rejection coming, as the legislators had vowed to vote down the nominees if the salary increases weren’t reduced or altogether abandoned.

“The governor should really reconsider his approach to granting raises at the early level of his administration, and thus I’m prepared to act accordingly when the time comes,” Sen. Myron D. Jackson told *VI Consortium* on May 14 near Fort Christiansvaern [following a presentation](#) hosted by U.S. National Park Service about searching for shipwrecks off the coast of the island.

Asked if he was prepared to vote against the nominees, Jackson said a “no” vote would most likely be his position, which he remained true to on Thursday.

Members of the 31st Legislature who voted against the salary increases include:

Sen. Novelle Francis (D-STX)

Sen. Justin Harrigan, Sr. (D-STT)

Sen. Myron Jackson (D-STT)

Sen. Neville James (D-STX)

Sen. Sammeul Sanes (D-STX)

Sen. Kurt Vialet (D-STX)

Sen. Janette Millin Young (D-STT)

Sen. Tregenza Roach (IND STT)

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