

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Mapp Vetos Amendment That Sought To Return Salaries Of Cabinet Members To Dec. 2014 Levels

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- Governor Kenneth Mapp.

ST. THOMAS -- Governor Kenneth Mapp has vetoed section 9 of bill No. 31-0149, a amendment [proposed by Senator Myron Jackson](#) and supported by Democrats, that took away the pay raises Mapp gave to his cabinet nominees that was capped, after an agreement between the two branches of government, at \$105,000, and set them to the amount each position was paid on December 31, 2014.

The amendment was added during a [protracted session](#) at the Earl B. Ottley Legislative Hall on July 30, where the Senate took action on a myriad of bills. Members of the body had contended that giving any pay raises at a time when the government was passing legislation to borrow monies in an attempt to keep itself afloat, was an ill-thought-out idea.

Mapp, however, disagreed.

"I don't believe that this veto requires much discussion from me," said the governor in a note accompanying his veto. "My position on the issue of salaries for my cabinet is a matter of public record."

The territory's eighth elected governor also vetoed section 11 of the same bill, which called for a report detailing how public funds are being used.

"Why is the Senate mandating that the governor report within seven days on the use of funds that will be spent and managed by the Department of Agriculture and administered by the commissioner of finance?" asked Mapp. "There are sufficient reporting requirements contained within our laws, and I will advise the commissioner of finance and agriculture to prepare and submit a report to the Legislature on how these funds are spent."

The governor's veto action leaves his cabinet members' salaries at the \$105,000 cap agreement, and comes at a time when [teachers are leaving the territory at a historic rate](#) because they haven't seen wage increases in nearly a decade.

Bill No. 31-0149, an act authorizing the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, through the Office of the Tax Assessor, to issue the real property tax bills for a given calendar year based on the assessment of the current year, saw sections 1,2,3,5,6,7,8,10,12 and 13 being approved by the governor, including \$500,000 in [drought relief monies](#) for the territory's farmers, and funds to help keep Women's Coalition of St. Croix afloat, among other important measures.