

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Vialet Commends Gas Stations For Lowering Prices, Calls For Further Drops

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Ernice Gilbert **September 19, 2015**



ST. CROIX -- Senator Kurt Vialet in a press release issued on Friday commended gas station owners here for lowering their gas prices, a move he says has brought relief to residents. But the senator is also calling on those in the gasoline business to "do the right thing" and decrease the price even further, pointing out that prices in the U.S. have now dropped as low as \$2.30 per gallon, while one of the lowest prices on this island is \$3.07.

The first major drop -- from \$3.39 to \$3.19 -- came after The Consortium ran [multiple stories criticizing](#) the then-high price of gasoline per gallon here, while St. Thomas was below the \$3.00 mark. The publication noted the many months that the price of gas went unchanged on this island, even after WAPA's price of energy per kilowatt hour dropped

from 41 cents to 19 cents, representing over 50 percent in energy savings. The cost of energy was the biggest reason, according to gas station owners, that prices remained high -- yet even after the drop, gas prices did not follow suit.

The Consortium then pointed to St. Thomas, an island that had historically sold its gas at a higher price than St. Croix, highlighting the varying prices in the territory's capital -- from \$3.17, \$3.07, \$2.99, \$2.89 and even \$2.69 at one point.

Gas station owners were further pressured by Sen. Violet, who, on [numerous occasions](#), voiced frustration with the high prices, and said residents were being "ripped off." He also called on the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs Commissioner Devin Carrington to place a cap on the markup price of gas per gallon and force gas station owners to take the government to court.

"Perhaps we're going to have to let them take us to court. Put a cap on the markup and let them open up the books in court and show us how much they're marking it up. Let us go to court so we could reveal what is going in the gas industry. Something needs to be done," Violet said.

"We might lose the case because the courts might say it was not legal for you to take them to court because you didn't conduct the study. But fine, they will have to open the books, and the people of the Virgin Islands will be able to clearly see that they're ripping us off; and they really need to stop because that's more disposable income."

Now, however, prices here vary between \$3.11, \$3.09 and \$3.07.