

The Virgin Islands Consortium

American Airlines' New 3-Hour Check-In Policy Places Hardship On Local Travelers, Sen. Forde Says

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ST. THOMAS—Senator Jean Forde expressed displeasure at American Airlines' recently-issued 3-hour warning, which advises passengers to check-in three hours early or risk getting left behind, a press release the senator's office issued this afternoon has revealed.

According to the release, upon learning of American Airlines' warning to travelers, Senator Forde wrote to American Airlines Regional Manager, Cathy-Ann Edwards Joseph, expressing his concerns on the matter.

In the letter, Forde stated that the change in policy will not only pose a hardship on residents and visitors alike, but will certainly impose a negative impact on those traveling on American Airlines' first flight in the morning at 8:05 a.m., as the airport is not open on a 24-hour basis and would be closed at the mandated check-in time for an early morning flight. Moreover, Forde noted that taxi service is virtually non-existent at that time of the morning, the release further stated.

"While I recognize that the airline is attempting to address problems regarding delayed departure, I do feel that they can be dealt with in a different manner, and I urge American Airlines to rethink this matter and at least delay the implementation of this departure policy until they have met with the V.I. Port Authority and the Department of Tourism to try resolve these difficulties," Forde said.

"After all, it is impossible not to notice that none of the other airlines operating on St. Thomas have taken such drastic measures."

He concluded: "I am very much concerned about our guests' last impression of their island experience, and about the inconvenience this decision places on our people."