

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Mapp Appoints Former Senator Juan Figueroa-Serville As Acting Health Commissioner

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ST. CROIX -- Former senator Juan Figueroa-Serville, whose most recent position was assistant commissioner of the Department of Health, has been tapped by Governor Kenneth Mapp to serve as the territory's acting commissioner of the same department, a press release Government House issued on Tuesday makes known.

Mr. Figueroa Serville's appointment marks the end of former Acting DOH Commissioner Ms. Phyllis Wallace's tenure, after asking the governor to [withdraw her nomination in July](#). The process of finding her replacement saw added urgency when 31st Legislature senators called on Mr. Mapp to move quickly after Ms. Wallace failed to appear at multiple Senate hearings.

"It seems that every time the commissioner of health is invited to a Senate hearing, she's absent," Sen. Kurt Vialet said at a September Senate hearing. "And it is high time that the governor name a permanent commissioner of the Dept. of Health, [because] the concerns of that department are large, [and] we can't have individuals leading departments too afraid to come before the Legislature and testify. And this is on a regularly basis.

"So I think it's time for us to get a permanent selection for the position. I had a discussion with the governor, and I'm hoping that he names somebody very, very soon," he added.

In a [letter](#) advising Mr. Figueroa-Serville of his new role, Mr. Mapp thanked the former senator for his "willingness to serve in this new capacity."

But it seems unlikely that Mr. Figueroa-Serville will be the governor's permanent pick, as the letter makes clear that he will only hold the position "until a permanent commissioner is approved."

Feature Image: Juan Figueroa-Serville, via [linkedIn](#).