

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Show St. Croix The \$220 Million Cash

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Last week brought some good news to the territory with the announcement of the sale of the Hovensa refinery to ArcLight. It was a long-awaited and welcomed treat after the extended and contentious fallout that resulted when the refinery's sale to ABR [fell through last fall](#). By the way, I'm glad that fell through. Hats off to the members of the 30th Legislature for seeing that [sham of a deal](#) for what it was.

As part of the ArcLight deal, the territory stands to receive a windfall of \$220 million in cash. As Governor Mapp said during his press conference last week, these funds are not an end all be all to the territory's financial woes. But, in my opinion, it's a really good start.

This brings me to the reason I'm writing today. I believe that much, if not all of those

funds, should be spent in the development of St. Croix, first and foremost. This should be a no-brainer. Aside from the fact that the refinery is based on St. Croix and it's only right that its sale should directly benefit the people and economy of St. Croix, how much more development and fancy stuff does St. Thomas need at this point? The \$220 million should be placed in a separate fund for St. Croix-specific projects and not be co-mingled with the General Fund.

With the booming tourism industry on St. Thomas that brings cruise ships galor to the island, not to mention the bevy of developers flocking to St. Thomas's shores, and the lion's share of federal funds always seeming to make their way to Rock City, can St. Croix be taken care of this time? Can the Mapp Administration show St. Croix the \$220 million cash?

St. Croix is in crisis. Our young people and families deserve the same opportunities and recreational activities prevalent on our sister island. Our roads need to be fixed, our schools need to be rebuilt and outfitted with all the latest technology, an inter-island ferry system needs to be developed between St. Croix and nearby islands, recreational facilities need to be built up, tourism needs to be built up, jobs must be created for our young people. The list goes on and on.

St. Croix needs this one. I implore the members of the 31st Legislature, particularly the senators from St. Croix, to make sure that St. Croix benefits greatly from this deal. It's only right. I know there are good people on our sister islands that stand in solidarity with me on this issue. For the greedy naysayers who would seek to say give St. Thomas more, more, more--boo to you! These Virgin Islands are supposed to have all things in common. One island cannot be allowed to thrive while the others, or one other, lay in shambles.

Kenneth Mapp, this is your opportunity to stand up for the people of your native land and do right by us. Senate, the ball is in your court and we are looking at how you handle this. In the grand scheme of things, \$220 million is not a whole lot of money when it comes to addressing all the problems on St. Croix alone, but it will help us move in the right direction. #stcroix4life

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