

The Virgin Islands Consortium

British Virgin Islands Man Facing 20 Years In Federal Prison For Alien Smuggling

VIC News / **Published On February 16, 2016 09:05 PM /**

Staff **February 16, 2016**



ST. THOMAS -- Ashemba Frett, 22, of Tortola, British Virgin Islands, made his initial appearance before U.S. Magistrate Judge Ruth Miller after being charged in a complaint with encouraging and inducing aliens to illegally enter the United States, United States Attorney Ronald W. Sharpe announced today. Judge Miller released Mr. Frett to the custody of a third-party custodian and ordered him to post a \$10,000 unsecured bond.

According to the complaint, on February 14, 2016, the United States Coast Guard (U.S.C.G.) conducted a safety stop on a vessel in U.S. waters. The vessel was operated by Mr. Frett and an unidentified individual who jumped overboard prior to the vessel being stopped. A Haitian national and a national from the Dominican Republic were on

board the vessel. Neither the Haitian nor the Dominican Republic national possessed documents to lawfully enter the United States.

Under federal law if convicted of illegally encouraging and inducing aliens to enter the United States, Mr. Frett faces a maximum of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine, and in the case of a violation in which the offense was done for the purpose of private financial gain, not more than 10 years' imprisonment.

This case is being investigated by U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Air and Marine Operations, the U.S.C.G. and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Sigrid M. Tejo-Sprotte.

United States Attorney Sharpe reminds the public that a complaint is merely a formal charging document and is not evidence of guilt. Every defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.