

The Virgin Islands Consortium

There Will Be No Cruise Ship Visits To St. Croix During The Summer; Gittens Confirms

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ST. CROIX -- There will be no cruise ships visiting St. Croix for the summer months -- June, July, and August -- Senator Kenneth Gittens revealed during a Committee on Rules and Judiciary hearing held on Tuesday. Mr. Gittens said he became aware of the situation during his visit to the annual cruise line event in Faut Lauderdale, Florida called [Seatrade](#).

"I was disappointed to learn that St. Croix in particular will not have any cruise ships for the summer months," Mr. Gitten said. He added that because senators were present at the event, "I was able to publicly ask them to consider St. Croix as a port of call for any cancellations they may have in another destination due to whatever unforeseen

circumstances."

Mr. Gittens said the cruise line executives present at the event all agreed to send ships to St. Croix pending they were cancelled elsewhere. The senator also said the cruise executives spoke fondly of St. Croix, and that they called Governor Kenneth Mapp by name, a sign that Mr. Mapp has been working tirelessly to turn the fortunes on this island in regards to tourism, according to Mr. Gittens.

Mr. Mapp has indeed been making strides to put St. Croix at the forefront with announcements of various development projects, among them a four-star hotel, to bolster the Big Island's visitor traffic. And during the 2016 Seatrade event, the governor provided an update on the territory's infrastructural plans, as well as its commitment to sustainable tourism development and local agriculture to media outlets in Florida.

But the specifics for St. Croix's uplifting, as they relate to tourism development, have yet to be laid bare. The governor often speaks of new development, but a clear plan that specifically focuses on St. Croix's beleaguered tourism product, has not been introduced. And an assessment of what it would take to propel the tourism sector here, which was conducted by Disney and which Mr. Mapp said would be unveiled last month, has not been made available.