

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Territory Would Love To Host President Obama Before He Leaves Office, Mapp Says

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ST. CROIX -- Governor Kenneth Mapp says the Government of the Virgin Islands would be honored to host President Barack Obama before he leaves office, stating that Mr. Obama is almost universally loved here and would enjoy the territory's tropical offerings.

The visit, Mr. Mapp said during his remarks at Thursday's 99th Transfer Day Commemoration, would double as a vacation for the first family and as a chance for the U.S. president to learn first-hand the difficulties the the VI faces, as well as areas where it has made gains.

And at a brief press conference following Transfer Day activities, held with U.S. Department of Interior Secretary Sally Jewell, the governor built on earlier remarks made by Sonia Jacobs Dow from the St. Croix Landmarks Society, who first made the plea for Mr. Obama to visit the Virgin Islands.

"I want to underscore Ms. Sonia Dow's passionate plea as a message to you to ask the wonderful president of the United States, Barack Obama, to visit with us here in the Virgin Islands before the end of his term," Mr. Mapp told Ms. Jewell. "We would love to host him. It would be a place of additional warmth."

He added: "We know he's loved, respected and admired globally and within the United States as well, but the warmth in the Virgin Islands for the president is significant. We would be glad to have him here and hope that you can return with him."

The appeal comes weeks following Mr. Obama's historic trip to Cuba, which the president is hoping will serve as a benchmark for change on the island nation. Mr. Obama has taken significant steps to mend relations with Cuba, including [easing restrictions](#) on banking and travel.

Feature Image: Barack Obama along with Michelle, Malia and Sasha stop to look at a painting of Abraham Lincoln in the Museum of the City of Havana.

Image Credit: Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images.