

# The Virgin Islands Consortium

## Millin Young Calls For Override Of Mapp's Line-Item Veto Of Limousines Purchase Prohibition

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ST. THOMAS -- Senate Vice President Janette Millin Young said when the Legislature reconvenes in session on Monday, May 9, she will move for the override of Governor Kenneth Mapp's line-item veto of an amendment prohibiting the purchase of ceremonial parade-type cars for the governor and lieutenant governor.

On March 30, Mrs. Millin Young and Sen. Kurt Violet offered amendment No. 31-944 to bill No. 31-0224, which added a section that said, "Nothing in this Act is intended to authorize the purchase of official or ceremonial vehicles for the offices of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor. The commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement is prohibited from using the monies authorized in this Act to purchase

ceremonial or official vehicles for the offices of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor.”

But Mr. Mapp, in his transmittal letter to Senate President Neville James on recent actions taken on the Emergency Vehicles bill and other measures, contended that the addition of the language would prohibit not only the governor and lieutenant governor offices from purchasing the ceremonial vehicles, it would also bar other departments tied to the aforementioned offices from purchasing much-needed transportation.

The governor then reminded senators of the many offices connected to the Office of the Governor: Office of Veterans’ Affairs, the Law Enforcement Planning Commission, the VI Energy Office, the Division of Personnel, the Office of Management & Budget, the Bureau of Information Technology, the Office of the Tax Assessor, the Division of Corporations and Trademarks, the Division of Banking & Insurance, the Division of Tax Collector, the Division of the Recorder of Deeds, the Division of Property Appraisers, the Office of the Cadastral. According to Mr. Mapp, all these offices would be hamstrung by the move.

But the amendment included language specific to the purchase of “ceremonial” or “official” vehicles for the offices of the governor and lieutenant governor. Furthermore, it did not mention the prohibition of any office that may be connected to Mapp or Potter’s. The governor added that without the line-item veto, he would be forced to ask the Legislature to appropriate monies from the general fund to provide the necessary transportation for the employees within these units to perform their duties.

"I reviewed the arguments the governor used to justify his line-item veto, and I find them wholly without merit and lacking authority," Mrs. Millin Young said in a press release issued late Friday.

"We must be consistent in our public statements and actions. The governor's original funding request, when his representatives testified, they made a distinction of what constitutes a ceremonial vehicle and made it clear that they were parade-type vehicles for the governor and lieutenant governor. There is a clear distinction between a ceremonial-type vehicle and a service vehicle for routine office requirements," Mrs. Millin Young added.

"The governor's veto message falls flat on its face given the existing circumstances, and the Legislature would be ill-advised to retreat from its well-considered position. The notion of legislative intent is a part of the legislative process, and, in these circumstances, can and must prevail," the three-term senator noted.

"If last year the governor openly declared that we have a major fiscal crisis and he is directing a reduction of cars, cell phones, fax lines and unnecessary expenditures, then all top leaders must say and do this. The taxpayers need to be reassured that we are limiting unnecessary and extravagant spending.

"During budget hearings last year, many, if not all, government agencies came before us with requests for additional resources. Some departments like Police and Education indicated they barely had sufficient funds to meet their mandates. Clearly, many of our roads and schools are in disrepair, WAPA, GERS, our hospitals are in dire financial straits and a massive 2017 fiscal budget looms, raising questions about the sustainability of employee raises. We know this is true and thus we must be consistent. We will be

judged by the actions we take. I, for one, am willing to take a stand," Millin Young concluded.

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