

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Senator Marvin Blyden Is Seeking Community's Help In Finding Ways To Curtail Gun Violence In Territory

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Senator Marvin Blyden

ST. THOMAS -- In a press release issued today, freshman Senator Marvin Blyden said he was not pleased with the level of crime in the territory, specifically the homicide deaths of black males that Mr. Blyden said has become the norm.

The senator's comments come as the islands, particularly St. Thomas, has seen relentless gun violence in recent weeks --some leading to homicide deaths, while others lead to multiple injured victims.

The past two weekends here have been particularly bloody: Last week, a drive-by shooting [ended the lives of two young men](#), and seven days later, early Sunday, [another drive-by shooting](#) claimed the life of yet another young man and left a woman critically injured. Again on Sunday, at about 3:28 p.m., a 22-year-old was [gunned down](#) at a housing community.

"It is getting out of hand and my heart ached when I attended a graduation ceremony at CAHS for Adult Education over the weekend, and there were three young men who graduated and should [have] been there but could not because they tragically lost their lives to gun violence," said Mr. Blyden, who was described as "somber and disturbed."

Mr. Blyden believes the crimes are senseless and retaliatory in nature, and should not be accepted as normal. He pinned responsibility on parents to raise their children right, and the Legislature, to find ways that would quell what he sees as a growing problem.

According to the release, Mr. Blyden has reached out to Virgin Islands Housing Authority Executive Director Robert Graham, and Virgin Islands Police Department Commissioner Delroy Richards, to reach a memorandum of understanding that would see both government entities working cohesively on possible solutions to the problem.

"It seems like what we've been doing isn't working as well as it should, and I want to see what can be done to help save lives, to include jobs. Getting to the core of the problem is the solution, but we need to know exactly what that is," Mr. Blyden concluded.