

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Millin Young Pleased With Passage Of Crime And Public Health Safety Measure

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ST. THOMAS -- Emphasizing that living in a violent community can wreak havoc on the physical and mental well-being of its residents, and similarly, poor health can lead to dangerous behaviors, Senate Vice President Janette Millin Young hailed the passage of her bill to create a crime and public health study as timely.

"Bill No. 31-0005 was unanimously approved by the body during legislative session held on June 29, 2016. The bill recognizes violence as a public health problem; allowing public health professionals can now identify the problems that lead to violence and the risk factors," said Mrs. Millin Young on Thursday.

"Preventing violence must be a major government priority. Bill No. 31-0005 seeks to save lives, reduce crime, protect the public, and put measures in place to effectively tackle violence and crime. It is time we begin to address the root cause of violence to prevent it from happening in the first place," she added, guided by the recent increase in homicides in the territory, particularly on St. Thomas.

Mrs. Millin Young said that a study of crime and violence in the territory would outline the steps necessary to implement a sound public health approach to violence prevention. According to the release, it's the senator's hope to see more violence prevention programs being developed as a result of the passage of this measure, and the coordination and collaboration of the sectors of public health, mental health, courts, social services, education and other relevant entities.

"As we move forward with the documentation and monitoring of violence and crime in our community, we should be able to see the implementation of more effective programs and policies that will address social, emotional and behavioral issues as well as family environments. Additionally, the data that will be derived from these new sources of information should be shared in order to monitor health risk behaviors among residents, particularly our youth," Mrs. Millin Young concluded.