The Virgin Islands Consortium

Senate Sets Aside $15 Million For Tax Refunds As Part Of Borrowing Measure

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ST. THOMAS -- Members of the 31st Legislature met at the Alexander Farrelly Justice Complex in the Superior Court on Thursday afternoon, to approve a working capital bill of $247 million that Governor Kenneth Mapp had vetoed and sent back to the Senate, assailing members of the body for forwarding a measure to him that he said was "fatally flawed."

The senators responded with no-holds-barred chides of their own (a full story is forthcoming Friday morning), but went on to approve the measure 13-2, noting their responsibilities as senators and the importance of the measure, provisions of which include funding for the fiscal year 2017 budget.

An amended to the bill that will come as welcome news to residents -- many of whom have reached out to this publication asking for an update relative to tax refunds -- sets aside some $15 million strictly to make tax refunds available to residents. The amendment, which was authored by Senator Nereida Rivera-O'Reilly, will be used for tax refunds preceding 2016. It was co-sponsored by Senators Kurt Vialet, Kenneth Gittens, Justin Harrigan, Sr., Novelle Francis, Almando Liburd, Sammuel Sanes, Myron Jackson, Neville James, Clifford Graham, Marvin Blyden and Jean Forde.

Bureau of Internal Revenue Director Marvin Pickering was quoted at today's session as stating that once Finance Commissioner Valdamier Collens releases the funds, tax refunds would be made available to residents by Thanksgiving.