

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Nelson Urges Senators To Take Action On Medical Marijuana Bill At Upcoming Session

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Senator Positive Nelson last week sent a letter to all senators asking for their support to special-order his medical marijuana bill to a session agenda set for December 20. The measure, Bill No. 31-0348 -- The Virgin Islands Medical Cannabis Patient Care Act -- [was placed on hold in June](#), as senators cited multiple problems with the way the bill was written — mirroring concerns raised during the measure's [first hearing](#).

In his letter, Mr. Nelson reminded his fellow colleagues of what he said was the plight of Virgin Islands citizens who suffer chronic pain and ailments, urging lawmakers to approved bill. He said the measure is a well-studied and crafted piece of legislation, forged by science and evidence, which would allow for the use of marijuana for medicinal

purposes.

Mr. Nelson says he is prepared to offer an amendment to the measure, which he says addresses many of the concerns raised the committee hearings. "These changes are primarily aimed at tightening safeguards to ensure that the medical cannabis program is even more effective, safer for patients, not negatively impactful on commercial enterprises, and not contributing to recreational use of marijuana in the territory, particularly among young people," he said.

Roughly 56.6 percent of Virgin Islands residents voted by referendum in favor for the use of medical marijuana for medicinal purposes on November 4, 2014, Mr. Nelson reminded.

"We made a commitment to our constituents to offer measures on their behalf. I call on my fellow senators to join us in special-ordering this bill to the floor on December 20. We have one last chance as a body -- the 31st Legislature -- to approve this measure and provide relief, medical relief to patients, families and our community. Let us do our jobs so residents can have access to medical cannabis," Mr. Nelson said.

As an aside, Mr. Nelson thanked those who showed support in some form [following his vehicular accident](#), which occurred on Sunday, December 3.

"To conclude, I would like to deeply express my sincere thanks, gratitude and love to all of you for your prayers, thoughtfulness and concern after my accident. Your expression of love was felt and I am grateful. I am thankful to God for the outpouring of his love and mercy towards me for sparing my life. God is good, all the time!" Mr. Nelson proclaimed.

Feature Image: Sen. Nelson holds up a small canister containing a liquid form of medical marijuana during a May, 2015 press conference held at the Curriculum Center located west of the St. Croix Central High School. (Credit: Ernice Gilbert, VIC)