

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Francis Says He's Expecting Facts And Transparency From Mapp's State Of The Territory Address

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ST. CROIX -- As Governor Kenneth Mapp prepares to make his third State of the Territory Address, Senator Novelle Francis, in a press release issued Saturday, said he's expecting that the annual speech scheduled for Monday will be a critical and factual analysis of the government's position.

It will be the third SOTA that Mr. Francis has attended as a senator.

According to the release, Mr. Francis says he is hopeful that the governor's speech will reflect the territory's true state of affairs and give a total and comprehensive look into the fiscal direction that the territory is heading.

"Last year, the governor in his own words reported that the territory 'is receding from the brink of financial collapse and entering a state of economic and financial recovery,' and we believed that to be true until it was clear that we are much closer to financial collapse than we were 12 months ago," the second-term Democrat said.

As he reflects on the things that Mr. Mapp said last year and in subsequent talks with legislators, Mr. Francis said he is anticipating that the governor will shed light on any proposed austerity measures and the impact of any such measures on public employees, the private sector and the community at large, according to the release. He is especially interested in hearing more of the governor's plans on previously identified critical priorities, which include areas such as the Department of Education, health facilities, the senior population and crime, the release further stated.

"We have a myriad of problem areas that we have been trying to address through legislation and I expect that during his speech on Monday, Mr. Mapp will focus on some of these issues, share his overview and perhaps some solutions that we can work together to see come to fruition," Mr. Francis concluded.

Correction: January 30, 2017

A previous version of this press release stated that tonight's State of the Territory Address will be the governor's second. Tonight's SOTA will be the governor's third. The release has been updated to reflect the correction information.