

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Francis Calls For Stepped-Up Crime Prevention And Community Intervention

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Senator Novelle Francis, vice-chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security, Justice and Public Safety on Monday reached out to community organizations and law enforcement entities to move quickly to implement crime prevention and intervention strategies needed to curb the occurrences of violent crimes across the territory, a release Mr. Francis's office issued has made known.

The second-term Democrat said hearing reports of homicides every few days and having 9 homicides reported to police just six weeks into the new year, is cause for alarm.

"The reports are alarming and we all see the rippling effects of lives being violently taken in our communities. I urge implementation of intervention programs and encourage more frequent traffic initiatives, and community policing that have been proven to work as effective crime-fighting tools," he said.

Mr. Francis said that without traffic initiatives criminals can traffic illegal weapons to fuel their criminal activities without risk of interception by police. "Measures such as improved street lighting, surveillance cameras, routine traffic stops and increased police enforcement are proven crime fighting strategies. We need more boots on the ground but taking simple yet effective steps can have a significant impact on our overall crime rate," he said.

The senator also noted that crime prevention remains a high priority for him as he continues to push anti-gang, no loitering and firearm importation measures through the legislative process, according to the release. "We are seeing the visible result of failing to develop economic opportunities, build a skilled workforce, create jobs and provide quality education to all. It is going to take a collaborative effort to right the wrongs of society before we lose an entire generation," he concluded.