

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Sen. Francis Says Home Depot And Others Outsourcing Work While Ending Contracts With Local Providers

VIC News / **Published On April 07, 2017 09:45 PM /**

Staff **April 07, 2017**



A Home Depot employee retrieves power tools at the company's store in Torrance, California, U.S., on Friday, May 13, 2016. Home Depot is scheduled to release earnings figured on May 17. Photographer: Patrick T. Fallon/Bloomberg via Getty Images

Senator Novelle Francis in a press release issued Friday, said he has learned that companies such as Home Depot were choosing to outsource work to companies based outside the territory, while ending contract with local providers. The senator expressed frustration that these companies were apparently not subject to the same level of scrutiny

as local firms.

Mr. Francis said he learned last week that Home Depot and other businesses were increasingly outsourcing their services to companies based in Puerto Rico. He did not reveal how or where he received the information, but lawmakers sometimes have access to details not readily available to the public.

"Our local companies, which provide jobs and contribute to our tax base, are disadvantaged by companies that receive benefits but are not subject to the same fees, taxes or licensure requirements," he said. "Historically, when these outside companies are chosen to carry out these services, they take the lion's share of the money back to their community. This increases their employment, their tax revenue and the overall economic state of their community while the Virgin Islands continues to suffer."

The senator called on the Departments of Labor and Licensing and Consumer Affairs to make sure that all companies doing business in the territory are duly licensed and in compliance with local laws.

"We have to level the playing field to ensure that our local companies, who have a vested interest in this community, always receive their fair share of the pie so that they can reinvest in their families and support our local vendors and keep the money circulating in our community," he said. "When we put these issues in the light, they are corrected for a time, then they resurface with another company. I will continue to champion this cause because I believe that if unfair practices are unaddressed, we will not certainly not achieve the economic parity that our local business owners deserve."