

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Coffelt To Announce Bid For Governor Tuesday

VIC News / **Published On May 24, 2017 05:28 PM /**

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ST. CROIX -- Former Judge Soraya Diase Coffelt, above, will announce her bid for governor of the Virgin Islands on Tuesday, according to a press invite sent to media outlets, including The Virgin Islands Consortium.

The announcement is another sign that the 2018 gubernatorial year will include a multitude of candidates, among them Ms. Coffelt, Albert Bryan, Jr., Adlah Donastorg and Warren Mosler. Mr. Mosler announced his candidacy [late January](#), but has gone cold ever since, leading to the belief among political circles that he may be reconsidering.

"This is an exciting time for my supporters and me. I take great pleasure to personally invite you and your staff to take part in this event," reads the invite.

Ms. Coffelt, who [briefly served](#) as the territory's attorney general following her unsuccessful gubernatorial run in 2014, [resigned](#) two weeks after taking the position, with sources telling The Consortium then that Ms. Coffelt left because she did not want Terri Griffiths -- [who Mr. Mapp appointed as acting A.G.](#) following Ms. Coffelt's resignation -- on her team. The governor later chided Ms. Coffelt, charging that she wanted to run the Department of Justice.

"The person I had intended to nominate first as attorney general did cite sufficient differences in the management style of the administration," Mr. Mapp [said at a press conference in August 2015](#) organized by Government House to announce current Attorney General Claude Walker as his new nominee. "And it was clear -- and with no disrespect intended to her -- it was clear that her perception was that she would be attorney general and then she would take that department and run off and manage it as if it was a government totally under her control."

He added: "The Revised Organic Act is clear in terms of the cabinet, the members of the cabinet and the governor's overall responsibility and authority as chief executive officer of the government to manage the affairs of the government.

"No commissioner, no member of a cabinet can expect — whether in the Government of the Virgin Islands, in a state government, in the national government — that they would be given a department as its head, and then they would do whatsoever they will in that department," the governor said.

Mrs. Coffelt ran her last campaign with the fight against corruption as her platform. Since then, she has written op-eds [in that vein](#), and has continued speaking against the problem. She has also remained active in the community, as well as taking educational trips aimed at bettering her understanding of leadership.

But Ms. Coffelt, who is expected to run as an independent candidate, will face fierce challenges from Democratic contenders, and the governor himself, who has the advantage of being a sitting leader.

Nonetheless, with Mr. Mapp so far unable to fulfill some key promises he's made -- including construction at the Paul E. Joseph Stadium and the rebuilding of the territory's infrastructure beginning with its roads -- all while leading a government that remains strapped for cash with many services being affected, candidates are smelling blood.

The event is set to take place at Gertrude's Restaurant on the Hess Road, with doors opening at 10:30 a.m., followed by an address by Ms. Coffelt at 11:05 a.m. The Consortium will be present to cover the event.