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Territory's Flags to be Flown at Half-Staff Until July 24 in Honor of Ron de Lugo, the USVI's Longest-Serving Delegate to Congress

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Governor Albert Bryan has issued an executive order that all U.S. Virgin Islands flags in the territory are to be flown at half-staff in honor of revered statesman Ron de Lugo, starting today until sunset on Friday, July 24, Government House has announced.

Also, on Friday, Mr. Bryan asked the White House to allow all U.S. flags in the territory to be flown at half-staff.

Mr. de Lugo, a former Virgin Islands senator and the longest-serving Congressional delegate for the territory, died Tuesday, July 14. He was 89.

“He was a pragmatic statesman who carried the torch of political progress for the Virgin Islands and the other insular territories in the U.S. Congress for more than two decades. Growing up, he was a household name, known not only for his political service but also for his commentary on local talk radio,” Mr. Bryan said. “Our thoughts are with his family, loved ones, and all in the Virgin Islands community who mourn his loss. Ron de Lugo will always be remembered for his historic contributions to the political empowerment of the people of the Virgin Islands.”

In 1948, Mr. de Lugo served two years in the U.S. Army as a Program Director for the Armed Forces Radio Network, and, after returning to the Virgin Islands he remained in broadcasting and helped form WSTA, the first radio station on St. Thomas, and was known on the air as “Mango Jones.” He also was instrumental with helping revive the St. Thomas Carnival in 1952.

In 1955, Mr. de Lugo moved with his family to St. Croix and became the second youngest member of the Virgin Islands Legislature, serving from 1962 to 1966. In 1972, he lobbied for the creation of a seat in Congress for a nonvoting representative from the Virgin Islands and subsequently won an elected seat to serve as the Territory’s first Delegate to Congress. He served 10 terms of extraordinary service on behalf of the people of the Virgin Islands as Delegate in the U.S. House of Representatives before retiring

Mr. de Lugo always will be remembered for his historic contributions to the political empowerment of the people of the Virgin Islands by securing for the Territory:

- The right to elect its own governor
- A delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives
- For that delegate to have seniority and a vote in committee
- The right to write its own constitution
- The authority to exercise the people-power rights of initiative, referendum and recall
- The right to have the Adjutant General of the Virgin islands appointed by the Governor of the Virgin Islands

In 1994, the 20th Legislature of the Virgin Islands presented Mr. de Lugo with the Virgin Islands Medal of Honor, and in 2002, the 107th Congress designated the Federal Building in Charlotte Amalie the Ron De Lugo Federal Building and United States Court House.