

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Decaying Bodies, Stench, Emanating From Morgue, Hansen Says

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Mortician covering dead body in morgue

ST. CROIX -- Senator Alicia Hansen on Monday forwarded to The Consortium a letter she wrote to Juan F. Luis Hospital Acting CEO Richard Evangelista, informing him that she had learned from reliable sources, that there were decaying bodies at the morgue located at the hospital, which was causing a stench.

The letter adds more pressure on an already problem-ridden facility, which on Friday [received a letter](#) from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, stating that it had

learned of the storage of hazardous waste at the rear of the hospital, as well as leaks in the hospital's roof and mold in operating rooms.

See a full reproduction of the letter, verbatim, below:

Dear Atty. Evangelista,

It has been brought to my attention that the Juan F. Luis Hospital is experiencing difficulties in the area of the Morgue. Employees are complaining that there is a stench permeating the area and reliable sources are reporting that there are decaying bodies in the facility. Sources are saying that they are concerned about the employees that are being affected on a daily basis.

Mr. Evangelista, I am asking you to investigate this matter post haste. This issue should not exist for as long as reports are saying. I am disappointed that we have found ourselves here yet again, where I have to inquire about such matters. Is it a fact that the freezer utilized in the morgue is not working as is required? If this is so, and the deceased cannot be adequately housed at the hospital morgue, the public needs to be made aware of the situation, so that the families can be allowed the proper time to make the necessary arrangements for the protection and dignity of their loved ones, as well as the government being able to step in and assist in doing what is required by law.

Additionally, as I took a trip to the back of your hospital as part of my investigation in to the improper treatment of families identifying their loved ones, I noticed a pile of bags of which I was informed, contained hazardous waste. I would like an explanation for why those hazardous bags were sitting in the back of the hospital long enough to create a mountain. The protection of the public and the safety of the employees of the Juan F. Luis hospital should be your top priority.

I look forward to your report on the matters at hand.