

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Here's The Breakdown Of The V.I. Government's \$7.5 Billion Request To Congress For Disaster Aid

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Ernice Gilbert **December 19, 2017**



ST. CROIX -- A document provided to media houses present at Senator Positive Nelson's press event on Monday at Palms at the Pelican Cove, gave details on how the Virgin Islands government intends to spend the \$7.5 billion that it has requested from Congress for disaster aid following Hurricanes Irma and Maria, if indeed Congress were to make available the funds. The assessment document comes with an AECOM logo on all pages, suggesting that [the firm](#) may have been hired to do the job.

Mr. Nelson, part of a delegation of local leaders who were present in Washington last month where Governor Mapp and other local officials testified before U.S. lawmakers, said while he appreciated the document provided by the Mapp administration, the

document, he said, does not go into detail on how exactly the funds would be expended. Mr. Nelson also said that the U.S. lawmakers were not trusting of the local leaders, stating, according to Mr. Nelson, that senators were too on Mr. Mapp.

The breakdown

Education: \$715 million. According to the document, the sum includes funds to replace 9 "destroyed" schools with 6 new schools. It also includes replacement of damaged equipment to include buses and IT equipment.

Transportation: \$425 million. That amount includes funding for infrastructure repairs, airport terminal repairs and tower repairs, as well as port and cruise ship terminal repairs, according to the document.

Private and Public Housing: \$1.8 billion. The monies would provide funding for the Stability Through Engagement Program (STEP), which is designed to provide short-term rental assistance to rapidly re-house individuals and families who meet the federal definition of homelessness. The request also seeks Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program funds as Disaster Recovery grants, which is aimed at rebuilding affected areas and providing crucial seed money for recovery. Lastly, the \$1.8 billion request for Private and Public Housing seeks funding to repair or replace Virgin Islands Housing Authority buildings.

Juan F. Luis Hospital: While Mr. Mapp has called for new, smaller hospitals on the three islands, the government's request for the Juan F. Luis Hospital includes funding only to repair, not replace. According to the document, the cost to repair JFL is \$80.7 million, while the cost to replace the facility comes in at \$171 million.

Schneider Regional Medical Center: Total cost to repair SRMC is \$106.3 million, which is what the government is asking for, according to the Mapp administration assessment. It would cost \$176 million to replace.

Estate Catherineberg: \$2 million. The document lists damages such as wind-driven and water intrusion. The facility's structure and mechanical and plumbing were assessed to be severely impacted by the storm.

Government House, St. Croix (Christiansted and Frederiksted): \$18 million. The assessment says the buildings' structure and mechanical/plumbing and fire protection sustained "major damage," with their electrical, communication and security systems suffering "catastrophic" damage.

Government House, St. Thomas and St. John: \$8 million; **Office of the Governor's Finance Communication Building,** \$3 million; and the **Randall Doc James Reacetrack** at \$4 million.

The above listed areas of need are those included in the document that comes with some level of description. The following, however, did not. It is not certain whether this was an error by Mr. Nelson's team or an omission by the Mapp administration.