

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Ben Carson Says He Will Visit USVI During Rebuilding Process

VIC News / **Published On April 11, 2018 04:50 PM /**

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Moments after announcing \$1.6 billion in aid to the U.S. Virgin Islands as part of a \$28 billion federal effort to support states and territories that were affected by natural disasters, Ben Carson, secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (H.U.D.), told The Consortium that he will visit the territory as it rebuilds from the ruinous storms of 2017.

Vice President [Mike Pence has visited](#), so too have other top Trump administration officials, including H.U.D. deputy secretary. But Mr. Carson, whose department will oversee the \$1.8 billion in funding already committed to the U.S. Virgin Islands, has yet to land in the territory as secretary of H.U.D.

"I have certainly been there in the past, and will be there during the building process," Mr. Carson said during an interview.

Mr. Carson said the total investment in the U.S.V.I. this year of \$1.8 billion, would not only harden the territory's infrastructure and prepare it for a solid future, the funds would also help the territory better compete against its Caribbean counterparts.

"Basically the real purpose of this is to put the U.S. Virgin Islands in a very strong position for the future, as they compete with other entities in the Caribbean," Mr. Carson said.

Later during the interview, while speaking on H.U.D.'s commitment to the territory, Mr. Carson said, "As far as I'm concerned, the U.S. Virgin Islands is part of the United States -- a vital part of it -- so they will be supported as any other part of the United States would be."

Feature Image Credit: The New York Times.

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