

The Virgin Islands Consortium

In Session, Lawmakers Approve Renewal Of Cigna Insurance, Other Health-Related Measures

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ST. THOMAS -- During a daylong Senate session at the Earl B. Ottley Legislative Hall on Tuesday, lawmakers who make up the 32nd Legislature approved several health-related measures, among them the renewal of the Cigna Health Insurance package that's been in place for seven months, and the renewal of the Government Employees' Health and Dental Insurance Plan.

Cigna representatives were not present at the Session, but lawmakers had already met with the company's officials to discuss the agreement during a Committee of the Whole meeting.

"We have had significant discussions with CIGNA and the Virgin Islands Department of Personnel in a meeting held by the Committee of the Whole and subsequently the Committee on Finance. Today the contract will be formally ratified," said Senate President Myron Jackson.

Though the renewal agreement with Cigna has been in place for seven months, lawmakers were hindered in ratifying it because of the 2017 storms that ravaged the territory. And the agreement currently in place, which sees government employees paying 5 percent less than [the original renewal proposal](#), was enough for most lawmakers who saw no need to rock the boat.

"We have to look at the fact that it would have been worse if we had accepted the 60/40 percent ratio where government employees [would] have to pay an additional 5 percent [extra] for their health insurance," said Sen. Tregenza Roach. "However, the insurance will remain the same at 65 percent for the government and 35 percent for employees. We take this action because we are not in the condition to risk the health of government employees."

"Why are we here talking about this when it is already in process?" asked Sen. Janette Millin Young. "I will vote for it because my people need health insurance."

Following deliberations, the senators approved the following measures:

- Bill No. 32-0196- An Act Ratifying Agreement for Group Life with ALIC Life Insurance Company for Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance Agreement
- Bill No. 32-0199- An Act ratifying and approving the Fifth Amendment to the Agreement for Medical Health Insurance and the First Amended and Restarted Agreement for Medical Health Insurance between the Government of the Virgin Islands (GVI) and United Healthcare Insurance Company and its affiliates.
- Bill No. 32-0201- An Act ratifying the Fourth Renewal of the Group Medical Health Insurance Agreement
- Bill No. 32-0202- An Act ratifying the First Agreement for Group Dental Health Insurance by and between the GVI, through the Health Insurance Board of Trustees, the V.I. Port Authority, the University of the Virgin Islands, the St. Thomas East End Medical Center, the V.I. Housing Authority the Non-profit organizations defined as eligible by the Government, including the Frederiksted Health Care, Inc. and CIGNA Health and Life Insurance Company. For purposes of this First Organization is an entity determined by the Government to satisfy the requirements under applicable V.I. law for participation under this First Renewal

All items approved will be forwarded to Governor Kenneth Mapp for further consideration. The session was recessed until Thursday, May 3.