

The Virgin Islands Consortium

President Trump Grants Request For Additional Recovery Aid To USVI, Mapp Says

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Additional federal disaster relief and recovery assistance has been authorized for the U.S. Virgin Islands at the request of the territory's government, Governor Kenneth Mapp has reported.

"This announcement means that we should not have to pay any share of the costs for debris removal or emergency home repairs," Mr. Mapp said. "It represents tens of millions of dollars in cost savings to the Virgin Islands."

According to a Government House release, President Donald J. Trump made additional disaster assistance available to the territory by authorizing an increase in the level of

federal funding for disaster relief as a result of Hurricanes Irma and Maria. Under the president's order, the federal share for Other Needs Assistance under section 408 of the Stafford Act and all categories of Public Assistance is authorized at 90 percent, except for assistance otherwise approved at 100 percent.

"We remain grateful to President Trump and all our federal partners for working with us to ensure that the Virgin Islands is truly able to rebuild smarter and stronger," Mr. Mapp said. "We requested an adjustment to the cost share and an extension on the length of time that we could access appropriated funds. I am so pleased at the response, particularly when it comes to the territory's hazard mitigation projects."

According to Government House, the amended disaster declaration allows for certain projects to protect the Territory from future storm damage to be 100 percent federally funded. Prior to the amendment the local government was required to share at least 25 percent of the costs. Government House said the rarely granted 100 percent coverage in this area is the direct result of a meeting that Mr. Mapp had in April with Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator William "Brock" Long and Department of the Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke.

"We have additional time and money available to remove debris, fix homes and mitigate damage from future storms," the governor said. "This is great news for the U.S. Virgin Islands."