

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Petrus Calls For Resignation Of David Mapp Following Black 'Allah' Flag Incident

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Democratic candidate for governor Allison Petrus issued a statement Friday calling for the immediate resignation of Virgin Islands Port Authority Executive Director David Mapp, brother of Governor Kenneth Mapp, in wake of what Mr. Petrus said was a security breach where all of the national flags lining the entrance to Cyril E. King Airport [were removed and replaced with black flags bearing the word "Allah"](#).

"This security issue, along with the overall mismanagement of the Port Authority, would have led to the dismissal of anyone else in that position of executive director if they weren't the brother of the governor or the cousin of the chairperson of the Port Authority Board," Mr. Petrus fired in a scathing rebuke of the Port Authority leadership.

"As a leading tourist destination in the Caribbean, it is imperative that USVI is viewed by the world as a safe vacation destination with a keen eye and focus on the access and security of our ports through which hundreds of thousands of visitors pass through each year," he added.

Additionally, Mr. Petrus said, the executive director's lack of urgency in re-establishing a custom's clearing space in Red Hook speaks to the fact that he is incognizant to the importance of commerce between the BVI and the USVI.

"David Mapp's unacceptable performance demonstrates that he is unfit to manage the most important entity that feeds our economy – the Port Authority. Officials need to be accountable for their duties, and in an administration led by me and Senator Sammuel Sanes, they will be," said the gubernatorial candidate, putting in a plug for himself and his running mate.

"It is clear that David Mapp is not able to execute his job effectively. The fact that Mr. Mapp is brother to the Governor and the cousin of the Chairperson of the Port Authority Board should not afford him any protection from his dereliction of duty in keeping our Ports operable and safe," Mr. Petrus concluded.

In a statement issued today, the president of the Virgin Islands Islamic Society, Omar Idheileh, renounced the illegal and provocative action of the perpetrator.

"This action is disturbing and is against our religious teachings and it has caused unease to the Virgin Islands Muslim communities on St. Croix and St. Thomas. Both communities have spoken to the authorities to help bring the perpetrator to justice," said Mr. Idheileh. "The Muslim communities on St. Croix and St. Thomas have lived here for decades in peace and security with Virgin Islanders, and we hope and strive for it to remain like this."

In a release issued at 10:28 this morning, the Virgin Islands Port Authority said it had launched an investigation into the removal of the flags. The authority said its law enforcement officers reported that upon arrival to the airport early this morning, they noticed that all the flags were removed from the 11 poles at the monument and replaced with black flags. The flags have since been removed.

The Port Authority said it has reported the incident to the F.B.I., the Transportation Security Administration (T.S.A.) and the Virgin Islands Police Department.

"The matter is still under investigation. Security at the airport has been heightened. The Cyril E. King Airport will remain open and functioning as normal, and all flights will arrive and depart as scheduled," the Port Authority release said.

Although rumors were circulating that at least one of the flags included the terrorist group ISIS's name, Monifa Brathwaite, V.I.P.A. public information officer, said, "None of the flags have ISIS on it. They were all identical flags as shown in the photos."