

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Democratic Party State Chair Stands By Allison DeGazon As Board Of Elections Commences Residency Investigation

Politics / **Published On August 17, 2018 09:26 AM /**

Staff **August 17, 2018**



In a letter addressed to Board of Elections Chairman Arturo Watlington, former Delegate to Congress and outgoing State Chair of the Democratic Party, Donna Christensen, made clear her unwavering support for Democratic candidate for senator Allison DeGazon, following a contentious Thursday board meeting.

"The Democratic Party strongly denounces the spurious and baseless attack on the qualifications of one of our candidates, Allison DeGazon, by one or a group of cowards who are throwing stones but afraid to show their hands. In fact, we do not see why an

anonymous letter is being given any consideration at all," wrote Ms. Christensen. "The Party leadership and most of our candidates have worked very hard to keep the campaign on a "high road". Allison, in particular has put together a strong and creative campaign that all of us could learn from. It is sad that a few have chosen to sink to the dirty politics of the past."

The letter was in response to a matter brought up by the board regarding residency qualifications of Ms. DeGazon to be a member of the territory's Legislature. Mr. Watlington said the board had received an anonymous letter this month that included an attachment showing that on May 3, 2017, Ms. DeGazon had registered a business called Business Strategies VI LLC, using a Georgia address for the business and physical locations.

In an email addressed to the board, Supervisor of Elections Caroline Fawkes said Ms. DeGazon utilized her ex-husband's address in Georgia to create the business -- which, by the way, was listed as active/non-compliant on the application, the supervisor said. Mrs. Fawkes said she made contact with Georgia's secretary of state on Wednesday, and was told that one does not need to be a resident of Georgia to have a business there.

Mrs. Fawkes said her due diligence found that Ms. DeGazon was a resident of the territory by July 4, which was [the last day to register for the 2018 primary election](#).

The board failed to decide on what to do with the DeGazon matter on Thursday, following a question by board member Jevon Williams asking whether members could see the documents that the Georgia secretary of state provided to the supervisor. He also requested Ms. DeGazon's tax clearance documents along with her police background check results.

Mr. Watlington refused, contending that some board members were also seeking confusion.

Following the meeting, Ms. DeGazon [posted on her Facebook page](#), "Very positive hearing at Board of Elections today. I want to thank the board and staff in advance for their due diligence in quickly resolving this matter. My campaign continues..."

Recount petition for Ophelia Williams-Jackson denied

The board also took on the matter of a recount request by Dale Browne, the campaign manager of Ophelia Williams-Jackson, during the Thursday meeting. Though neither Mr. Browne or Mrs. Williams-Jackson were present, they made their case via teleconference.

Mr. Browne called into question the reliability of the voting machines after at least two voters -- Larry Miller and Violet Rogers -- told board members that the machines refused their ballots even after multiple attempts. But board members questioned whether the machines were being utilized properly.

Ultimately, the board voted overwhelmingly -- 9-0 -- to reject Mrs. Williams-Jackson request for recount.

Feature Image: Allison DeGazon

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