

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Leaders Around The World, Including VI Governor, Pay Tribute To Aretha Franklin

Entertainment / **Published On August 17, 2018 09:52 AM /**

Staff **August 17, 2018**



ATLANTA, GA - MARCH 05: The Queen of Soul Aretha Franklin performs at The Fox Theatre on March 5, 2012 in Atlanta, Georgia. (Photo by Rick Diamond/Getty Images for The Fox Theatre)

Governor Kenneth Mapp on Thursday expressed his condolences to the family, friends and the many fans of acclaimed singer and civil rights activist, Aretha Franklin.

Ms. Franklin, who passed away early Wednesday, was known internationally as the Queen of Soul and had 40 Grammy nominations during her more than six-decade career

in music. She performed at the inaugural events of three U.S. presidents: Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama.

"Few people have impacted so many through their artistry," Governor Mapp said. "I have been a lifelong fan of Aretha Franklin and I was deeply saddened to learn of her passing. Her music moved so many and her performances were legendary."

Mr. Mapp joined other leaders and millions of fans around the world paying tribute to the iconic entertainer and civil rights leader. "Aretha Franklin's music remains uplifting and inspiring," he said. "Though she has passed away, she has left us with so much."

On a Facebook post, [Mr. Obama said](#), "America has no royalty. But we do have a chance to earn something more enduring. Born in Memphis and raised in Detroit, Aretha Franklin grew up performing gospel songs in her father's congregation. For more than six decades since, every time she sang, we were all graced with a glimpse of the divine. Through her compositions and unmatched musicianship, Aretha helped define the American experience. In her voice, we could feel our history, all of it and in every shade—our power and our pain, our darkness and our light, our quest for redemption and our hard-won respect. She helped us feel more connected to each other, more hopeful, more human. And sometimes she helped us just forget about everything else and dance."

"Aretha may have passed on to a better place, but the gift of her music remains to inspire us all. May the Queen of Soul rest in eternal peace. Michelle and I send our prayers and warmest sympathies to her family and all those moved by her song."

The "[Respect](#)" singer was diagnosed with cancer in 2010 and announced last year she was retiring from music.

Ms. Franklin won 18 Grammys, and had 17 Top Ten US chart hits over a music career spanning seven decades. She gave her final performance last November at a gala in New York held in aid of the Elton John Aids Foundation, according to the BBC.

In a statement, her family said: "In one of the darkest moments of our lives, we are not able to find the appropriate words to express the pain in our heart. We have lost the matriarch and rock of our family. The love she had for her children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews and cousins knew no bounds."

The family also confirmed her death was due to advanced pancreatic cancer of the neuroendocrine type.

[Watch the original video](#)