

The Virgin Islands Consortium

USVI Will Be Compliant With Real ID Act By Oct. 10, BMV Says

VIC News / **Published On August 17, 2018 10:41 AM /**

Ernice Gilbert **August 17, 2018**



Bureau of Motor Vehicles officials told lawmakers at the Capitol Building on Thursday that the U.S. Virgin Islands will be compliant with the federal Real ID Act by October 10, the deadline given [via means of extension](#) for U.S. states and territories that failed to meet the original deadline.

D.H.S. had on January 8, 2016, announced that five states, along with the U.S. Virgin Islands, would have two more years to come into compliance with the Act.

Speaking during a budget hearing on Thursday, BMV Director Lawrence Olive -- responding to a question posed by Senator Nereida Rivera-O'Reilly -- said along with

meeting the October 10 deadline, residents would have to pay for the updated license. However, Senator Kurt Vialet said a funding source would be sought to cover the cost, as placing yet another burden on residents would be unfair.

BMV twice missed deadlines that it had set for itself to come into compliance with the real ID Act, following the two-year extension offered by the federal government.

In April 2016, Mr. Olive said the territory would come into compliance with the REAL ID Act by the end of 2016. B.M.V. missed its own deadline, and in May 2017, Mr. Olive again assured lawmakers that compliance would be met by the end of 2017 — but that was before Hurricanes Irma and Maria struck the territory, crippling the operations of B.M.V.

“The overall goal of the REAL ID Act passed by Congress is to prevent the fraudulent issuance and use of driver’s licenses and identification cards, thereby ensuring the safety and security of the American public. Given today’s threat environment, this requirement is as relevant now as it was when the 9/11 Commission recommended it,” said former D.H.S. Secretary Jeh Johnson in 2016.

B.M.V.'s recommended FY 2019 Budget request is \$1,767,664, a decrease of \$252,149 from the 2018 Fiscal Year. The bureau also has \$1 million from the "BMV Funds", bringing the 2019 budgeted total to \$2,767,664. Under non-appropriated funds, BMV has projected \$1,282,246 in the Personalized License Plate Fund, for a grand total of \$4,049,910 for Fiscal Year 2019.

Also at the budget hearing were officials from the Election System of the Virgin Islands and the Virgin Islands Taxi Cab Commission.

The Elections System of the Virgin Islands has two divisions: The Board of Election and the Office of the Supervisor. The Board of Election FY 2019 budget request is \$232,360. The budget breakdown is as follows: \$1567,760 for personnel services, \$36,600 for fringe benefits, \$2,000 for supplies and \$37,000 for other services.