

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Letter to the Editor | I Support Governor Mapp's Veto Of Certified Of Need Waiver, But Measure Should Be Revisited

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I don't often agree with actions taken by Governor Mapp, but I support his veto of Bill 32-0245, waiving a Certificate of Need for non-hospital care facilities, operating as standalone facilities.

Certificate of Need (C.O.N.) programs are aimed at restraining health care facility costs and facilitating coordinated planning of new services and facility construction. I am aware that some states have repealed their C.O.N.s. One that did, has since reinstated it. Some have limited the scope and others have expanded it. Some are governed by independent

councils. At least 35 states continue the process.

While they have not proven to reduce healthcare costs, I believe that the coordinated planning function is important and needed here.

I am aware that the process in the Virgin Islands has been flawed in some instances, but I don't believe in repeal or in waiving it for a full class of facilities. However, it does need to be restructured to ensure that there are clear criteria and that the process is objective and fair. Additionally, there should be a process for reconsideration or to grieve a decision.

In no way is my position one in opposition to the upcoming Liberty Medical Development, LLC, which I support. I take it because I believe that it when a CON is developed and administered well, without personal or special interest influence, the coordination of health care services it provides, serves the community best.

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