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Opinion | PSC Commissioners, Take the Advice of Governor Bryan's Transition Team Report Dated Dec 2018

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Beginning this Monday October 21 at 5:30 pm on the island of St. Croix Board of Education office, St. John Legislature Tuesday Oct 22 5:30pm and Wednesday Oct 23 at the PSC office Barbel Plaza 5:30pm, the Public Services Commission will be conducting a series of public hearings pertaining to WAPA's latest attempt at fleecing the people of this territory via a Base Rate increase.

The base rate is established to cover the operational cost of doing business as a cooperation. Under most normal circumstances a cost increase would be supported because we understand that there is a cost to do business, however, WAPA is not a normal operation on any level. Think about this, WAPA's current Base Rate portion at 22 cents is higher than the entire bill for residents of

Antigua which is 15 cents per kw, Grenada which is 19 cents per kw, Nevis which is 19 per kw, BVI which is 23 per kw! Then when you add in the dreaded LEAC the bill skyrockets to 43 cents per kw, three times higher than Antigua at 15 cents per Kw.

Any increase will have far reaching impacts on the elderly's ability to purchase medicine, food, and other necessary cost of living expenses. Small businesses shouldn't have the monthly battle between rent or WAPA. Churches can't assist many of their members in times of need because tithes and offering which is collected, a higher portion must be diverted to WAPA. Finally, the working class, social workers, home health workers, nurses, teachers, police, fire fighters, taxi drivers, barbers etc, all struggle with the crippling cost of WAPA monthly.

Commissioners, your decision based on the info collected over the next three days will be impactful. Listen to the cry of the people. The pain that will be conveyed is real and detrimental.

Commissioners, Governors Bryan's transition team conducted a report that was completed Dec 2018 and submitted to him subsequently and this writer would like to provide a direct quote from Page 24 of the report: *"WAPA's financial and operational problems will not be solved by simply WAPA throwing more money at the issues. The mere fact that simple solutions such as these are being proposed to solve complex problems is an insult to the Virgin Islands community."*

Submitted by on Sunday: Clarence Payne

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