

The Virgin Islands Consortium

D.H.S. Acting Commissioner Felecia Blyden To Testify On State Of Behavioral Health Programs In USVI

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ST. CROIX -- The Committee on Health, Hospital and Human Services has scheduled a public hearing for Thursday at the Virgin Islands Cardiac Center, to receive an update on the state of behavioral health in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The hearing starts at 9:00 a.m.

The committee, chaired by freshman Senator Oakland Benta, will receive testimony from Department of Human Services Acting Commissioner Felecia Blyden. The committee is also expected to hear from local organizations that administer behavioral health programs impacting the community, according to a release the Legislature issued Tuesday.

Ms. Blyden is expected to testify on pertinent issues that D.H.S. is directly responsible for. The Health, Hospital and Human Services committee has direct oversight of D.H.S.

Mr. Benta said the issues are not only important for committee members to be informed on, but are vital to the Virgin Islands community as they affect the social and welfare existence of the people, places, and things, according to the release.

The programs include: The Family Assistance Programs, contracts, Meals on Wheels, Queen Louise Home and Herbert Grigg Home For the Aged, Juvenile Program Higher Achievement Wisdom and Knowledge, Youth Rehabilitation Center (YRC), Medical Assistant Program (MAP), Residential Services, The Sea View Nursing Home, Behavioral Health Care Services, grants and other social welfare programs, disabilities and vocational rehabilitation programs, Head Start programs, foster care, construction of the Aldersville Senior Center , and any other relevant issues.

Committee members are expected to engage in a dialogue with the heads of local charitable organizations that administer behavioral health programs, among them Ten Thousand Helpers of St. Croix, Inc, My Brother's Workshop, Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands, Women's Coalition of St. Croix, VI Partners in Recovery, and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).