

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Senator On Jeffery Epstein: 'Widespread Corruption' In USVI; 'He Has People On His Payroll'

VIC News / **Published On July 12, 2019 11:58 PM /**

Staff **July 12, 2019**



In an explosive interview with right-leaning news website Breitbart News on Thursday, Senator Oakland Benta spoke out in blunt terms against Jeffery Epstein and his local ties, and called for a wide-ranging investigation by the federal government into the billionaire's and others' alleged "widespread corruption."

"There is widespread corruption within the territory that needs to be addressed and looked at with fresh eyes," Mr. Benta, who served a chief of police on St. Croix before being elected senator in 2018, [told Breitbart News](#).

Mr. Epstein, who in 2008 secured a lenient plea deal in Florida after he pleaded guilty to state charges of soliciting and procuring a minor for prostitution, was rearrested on Saturday night and charged with two counts related to sex trafficking of minors, which together carry a maximum sentence of 45 years in prison.

He owns a mansion on an island in the U.S. Virgin Islands that he also owns, called Little Saint James. Charges against the financier also allege that the USVI home was part of Mr. Epstein's sex trafficking operation.

Mr. Benta told Breitbart that authorities both locally and federally need to probe into more potential crimes that may have been committed.

"Being an investigator as well, and understanding the dynamics, the police department now needs to work with its federal partners very closely because we have interstate trafficking across state lines of minors," Mr. Benta said. "If you move across state lines, that is a trafficking offense. At the end of the day, there are so many souls that have been placed in these positions that don't have the wherewithal or the assistance and they're saying 'please help.' Now we can actually encourage them to come forward because they know that justice will be served once it is brought to the correct ears here in the territory. Now, there is a belief and a trust that services will be rendered and justice will be served based on who they speak to within the territory."

Mr. Benta told the publication that Mr. Epstein ran a massive influence operation to get powerful politicians, nonprofit organizations, law enforcement, and government agencies charged with stopping such corruption and criminal activity from focusing on him. "He [Mr. Epstein] has people on his payroll," Mr. Benta alleged, according to Breitbart. "He has campaign contributions. He has donated to a lot of agencies and nonprofits. Maybe part of the reason why they're not vocal is a lot of the nonprofit organizations have been recipients of contributions from Jeffrey Epstein and a lot of surrounding programs with children."

The Breitbart article, citing a [Bloomberg News report](#), mentioned the wife of former Governor John P. de Jongh's, Cecile, as still being employed by Mr. Epstein, according to his company's published reports.

Mr. Benta said it was past time that the local government root out corruption.

"Yesterday, I made a point of privilege and launched a skirting address to my colleagues that we need to engage in this process of dire concern within our territories because at the end of the day it falls on our shoulders whether we will continue to work under the auspices of a corrupt enterprise which is identified as a white collar crime destination—which under the U.S. jurisdiction we are identified as such—and these sort of behaviors, we are not by ourselves because we have a lot of agencies that are funded federally that are supposed to safeguard this territory from these types of behaviors and crimes against persons most of all our children," he Thursday.

"I'm the only one—the only elected official in the territory, the only government official in the territory, who has said anything about this issue from the time it has begun until now," he added. "It's everywhere. It needs to be the responsibility of all of us—every single person in the government—we now need to hold every single person within the

respected agencies accountable for doing what they are supposed to and if not address it appropriately if they are not doing what they are supposed to. If you know something, say something. Or if you should have known something, that also is a caveat for us to apply justice when it comes to corruption in the other direction.”

The senator also called on Attorney General Denise George to investigate the matter.

“The attorney general, she is a female—Denise George—and just got seated into the position within the last two weeks, she needs to pay attention to the sex offenders list that falls under her purview and needs to make sure we have an account of all who are in the territory and who comes into contact with our children from elementary through high school and any sports like baseball or softball—any organization that has children being the main caveat to those programs—that we hold each one of those registered pedophiles in the region close to our chests as far as our observation in terms of who they are engaging with in the territory,” he said.