

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Watch | Bryan Says USVI Safe From Hurricane Jerry But Urges Vigilance

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During a press conference held at Government House on St. Croix Thursday, Governor Albert Bryan -- going based on information provided to him by a National Weather Service meteorologist -- said the territory was safe from Hurricane Jerry as its projected path takes it north of the USVI.

Mr. Bryan said the meteorologist described the storm as "obedient" because it has been tracking just as the N.H.C. predicted it would.

As he announced that the USVI would be safe from harm if the storm holds to its projected path, Mr. Bryan veered off topic for a moment to express hopefulness that Congress would vote today to extend the 100 percent federal funding for Medicaid in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The 3:00 p.m. vote was successful, according to a release Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett issued this evening.

Mr. Bryan said he would leave the territory for Washington "to pursue further talks with FEMA, among other agencies, especially pushing for our Medicaid."

The governor said meetings were planned next week with a number of representatives and senators in Congress, as well as agency heads of FEMA and HUD, "making sure that we get this money in and that we stay prepared for the hurricane season."

As of 5:00 p.m. today, the eye of Hurricane Jerry was located near latitude 17.5 North, longitude 55.8 West. At the time, the storm was moving toward the west-northwest near 17 mph (28 km/h). A west-northwest to northwest motion at a decreasing forward speed is expected over the next few days.

On the forecast track, the center of Jerry will move north of the northern Leeward Islands Friday, pass well north of Puerto Rico on Saturday and be well east-northeast of the southeastern Bahamas on Sunday.

Satellite and Air Force Hurricane Hunter data indicate that maximum sustained winds have increased to near 90 mph (150 km/h) with higher gusts.

Jerry could strengthen during the next day or so before weakening is anticipated by this weekend. Hurricane-force winds extend outward up to 25 miles (35 km) from the center and tropical-storm-force winds extend outward up to 80 miles (130 km). The estimated minimum central pressure is 979 mb (28.91 inches).

A tropical storm watch is in effect for Barbuda. Anguilla, St. Maarten, St. Martin, St. Barthelemy, Saba and St. Eustatius.

A tropical storm watch means that tropical storm conditions are possible within the watch area, in this case within 24-36 hours.

Interests elsewhere in the northern Leeward Islands should monitor the progress of Jerry, N.H.C. said.