

Democratic District Chairs Stress Importance Of Newly Formed Majority Caucus

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Legislature Building in St. Thomas in 2015 By. ERNICE GILBERT FOR VI CONSORTIUM

The Democratic Party district chairs of all three islands expressed the importance of the 34th Legislature of the Virgin Islands having a Democratic majority in an interview with the Consortium after the Oath of Office Ceremony on Monday.

Renee McAlpin-Peterson, the St. Croix Democratic district chair, said, “Especially now that we (Democrats) have the House of Representatives, the Senate and about to swear in President-Elect Joe Biden, who has a home in St. Croix, in the states we have a lot to gain; we have to be serious and party politics mean something stateside and this is why it is crucial the 34th Legislature remains Democratic.”

Randolph Bennett, the Democratic Party's St. Thomas district chair acknowledged that the party hasn't been perfect but will resolve their issues. "Over the years there have been some drawbacks to our party, sometimes you have conflicts within, but going forward the 34th Legislature and the executive branch are going to resolve those issues and move forward together as a team. That I guarantee to the people of the Virgin Islands."

One way Mr. Bennett told the Consortium that they can accomplish this is by using a "creative leadership approach to solve problems," which is the "style of the new and younger Democrats."

Clarence Stephenson, the St. John Democratic district chair, was in attendance and agreed with the sentiments expressed by his colleagues.

The majority caucus will be composed of Democratic Senators Marvin Blyden, Novelle Francis Jr. , Donna Frett-Gregory (new Senate president) , Kenneth Gittens, Carla Joseph, Steven Payne Sr., Milton Potter, Kurt Violet, and Genevieve Whitaker. They will be joined by Independents Janelle Sarauw and Samuel Carrion to form the 11-member Majority Caucus.

The Democratic Party was incorporated in the USVI in 1963 and is the oldest political party in the territory. This was the first year that all three of the party's district chairs were sworn in together. They did this to set an example of party unity.