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## National Park Services Sends Officers From Puerto Rico and Florida to Assist With Buck Island Security; Bryan Pledges Support of VIPD

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Local leaders said they are working with the National Park Service to make available additional resources to ensure the safety of visitors to the Buck Island Reef National Monument. In the meantime, the National Park Service has enlisted Park Service officers from Florida and Puerto Rico to help with security, according to Government House, a move that follows a recent [brawl and gunshots being fired](#) on the popular beach.

Both Governor Albert Bryan and Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett pledged their support in the security effort, according to a release Government House issued Friday. Mr. Bryan promised manpower that includes officer from the Virgin Islands Police Department and the Department of Planning and Natural Resources.

The governor also sent a letter to the Department of the Interior in support of increased funding for resources to maintain the safety of the popular excursion destination for residents and tourists, according to Government House.

“Our primary goal is to ensure the park is safe for our local community as well as visitors to the Territory,” Mr. Bryan said. “We also have to be good stewards of the precious natural resources at the Buck Island National Monument, that is why we are going the extra mile to keep Buck Island accessible to everyone.”

Ms. Plaskett, who is furthering the issue with federal officials in Washington, D.C., expressed similar concerns about Buck Island.

“The lack of concern for families, individuals, and especially children by the behavior of a few on Buck Island is disappointing and the violence seen recently is appalling and dishonors the work that we have done to ensure that this national treasure remains our local treasure; and not just for us today but for the generations that will come after us,” she said. “Our free and uninhibited access as Virgin Islanders to Buck Island is a right that many individuals in the Virgin Islands generally, and on St. Croix particularly, have fought long for, and our office has maintained pressure and done much hard work to keep that birthright.

Ms. Plaskett added, “The safety of Virgin Islanders and our visitors at Buck Island is important and we will not tolerate a few people destroying the opportunity and access that we have in the jewel that is the Buck Island Reef National Monument.”