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Republican Dennis Lennox Caught on Tape Appearing to Extort Virgin Islands Republican Official

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Gordon Ackley

V.I. Republican Gordon Ackley, who in 2016 [criticized](#) Virgin Islands Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett when her privacy was criminally invaded by disgruntled staffers in 2016, is embroiled in another scandal.

Ackley and John Yob, a political operative from Michigan, have been trying to unseat John Canegata, Chairman of the Virgin Islands Republican Party (VIGOP), for some time. This summer, Ackley filed a lawsuit seeking injunctive relief against Canegata, arguing that Canegata was not the valid Chairman of the VIGOP. Judge Kathleen Mackay rejected Ackley's filing, concluding that Canegata was the valid Chairman of the VIGOP. Ackley then filed a motion with

the Virgin Islands Board of Elections seeking to unseat Mr. Canegata. The Board of Elections rejected Mr. Ackley's arguments, and, to this day, recognizes John Canegata as Chairman of the VIGOP.

Ackley then hired political operative Dennis Lennox, who ran Ackley's failed bid for Delegate to Congress in 2016 and who has been [charged with corruption-related offenses in Michigan](#), to petition the Republican National Committee ("RNC") to order a new election. The RNC, based on Mr. Lennox's arguments, ordered that the VIGOP conduct new officer elections, and, after those elections, conduct an audit of the organization. Many believed that the RNC discriminated against Mr. Canegata, who had prevailed in his arguments before the Virgin Islands courts and Board of Elections only to be stymied by the RNC.

The Consortium has [obtained an audio recording](#) of a call made by Mr. Lennox to VIGOP Secretary Robert Max Schanfarber immediately after the RNC ordered the new VIGOP election. In this recording, Mr. Lennox, who argued before the RNC on behalf of Mr. Ackley, stated, "You're a smart enough guy, you had to have sat in the room today and realized the handwriting was on the wall" at the RNC, implying that the RNC was biased and discriminated against Mr. Canegata. During this conversation, Lennox appears to have attempted to extort Secretary Robert Max Schanfarber into joining the Gordon Ackley/John Yob/Todd Hecht slate for VIGOP office. Readers may recall that John Yob was involved in a scandal several years ago, where he filed false residency affidavits in an attempt to serve as a Republican delegate from the Virgin Islands in the 2016 election. See [here](#).

In the recording, Mr. Lennox can be heard telling Mr. Schanfarber that Mr. Schanfarber should support the Gordon Ackley/John Yob/Todd Hecht slate in the upcoming RNC-ordered election. Mr. Lennox then upped the ante, stating that if Mr. Schanfarber did not support the Gordon Ackley/John Yob/Todd Hecht slate, Mr. Lennox would reveal that Mr. Schanfarber had allegedly been arrested in the 1980s. On the tape, Lennox can be heard stating: "You have bench warrants out for your arrest and you never showed up for your appearances. I'm offering you the opportunity to support John Yob, Gordon Ackley, Jevon, Antoinette, April, unify the party. Those records will disappear and never show up again." Most jurisdictions prohibit threats aimed at coercing behavior.