

# The Virgin Islands Consortium

## Bill Sponsored by Gittens to Acquire Land on St. Croix For State-of-the-Art Police Station Signed into Law

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**The Hannah's Rest site of St. Croix 's future police station. By. OFFICE OF SENATOR KENNETH GITTENS**

Senator Kenneth Gittens' plan to acquire land for a new, state-of-the-art police station in Frederiksted has been signed into law by Governor Albert Bryan, announced Mr. Gittens's office Friday.

Act 8437 transfers two acres of land from the Virgin Islands Water & Power Authority to the Government of the Virgin Islands for the construction of a new police facility at #51 Hannah's Rest, Frederiksted, St. Croix. The land transfer comes at no cost to the

government and provides leverage in securing federal funding for construction of modern police station designed to better meet the needs of the community, Mr. Gittens said.

The announcement follows recent news that the V.I.P.D. owed its current landlord [nearly \\$400,000 for the Mars Hill V.I.P.D. headquarters](#), after failing to pay rent for over 15 months.

Mr. Gittens, a former law enforcement officer, emphasized the importance of the new Frederiksted police station being built to withstand hurricanes and to serve as a western satellite emergency operations center in the event of a disaster.

"I envision this new police station as not simply a place for VIPD to operate, but also as a center for positive community engagement with law enforcement," he said. "Building better relationships and trust with the citizens that our police serve is critical to their effectiveness."

During his tenure at the Legislature, Mr. Gittens has focused much attention on what he describes as "the exorbitant rents our Government is paying for what are often substandard facilities," according to the release.

"Construction of a new police station is a significant cost saving measure in addition to assuring our officers and civilian staff have safe and adequate work spaces," the senator said. "I have also identified property in the the St. Thomas-St. John district suitable for new police facilities and that legislation is now pending."

Mr. Gittens thanked the governor and his colleagues for their support on working toward the construction of a modern, hardened Frederiksted police station and urged the Virgin Islands Police Department to move forward in applying for construction funding.