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Bryan Announces Ray Martinez as Nominee for Police Commissioner

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Police Commissioner Nominee Ray Martinez

Governor Albert Bryan has announced Ray Martinez as his nominee for commissioner of the V.I. Police Department following Trevor Velinor's departure. Mr. Velinor's appointment was part of an agreement between the ATF and the Government of the Virgin Islands under the Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) Mobility Program, which provides for temporary assignment of personnel between the federal, state and local governments. A similar arrangement was actualized during the former Governor Kenneth Mapp administration for then-Health Commissioner Michelle Davis.

Gov't House said Mr. Velinor will officially leave the V.I.P.D. July 13.

The Consortium on June 30, citing a person with first-hand knowledge of the matter, reported that Mr. Martinez [would be chosen to lead the department](#). The publication on June 11 said it had learned that Governor Bryan was considering Mr. Martinez.

Mr. Martinez, speaking Tuesday during the announcement of his appointment, said he understood the task of police commissioner is difficult. "I understand that this is a yeoman's task, but I'm confident that with the assistance of the men and women in blue, along with our great community, that I will be successful," he said.

According to Gov't House, Mr. Martinez has a long and distinguished career with the V.I. Police Department and was appointed to the LEPC by Governor Bryan when the Bryan-Roach administration took office.

Mr. Martinez, a 12-year employee of the Virgin Islands Police Department, served as that department's director of internal affairs and labor relations manager and as director of intelligence, during which time he developed the Criminal Intelligence Unit and its policies and procedures, the administration made known.

He has a bachelor of science degree in international and comparative criminal justice from Kaplan University and a master of science degree in criminal justice and criminology from the University of Cincinnati. He also is a graduate of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center's Criminal Investigation Training Program.

Governor Bryan stated, "I was telling [Martinez] when we had the interview for the job, I said, 'well, you've been chasing this car for a long time, it looks like you finally caught the bumper. Let's see if you could get it [to] stop.'" Mr. Bryan said he was proud to have Mr. Martinez on the team and he highlighted the commissioner-nominee's background in strategic planning and expertise in criminology.

Mr. Martinez's nomination comes at a crucial time for the V.I.P.D., with the territory experiencing rising gun violence and twenty-five homicides for the year so far. But his tenure will also see the rollout of a territory-wide video surveillance system that is expected to help the police department catch criminals while also serving as a deterrent to criminal behavior.

"The first set of cameras are now operable, and we are working towards fully installing and energizing a total of 280 in this first phase," Mr. Bryan said today.

Also working in the incoming commissioner's favor is Governor Bryan's recent announcement that his administration would expand its crime-fighting initiatives with Covid-19 funding following President Joe Biden's announcement that state and local officials whose jurisdictions are seeing heightened gun violence can use \$350 billion in Covid-19 relief dollars to bolster their police departments.

For example, officials can use the funding to hire more law enforcement personnel even if total personnel climbs beyond pre-Covid levels. The funds can also be used to invest in programs that try to identify and mediate potentially violent conflicts.

Mr. Bryan, noting the president's announcement, [said two weeks ago](#), "We have a tremendous opportunity now with President Biden's green light to significantly increase the tools we need. These resources will help us purchase more equipment, hire more officers and add more cameras to our growing surveillance network to help stop the violent crime plaguing our community. We also plan to use these resources to purchase additional scanning equipment at our territory's

ports.”

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