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## Democratic Party Calls for Blyden to be Sanctioned, Slams Senator as 'Selfish and Careless'

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**Senator Marvin Blyden. By. V.I. LEGISLATURE**

The Democratic Party of the Virgin Islands on Friday castigated party member Senator Marvin Blyden, condemning the Senate majority leader for putting Virgin Islanders at "deadly risk," and for acting "selfish and careless" when he attended a function with scores of people last Saturday after testing positive for Covid-19 two days earlier.

"The senator has apologized and expressed regrets and has made it clear it was not intended to be malicious," said the Party. "However, it is the responsibility of the Legislature and other relevant authorities to impose pertinent forms of reasonable sanctions against Senator Blyden after a thorough investigation of this selfish and careless action that has put countless individuals at

deadly risk." The statement was issued by Democratic Party State Chairman Cecil R. Benjamin.

It added, "We emphatically, categorically, and unapologetically condemn Senator Blyden and others who willfully violate these standards and implore them to do better going forward because nothing is more important currently than the safety, health, security, and well-being of our people. Therefore, let's go forward together with truth and fairness while creating new and better opportunities for all."

The Consortium [reported Monday that Mr. Blyden had flouted Dept. of Health Covid-19 protocols](#) when he went to an event with scores of people in attendance two days after testing positive for Covid-19. Mr. Blyden said he was first tested at the Legislature on Tues., Sept. 14 and refused to believe he was positive, so he sought another test at the V.I. Dept. of Health, which also returned positive Wednesday, Sept. 15. The senator said he was advised by D.O.H. to quarantine for 10 days. However, instead of following the health department's protocols, Mr. Blyden said he tested at home several times after and those tests came back negative. That prompted the senator to attend the function at Tillet Gardens using a government-owned, Legislature-issued, LEG 5 vehicle Saturday night.

The [Senate](#) and the [V.I. Dept. of Justice](#) have launched separate investigations into Mr. Blyden's actions.

The senator has [apologized to the public](#), stating, "I should have followed the guidelines set by the Department of Health and the CDC. Plain and simple, regardless of my intentions, my actions were wrong. I am deeply sorry, and I humbly apologize to the people of the Virgin Islands."

He further stated, "I committed this error, I apologize for it, and pledge to grow and learn from it. I also ask your forgiveness and your support as we continue to work together for a better quality of life for all Virgin Islanders."

Mr. Blyden said he attended the Tillet Gardens event Saturday night to meet with investors he had invited to the territory. It was not clear why the meeting could not have been conducted virtually. The senator also hasn't produced results from the home tests that he maintains show he was Covid negative. The one test result he provided to the Consortium showed a manually written date of July 16, 2021, with Mr. Blyden's name also manually written on the Abbott Covid test kit as well.

The Democratic Party said while it is sympathetic that Mr. Blyden contracted Covid-19, "as officials and leaders of government we are expected to be more responsible. We must maintain proper standards and set appropriate examples in accordance with our Democratic National, State and Local policies. It is our responsibility to ensure all protocols, management, restrictions, mass-vaccine mandates, and advocacy of this deadly pandemic that has claimed millions of lives around the world, in the United States and here in the Virgin Islands."

The party said it continues to strongly support and advocate national and territorial Covid-19 pandemic policies.

