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Blyden Says Evidence Will Show He Moved to Cancel Travel Plans

Technology / **Published On October 01, 2021 07:22 PM /**

Staff Consortium **October 01, 2021**

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Senator Marvin Blyden By. OFFICE OF SENATOR MARVIN BLYDEN

Senator Marvin Blyden on Friday said evidence will show that he moved to cancel travel plans to Hawaii, following [a Consortium story](#) that cited a V.I. Dept. of Justice probable cause fact sheet on the matter.

Part of the statement reads, "In actuality, his communications on this matter with the Department of Health, which took place mostly on September 17th, centered around getting assistance from the department in utilizing the Centers for Disease Control fee waiver program, which allows vaccinated travelers to avoid penalties and fees for flight cancellations due to a COVID-19 diagnosis."

According to the statement, Mr. Blyden said, "The fact is that I was trying to cancel my travel plans, not continue with them. By the time the 'Do Not Board' notice was issued I had already informed DOH of my success in cancelling my reservations and thanked the Department for its attempt to assist in the matter. I cannot go into further detail because of the pending case, but the record will bear me out, and I look forward to presenting the evidence to the court at the appropriate time."

The statement said Mr. Blyden expressed disappointment in the Consortium report that cited the V.I. Dept. of Justice's fact sheet stating that the V.I. Dept. of Health issued a no-fly order against the senator following information that he intended to leave the territory on September 21st for a family vacation.

According to the V.I. Dept. of Justice's fact sheet, multiple witnesses confirmed to law enforcement that they saw Mr. Blyden in attendance at the September 18th event at Tillet Gardens. One witness who was in attendance at the event presented themselves to the Department of Health after finding out of possible exposure. Another witness interviewed by police recalled seeing a dark colored SUV with Legislature license plates parked in the handicap space at the venue.

During investigations into the allegations against Mr. Blyden, law enforcement also interviewed Commissioner of Health Justa Encarnacion who confirmed that Mr. Blyden informed her on September 15th that he tested positive for Covid-19 after being tested at the Legislature. She noted that while he informed her that he had been experiencing cold-like symptoms, he believed the test administered by the Legislature was inaccurate. Arrangements were subsequently made for a PCR test on September 15th and Mr. Blyden reportedly contacted the commissioner on September 16th for assistance in interpreting the results. After informing him that the results were positive, the commissioner and V.I. Dept. of Health Territorial Epidemiologist Dr. Esther Ellis notified the senator that the PCR test taken on September 15th was a confirmatory test and he must therefore remain quarantined until September 25th.

Despite these clear orders from authorities, Mr. Blyden was spotted just days later at a public event where he could have potentially exposed scores of attendees to the infectious disease. While the senator previously claimed that he attended the event to meet with investors he invited to the territory, he provided no clear explanation of why the meeting was not held virtually given the circumstances.

After Mr. Blyden's sighting at the public event, Commissioner Encarnacion issued a public health order on September 20th, directing him to remain in quarantine. Dr. Ellis also imposed a no-fly order on Mr. Blyden following information that he intended to leave the territory on September 21st for a family vacation in Hawaii, according to the probable cause fact sheet.

The Consortium [reported exclusively on Monday, Sept. 20 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 on the night of Saturday, Sept. 18.

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