

The Virgin Islands Consortium

DLCA Officer Convicted After Attempting to Force Illegal Immigrant Into Sexual Acts Because of Status

Crime / **Published On December 17, 2019 04:04 PM /**

Staff Consortium **December 17, 2019**



ST. THOMAS — United States Attorney Gretchen C.F. Shappert for the District of the Virgin Islands announced today that Robert Defreitas, an officer with the Virgin Islands Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs (DLCA), was convicted at trial of Travel Act Bribery and Solicitation of a Bribe by a Public Employee.

According to the evidence presented at trial, in August 2018 Defreitas assisted with a DLCA inspection of a St. Thomas business, during which time he discovered that one of the company's workers had not entered the country by legal means. Defreitas attempted to use this information against the victim. The victim later recorded a phone call in which Defreitas sought sexual favors in return for not reporting the victim's immigration status.

A recording of the phone call was played for the jury during the prosecution's case-in-chief. Evidence at trial also showed numerous calls by Defreitas to the victim's phone number and efforts by Defreitas to disguise the purpose for his phone calls.

Defreitas was remanded to custody following trial, and the court scheduled the defendant's sentencing for April 15, 2020. This case was investigated by the Virgin Islands Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Nathan Brooks.