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Government to Come Current on All Tax Refunds in 2022, Says Governor

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The Bryan administration will have done something historic when it comes current on all tax refunds owed to Virgin Islanders by next year. The administration has made paying refunds a hallmark of its strategy, which may boost Governor Albert Bryan's standing during the upcoming 2022 general election.

"We're going to catch up this fiscal year. We're going to be current this fiscal year. Before election we're going to be current," Mr. Bryan told the Consortium during a Sunday interview. "Remember we're now getting the Earned Income Tax refunded to us. So tax year 2021 is going to be easy to pay because we're getting that money back. As soon as people file we will be coming around the corner and giving people their refunds."

He added, "We've been giving out so many tax checks that it's not even special no more."

Mr. Bryan quoted former President Barack Obama, who said the reason for the Earned Income Tax Credit is to help poor people. "If we are not paying taxes, we are impoverishing our own people," the governor said.

The administration in fiscal year 2020 paid out approximately \$63,174,443, or 24,718 checks, according to Richard Motta, Gov't House communications director. In fiscal year 2021, the administration issued 29,394 checks, or \$74,656,378. That's a total of \$137.8 million in two years.

In one of the many press releases the administration publishes regarding issuance of tax refunds, Mr. Bryan said, "As we send this money out there's also a message to the public: we are committed to your wellbeing and your health through this pandemic. But we're also committed to making sure that every Virgin Islands family has food on the table."