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Tax Free, Employer-Paid Student Loan Program Being Encouraged by Frett-Gregory and Francis-Heyliger After Meeting With Congressman Rodney Davis

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From left to right, Sen. Donna Frett-Gregory, Congressman Rodney Davis, and Sen. Alma Heyliger-Francis. By. OFFICE OF THE SENATE PRESIDENT

Senate President Donna Frett-Gregory along with Senator Alma Francis-Heyliger on Tuesday met with Congressman Rodney Davis at the Earl B. Ottley Legislature in St. Thomas. Mr. Davis is a ranking member of the Committee on House Administration, which is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the House and federal elections. Mr. Davis is currently serving his fourth term in Congress representing the 13th District of Illinois.

"It is always important as legislators that we connect with elected leaders on the national level to garner support of our territory's needs," stated Ms. Frett-Gregory. "It was a pleasure meeting with Ranking Member Davis and engaging in robust discussion surrounding election reform." Also discussed during the meeting was the coronavirus and its impact on the territory, and the federal stimulus bills enacted by Congress.

According to the release, Ms. Francis-Heyliger shared several pieces of proposed legislation on election reform to include expanded early voting, no-excuse absentee voting, and election records laws which is intended to make elections more transparent to the electorate. "Giving our residents greater access to the polls and providing greater transparency in the election process is of paramount importance," she said.

Mr. Davis also discussed legislation he sponsored that was included in the CARES Act passed in 2020. Under the Employer Participation in Repayment Act, employers can make tax-free student loan payments on behalf of their employees, up to \$5,250 per year.

Sens. Frett-Gregory and Francis-Heyliger are urging local business owners, economic development beneficiaries, and corporations within the territory to take advantage of this valuable program, according to the release. Not only does this program benefit employees by assisting with their long-term student loan debt, but it also provides tax incentives to the participating businesses.

According to the release, this is a perfect opportunity for businesses in the territory to support their employees. "Both Senator Francis Heyliger and I recognize the Employer Participation in Repayment Act is an incentive for businesses in the territory to attract and retain talent. Businesses are strongly encouraged to consider incorporating this program in their business model," concluded Frett-Gregory. This opportunity sunsets in 2025. To learn more about the program, go [here](#).