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## In Washington, Bryan Presses FEMA to Eliminate 10 Percent Match Funding Required From USVI, Discusses Other Priorities

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**From Left, Gov. Bryan Chief Legal Counsel David Bornn, O.D.R. Director Adrienne Williams-Octalien, Gov. Albert Bryan, FEMA Admin. Deanne Criswell and others FEMA officials. By. GOV'T HOUSE**

Governor Albert Bryan and FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell met Friday as part of Mr. Bryan's [latest trip to Washington](#). According to Gov't House, the two discussed the progress of ongoing recovery projects in the territory.

The meeting continues the ongoing discussion between Mr. Bryan and Ms. Criswell on the progress of critical recovery projects funded by FEMA and the pace of the agency's various

approval processes, Gov't House said.

In May 2021, Governor Bryan met with Ms. Criswell at Government House on St. Croix where they discussed the CLOMAR (Conditional Letter of Map Revision) permit for the Paul E. Joseph Stadium project, concerns regarding the territory's hospitals, the status of school reconstruction, and upgrading the wastewater and drinking water systems in the territory, according to the release.

The territory received approval of the CLOMAR for the Paul E. Joseph Stadium in October 2021 allowing the construction of the stadium to resume, and recently it received approval from FEMA for \$242 million to fund the construction of the New Arthur A. Richards K-8 School.

In December, FEMA also approved the replacement of the entire sewer system on the island of St. Croix after it determined that the island's sewersheds are eligible for replacement following the 2017 hurricanes.

Mr. Bryan thanked Ms. Criswell for the agency's continued support but expressed concern with the pace of fixed cost offers affecting the territory's most critical projects, which include schools and hospitals.

Also during the meeting, the governor reiterated his push for a waiver to the 10 percent cost share required by the federal government for the funding of those projects, noting that without the waiver, the territory will have to pay hundreds of millions in local funds to receive the funding approved for its recovery projects.

"Without this waiver, the territory will have to utilize more than \$500 million in HUD CDBG-DR funds that can be otherwise utilized for much-needed housing and capital improvement projects," Governor Bryan said, according to Gov't House.

The administration said that while FEMA was non-committal on the cost share waiver, the Ms. Criswell agreed to review an appeal submitted by the governor on December 27, 2021.

The administrator and her leadership team also committed to review their processes in an effort to move the territory's projects forward in a more expeditious manner, according to the release.