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Bryan Administration Installing 110 Electric Vehicle Charging Stations Territory-Wide in Push Away From Fossil Fuel

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Governor Albert Bryan has announced that his administration will be fast-tracking some energy-related initiatives that will assist the territory as it faces down escalating fuel costs as a result of Russia's war in Ukraine and rising domestic inflation.

While the governor made big announcements during his Monday press briefings, including a plan to make St. Croix [100 percent solar-powered in the coming months](#), Mr. Bryan also announced other smaller actions aimed at achieving the goal of reducing the territory's reliance on fossil fuel. To that end, the governor said the V.I. Energy Office has been tasked with installing charging stations for electric vehicles territory-wide to encourage adaption of such transportation.

"The Virgin Islands Energy Office has taken on the task and is in the process of purchasing 23 old electric vehicles and installing 110 charging stations throughout the territory," he said.

Without disclosing where the charging stations will be positioned, the governor said the territory will continue to move towards renewable energy resources.

"Once we put in those energy stations, for some time those will be free. This is our permanent move to get Virgin Islanders away from gas-guzzling vehicles and into energy-efficient vehicles that work on electric. Not only are we doing this but the legislation on a national level has allowed us to get a rebate," said the governor, referring to the \$7,500 rebate program for individuals purchasing electric vehicles that's in widespread use on the mainland.

Mr. Bryan told the Consortium his administration would be taking steps to make the program more accessible in the USVI, though he said it is already available as a tax rebate. "We're looking at advancing [the \$7,500] so people get the money more immediately," he said. The governor said an estimated 250 electric vehicles were in use territory-wide.

The government already owns six energy-efficient vehicles and there are currently two charging stations in the territory that are also owned by the government.

Gas and by extension energy costs have increased since the war began in Ukraine on Feb. 24, causing a surge in the price for most goods and services globally. Speaking about other initiatives, the governor said his administration is looking at several ways to help to take part of that financial impact off the backs of the people and onto the government.

"For once we have some options of what we can do to help. We anticipate if conditions remain on the current path the WAPA bill will have to seek considerable relief," he said before disclosing that he held a successful meeting last weekend with WAPA officials with a view of avoiding the anticipated massive increase in fees.

The governor will soon be having a similar discussion with members of the Senate. "We are enlisting the help of the Legislature to come and have talks with us about what we can do and what their input is to really relieve this emergency situation," he said.

The administration has already gained the approval from the U.S. Treasury to assist with the energy problems, however the governor said "solutions that are created must not be willy-nilly; they have to be solid and most definitely permanent."

"The most evident solution is to set a new energy goal for the territory and fast track of these renewable projects that we already have in the works," he said while reminding residents that they can qualify for a tax rebate if they have installed solar solutions at homes and at businesses.

Mr. Bryan is hoping to have St Croix become solar energy efficient within months by using the services of a mainland company to set up the system which will eventually be owned by the government.