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Taxicab Commission to Hold Final Town Hall Meetings Before Raising Taxi Rates by 50 Percent

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Linda Straker **April 17, 2022**

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Virgin Islanders concerned about taxi rates in the territory will have their final opportunities to weigh in on impending tariff increases for taxi and tour operators when the VI Taxicab Commission hosts its final town hall meetings on the subject this week.

During a recent session of the Senate Committee on Government Operations and Consumer Protection, two representatives from the taxicab commission were present to offer testimony and answer questions from lawmakers.

During the discussion, Senator Marvin Blyden suggested that perhaps the recommended 50 percent increase be phased in to avoid shock to customers.

"I believe you should amend it to go over like a six-month period so folks can really catch themselves because there is a lot going on," Mr. Blyden said. "Yes, the drivers do deserve an increase but 50 percent is a lot at the same time. So if you can do it on a gradual scale that will be much appreciated by the drivers and those that need the service because it can affect both areas, and you don't want to do that."

It is unclear if the senator's recommendation has been included in the rate increase proposal, which at that same meeting Taxicab Commission Executive Director Linda Smith said was completed and submitted to the board.

The first meetings were held on April 4, 5 and 6th, and the final town halls will be held April 19th on St. John at the Franklin D Powell Park, April 20th on St. Thomas at the commission's Subbase office, and April 21st on St. Croix at the Sunny Isle Amphitheater. The commission is seeking final recommendations on the upcoming tariff increase from meeting attendees.

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