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Plaskett Unveils 2023 Priorities in Congress For Community Projects in U.S. Virgin Islands

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Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett.

Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett has unveiled her office's priorities for fiscal year 2023 regarding community project funding requests for the U.S. Virgin Islands.

"Under Democratic leadership, the appropriations process this year has allowed for members to make requests for funding of specific projects with certain stipulations," said Ms. Plaskett, who serves on the House Ways and Means, Budget and Agriculture Committees. "Last month, Governor Bryan submitted a list of projects that his administration was interested in my office submitting. It has been my priority to focus my requests on providing solutions through social services, specifically tackling homelessness and behavioral and mental health issues, as well as

reducing crime rates in the territory."

Ms. Plaskett said that her FY2023 community project funding requests reflect that focus by providing resources for improved infrastructure for the USVI's air and marine ports, STEM education, increased access to healthcare and health equity, and addressing violence, particularly through the requests for the V.I. Police Department.

"I was happy to work with the governor's administration along with nonprofits and local government agencies in the community to develop their priorities for funding requests," she further stated. "I have taken those amazing partners' requests into consideration, some of those have been included and some have not.

"The next step will be having my staff advocate with the House Committee on Appropriations decide whether any or all projects will be included in the House version of the annual government spending bills. I and my legislative team will continue to vocalize my support for the requests."

The following are the requests Ms. Plaskett has submitted for consideration by the Appropriations Committee:

- \$1 million for the Charlotte Amalie (St. Thomas) Harbor Study project. This funding would be used to complete the post authorization change report required to be submitted to Congress for the Secretary to carry out the project for navigation.
- \$6.1 million for construction of the Estate La Grange Project on St. Croix. This funding would be used to construct this flood risk management project at Estate La Grange, St. Croix, Virgin Islands under the Continuing Authorities Program of the Army Corps of Engineers.
- \$1 million for the Christiansted Harbor Study project. This request will be utilized to review the permitting, NEPA and economic justification for the project for navigation at Christiansted harbor and for the Secretary to submit to Congress the post-authorization change report required for resumption of the project.
- \$2.2 million for the USVI community STEM project. The requested funding would be used by the Virgin Islands Department of Education to incorporate relevant STEM opportunities for students at all levels, ensuring that STEM initiatives are included in various courses and afterschool programs.
- \$1.897 million funding for the Virgin Islands Fire Services to procure ambulances for emergency medical services. The requested funding would be used by the Virgin Islands Fire Services to purchase seven ambulances to augment their current fleet and will be used across the three major islands of the Virgin Islands.
- \$995,000 for the Virgin Islands Diabetes Center of Excellence for the purchase of capital equipment required to diagnose diabetes and for services to help patients manage their diabetes.
- \$4.3 million under the Department of Justice Byrne Justice Assistance Grants account for the VIPD Marine Enforcement Vessels project. This will increase the amount of law enforcement vessels to engage in marine law enforcement.
- \$900,000 under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Operations, Research & Facilities account for the Coral and Aquatic Research and Restoration project.
- \$1.9 million under the Department of Housing and Urban Development Economic Development Initiative account for the Community First Tiny Homes Build Out Phase III project. The requested funding would be used by Liberty Place, Inc. to build 25 Permanent Supportive Housing units - tiny homes – on their campus, with wrap-around medical and behavioral health services to formerly chronically homeless individuals and small families.

- \$900,000 under the Department of Housing and Urban Development Economic Development Initiative account for the Bright Path Holistic Wellness project. The requested funding would be used by the Virgin Islands Housing Authority to ensure Virgin Islands resident individuals and families in public housing have access to services and resources that are instrumental in promoting health and wellness, housing stability, economic mobility, and personal self-sufficiency for every household.
- \$1,059,152 under the Department of Housing and Urban Development Economic Development Initiative account for the Christiansted Sunday Market Square Revitalization project. The requested funding would be used by the non-profit St. Croix Foundation to build seven low to moderate income housing units in Christiansted, three commercial spaces in Christiansted, and an innovative nonprofit co-working space in Christiansted to nurture civic sector collaboration.
- \$7 million under the Airport Improvement Program account for the Cyril E. King Airport Commuter Wing project
- \$4.5 million under the Airport Improvement Program account for the Cyril E. King Airport Safety Drainage project.
- \$7 million under the Airport Improvement Program account for the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport Apron Rehabilitation project.
- \$6 million under the Airport Improvement Program account for the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport Runway project.