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## Waste Collection Resumes on St. Croix; Past Agreement Was Unjust, Bryan Says

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**Trucks parked in the vicinity of the Anguilla Landfill on Wed. July 6, 2022. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM**

The collection of waste in St. Croix communities will resume today, waste haulers have confirmed to the Consortium, after an agreement was reached between Governor Albert Bryan and the waste haulers during a meeting held Thursday morning at a location in Frederiksted.

The meeting came one day after the haulers took [their most aggressive protest action](#) for lack of payment yet, blocking the path to the Anguilla Landfill and halting collection of waste throughout St. Croix until payments were made. The government then [moved swiftly to wire funds](#) to the accounts of the waste haulers, which prompted the unblocking of the Anguilla Landfill road

Wednesday evening and secured a preliminary agreement ahead of Thursday's meeting.

"We've reached a more solid deal and we're going back out to work tomorrow," James Bates of Bates Trucking told the Consortium following the Thursday meeting, which along with Governor Bryan and the waste haulers also included Bryan administration Chief of Staff Karl Knight and Waste Management Authority officials. Haulers that were present included Bates Trucking, Marco St. Croix, Just Right Trucking, Goldmine Waste Removal, and Joshua Trucking.

"This deal worked out better for the haulers financially, and I would say it is a more solid deal," Mr. Bates further stated.

Issues of payments with waste haulers precede the Bryan administration, but the governor told the Consortium Thursday that after understanding fully their plight, he said what was happening to these companies was unjust.

"I believe the key to resolving issues is really to listen, and when they presented their case to me, it was evident that they are in an unjust situation," Mr. Bryan said. "Their rates have been reduced over ten years ago, and their routes have been reduced. And with all the inflation and other economic factors, I think we arrived at a rate that is fair to the government and to them. Essentially they were basically paying to work for us because after they pick up all this garbage they were not making any money."

Mr. Bryan said that it costs a private homeowner roughly \$65 a month for garbage collection, while the government — before Thursday's agreement was reached — was paying \$7.50 a month. "I think we've gotten to an agreement where we have a fair rate, and I promised them that I will go out and look for the money," Mr. Bryan said, adding that while finding funding for the haulers was not in his purview, he would take up the issue. "We're going to go to the Senate to get the money to pay them," the governor said. He said that in four months new bids will go out which will untie the waste haulers from outdated agreements reached over a decade ago that they contend do not reflect current market conditions.

"They made a fair case. When I really assess the whole situation they were right. And then I had promised them some distressed business pay that we had to pay them out. I mean, the reason why it's taking so long is because we can't just pay money out. We need accurate accounting from the Waste Management Authority and they are taking forever to give us that information — up to now we're still waiting for more information.

"But we just paid them out because we know we need the garbage to be picked up. So all these haulers in the Virgin Islands will benefit from what was negotiated by waste haulers on St. Croix," Mr. Bryan said.