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Angel Bolques Jr. to be Sworn in Today as At-Large Senator in Fast-Moving Process

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Angel Bolques Jr. By. THE V.I. LEGISLATURE

Angel Bolques Jr. will be sworn in as a member of the 34th Legislature today at 3:00 p.m. in the Earle B. Ottley Legislative Chambers, Senate President Donna Frett-Gregory has announced.

According to a release from Ms. Frett-Gregory's office, the announcement follows a recommendation forwarded to the president by the Territorial Committee of the V.I. Democratic Party, and falls in line with Virgin Islands Code. The code dictates in relevant part that when the vacancy occurs within one year prior to the general election, the president of the Legislature, upon the written recommendation of the Territorial Committee of the political party of which the previous office holder was a candidate, shall appoint the person so recommended.

Once Mr. Bolques takes the oath of office, he will serve as the At-Large Senator for the 34th Legislature, stated the release.

Promptly seating Mr. Bolques is of the utmost importance, the Senate president said. "A full complement of legislators ensures that the Legislature is putting the people of this Territory first and that the people of St. John are represented," she said.

The expulsion of Steven Payne Sr. follows exclusive reporting from the V.I. Consortium which prompted the Senate to launch an investigation after a staffer in Mr. Payne's office accused him of sexual harassment.

The senator was being investigated by the Senate Committee on Ethical Conduct when the Consortium reported on two other incidents of alleged sexual harassment and assault. The second report was [published on April 11](#) regarding Chezni Jones, who alleged Mr. Payne ripped her underwear off during an encounter at a beach on St. John.

The [third report was published on May 25](#), and it detailed the account of 21-year-old Steffi Emilien, who alleged she was a minor age 16 or 17 when Mr. Payne assaulted her on multiple occasions. Among the incidents, according to Emilien, was an encounter at a band room in St. John when Mr. Payne allegedly stuck his tongue in the minor's mouth, and during a trip to the U.S. where Emilien alleged Mr. Payne forced her to give him a massage as well as take a shower with him at a hotel. According to Emilien, after they arrived to Mr. Payne's sister's house in Florida, he told her to take her pants off and get on the bed.