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Territory Has Between 4-5 Days Cash on Hand, Bryan Says, 'But It's Not a Real Number'

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The USVI has between four to five days cash on hand, according to Governor Albert Bryan, even as he quickly followed by stating that "it's not a real number."

The governor in December told the Consortium that the territory was cash-strapped, with a major reason being the subsidizing of WAPA on a monthly basis. "Right now, yeah, we're cash-strapped because we've been diverting a considerable amount of money to pay everybody's light bill by funding WAPA," Mr. Bryan told the Consortium late December.

However, during an interview with the publication Thursday evening, while the governor admitted to only "4-5 days" cash on hand, he added that "it's not a real number" and explained that the annual "budget makeup from ARPA" funds to the tune of between \$50 and \$60 million would

soon be released, “which will put us where we need to be.” The USVI received \$540 million from the American Rescue Plan Act, called ARPA or the Stimulus Act, which provided \$1.9 trillion in stimulus funds as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Act became law in March 2021 after being signed into law by President Joe Biden.

Mr. Bryan said he wasn't concerned at all with the cash-on-hand situation.

"Historically it's low cash time," he said, referring to the early months of the year. "This is when we start telling commissioners your budget is going to be a little bit behind. The governor added that in April revenues will see a substantially increase when taxes are paid.

Bolstering confidence in the territory's financial health, Mr. Bryan said the Water and Power Authority will continue to be subsidized by the government so that the utility rates of residents don't increase, and his administration will remain consistent in paying tax refunds, with the governor projecting \$5 million every month.