

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Governor Bryan Introduces Legislation to Combat Human Trafficking in USVI

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In a move against human trafficking, Governor Albert Bryan on Friday announced a new legislative proposal to the 35th Legislature, aimed at reinforcing the Virgin Islands Uniform Prevention and Remedies for Human Trafficking Act.

The proposed changes are expected to provide enhanced legal tools and substantial financial resources to combat the heinous crime, according to the administration.

The announcement comes [as newly unsealed court documents](#) detail allegations levied against Mr. Bryan by former Attorney General Denise George, who says the governor nudged her to act on waiver requests made by sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

The bill proposes changes to Title 14 of the Virgin Islands Code, specifically Chapter 3A. A new section, Section 133a, is set to be added, focusing primarily on the compulsory reporting of human trafficking incidents. This addition aims to clearly define the individuals obligated to report any suspicions of human trafficking. It further lays down the guidelines about what would be considered a lapse in reporting and the method that should be adhered to when reporting such incidents.

Furthermore, an amendment to Section 147 has been proposed, allowing the Attorney General to represent victims in pursuing civil actions for compensatory damages. This is seen as a significant step to ensure justice for the victims and hold perpetrators accountable.

In a noteworthy mention, a sum of \$11 million has been allocated for the cause, sourced from the sale of Little St. James. These funds will be specifically channeled to realize and support the objectives of the Virgin Islands Uniform Prevention and Remedies for Human Trafficking Act.