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Commissioner Kimberley Causey-Gomez Resigns From Dept. of Human Services

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Ernice Gilbert **August 24, 2023**

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DHS Commissioner Kimberley Causey-Gomez. By. V.I. LEGISLATURE

Dept. of Human Services Commissioner Kimberley Causey-Gomez has resigned, the Consortium can confirm. The move comes on the heels of Senate and community criticism that the commissioner had failed to successfully manage the sprawling arm of government.

According to people with knowledge of the matter, the commissioner made the decision on her own and was not forced by Governor Albert Bryan to end her tenure. She will remain at the department while Mr. Bryan searches for a replacement, an effort that is already underway, the Consortium has learned.

The governor named Ms. Causey-Gomez as commissioner [in April 2019](#). At the time, she was described as someone with a "proven record as an effective leader," who would "effectuate the changes needed to stabilize DHS and ensure the efficient delivery of services for our young children, seniors, and residents with disabilities who rely on the department." Mr. Bryan further stated that Ms. Causey-Gomez came equipped with the "intimate knowledge of the department from her experience there" and was ready "to hit the ground running."

However, her tenure as commissioner faced many challenges. One significant issue was the [death of young Aaron Benjamin Jr.](#), which led to [sharp criticism](#). The department had failed the boy, whose father had made many appeals to the DHS regarding mistreatment that his children faced from their mother and her boyfriend.

More recently, Ms. Causey-Gomez came [under intense fire from lawmakers](#). Senator Kenneth Gittens applied the most pressure, while Senator Donna Frett-Gregory expressed discontent that funds earmarked for the department were being returned to the federal government. Mr. Gittens accused DHS officials of "shilly-shallying," or failing to execute its duties in a committed and competent manner. He generated a less flattering version of the DHS acronym, rechristening the agency as the "Department of Hindrance Services" in a jab at its alleged inefficacy.

Even so, her tenure had high moments, including the department's management of the distribution of pandemic-era emergency funding. There was little to no criticism of the department's execution. The department also worked to manage elderly Virgin Islanders living at DHS-owned facilities during the Covid-19 pandemic.