BVI Losing Money as it Waits for Governor to Approve Medicinal Marijuana Act, Says Premier Fahie

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An Act authorizing the implementation of a medicinal marijuana industry in the British Virgin Islands, which was passed in the British territory's House of Assembly in July, was promoted as a source of revenue for the government. But three months later, BVI Governor Augustus Jaspert — appointed by the British monarch on the advice of the British government — have yet to approve the Act, leaving the territory which is already losing millions of tourism-related dollars because of the coronavirus pandemic, in a worse position financially.

BVI Premier Andrew Fahie said during an interview with 248 Media on Friday, (via BVI News), that the government was expected to earn millions of dollars through the medicinal marijuana industry. He also said over 100 jobs would have already been created.

“I could only say that if it was passed already we would have already been able to move towards having the three months crop, because the planting of it takes three months and we would have already moved towards over one hundred jobs and we would have already moved towards at least a couple millions of dollars in our economy,” Mr. Fahie said.

He added, “We are going to wait until it is assented to. It has pushed us a little behind with that industry with the revenue that we had already projected for this year.”

As it currently stands, the BVI Constitution lacks a specific timeframe relative to when a governor should take action on an Act. “It is one of the areas in our constitutional review that we have to ensure that we strengthen in the best interest of the people of the Virgin Islands,” Mr. Fahie said.

Once the measure is approved by the governor, Mr. Fahie said a commission will be created for industry regulation and guidelines for locals interested in participating.

In January, Mr. Fahie said his government would provide approximately 100 of its citizens with half an acre of land each to cultivate medicinal marijuana. "We're looking at Paraquita Bay for 50 acres of land, to empower 100 Virgin Islanders, 100 Belongers and we are doing it by districts. The Territorial members will also be able to include some youngsters, so at least the minimum of 10 persons per district for each of the nine districts," Mr. Fahie said. "We want to be able to give the

100 of them — each of them — a half-acre of land and this is what we are working towards so that they now can become the captains of their own ship and destiny financially."

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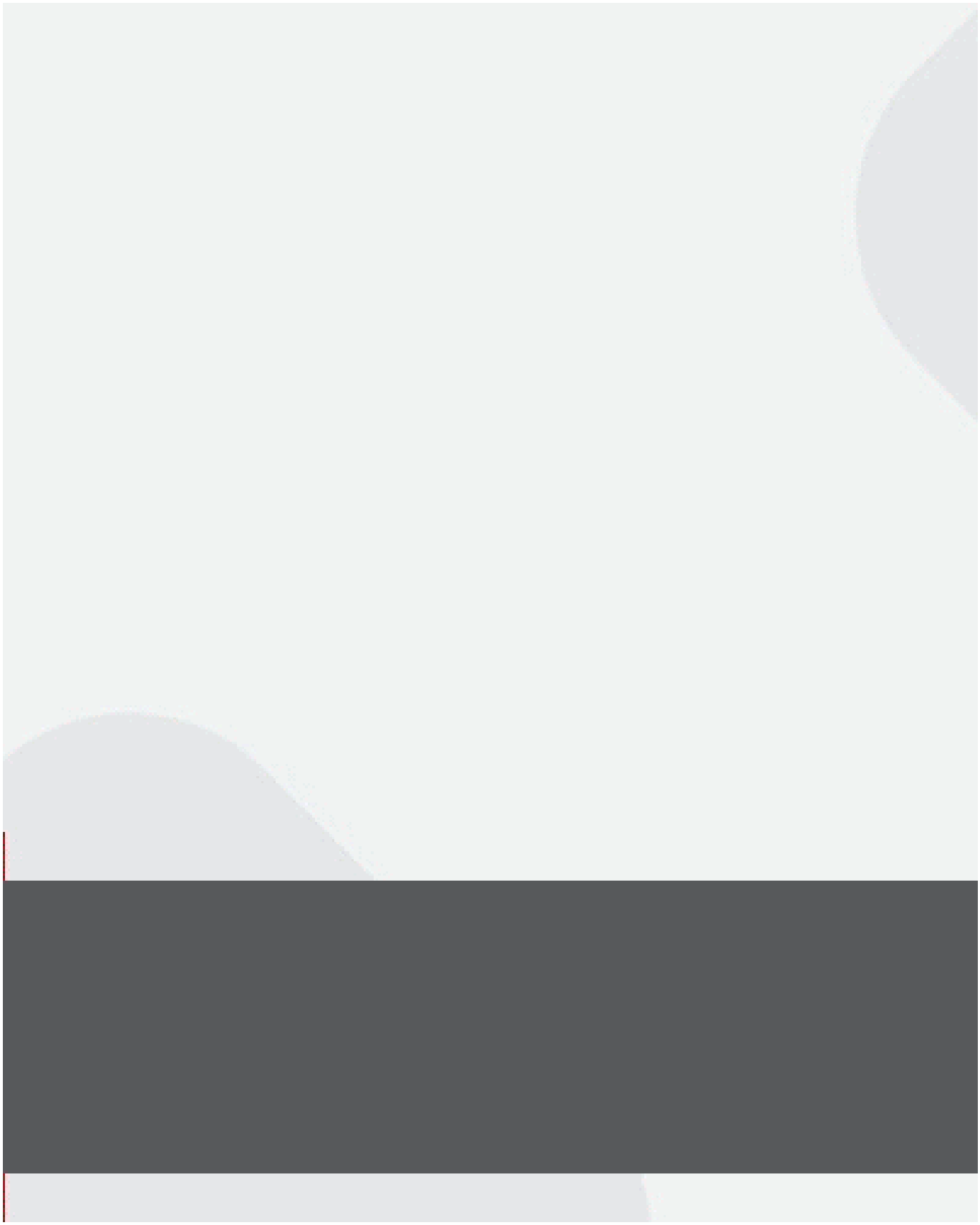

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