

Legislature of the U.S. Virgin Islands

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DISTRICT OF ST. CROIX



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Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure & Planning

Thursday, October 16, 2025

11:00 AM

Frits E. Lawaetz Legislative Conference Room
St. Croix, USVI

AGENDA

BLOCK I: 11:00AM—12:30PM

Bill No. 36-0135, "An act amending title 29 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 5, section 294 regarding expedited building permits for developers."

Proposed by Senator Kenneth L. Gittens

Invited Testifiers:

Honorable Jean-Pierre Oriol, Commissioner, Department of Planning and Natural Resources

BLOCK II: 12:30PM —2:00PM

The Committee will receive an update from the Department of Planning and Natural Resources with a focus on the implementation of the Comprehensive Land and Water Use Plan, including a review of:

- Progress made to date
- Current or anticipated challenges
- The projected timeline for next steps in the implementation process

Invited Testifier:

Honorable Jean-Pierre Oriol, Commissioner, Department of Planning and Natural Resources

BLOCK III: 2:00PM —4:00PM

The Committee will receive testimony from the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority on the status of FEMA-funded power plant upgrades and recovery projects at, including a review of:

- Progress on FEMA-funded replacement of the Richmond Power Plant on St. Croix and unit upgrades at the Randolph Harley Plant on St. Thomas, including the design-build solicitation process and anticipated construction timeline.

CHAIR

Committee on Disaster Recovery,
Infrastructure and Planning

MEMBER

Committee on Budget,
Appropriations and Finance

Committee on Education
and Workforce Development

Committee on Economic
Development and Agriculture

Committee on Housing, Transportation
and Telecommunications

SECRETARY

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and Territorial Affairs

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- Critical resilience projects such as undergrounding of electrical lines, installation of advanced composite utility poles, battery energy storage systems, and advanced metering.
- Integration of the recently commissioned solar farms on St. Croix into the WAPA power grid and their impact on system reliability, as well as any plans for solar development and integration in the St. Thomas–St. John district.

Invited Testifier:

Lemuel Lavinier, Chief Operating Officer, Electric System, Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority

Noel Hodge, Chief Engineer, Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority

Vernon Alexander, Director of Special Projects, Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority

Maxwell George, Director of Project Management, Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority

Joelle Webster, Director of Grants Management, Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority