



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER & POWER AUTHORITY CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS NEWS RELEASE

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WAPA Backs Legislation to Strengthen Reliability and Rebuild Trust

U.S. Virgin Islands (Nov. 18, 2025) – The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority (“WAPA” or “the Authority”) today detailed its support for the advancement of solar initiatives in the St. Thomas/St. John district during the Senate Committee of the Whole session chaired by Senate President Milton E. Potter. The Authority acknowledged concerns raised by senators and community members and emphasized that these projects are grounded in facts, strengthened oversight, and a commitment to rebuilding trust through visible results.

WAPA CEO and Executive Director Karl Knight underscored the significance of the work ahead, saying, *“I am on a mission to bring reliable and affordable power to the people of the Virgin Islands. We are moving ahead. These projects are an important part of reaching the future we all want.”* His comments reflect the broader sentiment shared during the hearing that reliability, transparency, and steady progress—not rhetoric—will rebuild confidence across the Territory.

Christian Loranger of VIElectron, the developer of the renewable energy projects, said the projects will meet all requirements for insurance, land clearing, archaeological review, and aviation safety. Commissioner JP Oriol of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources echoed that the necessary authorizations and studies were completed and approved by *“very, very capable people.”* Loranger further explained that inverter technology, system performance safeguards, and vegetation management follow proven utility-scale standards. Oriol reinforced confidence, saying, *“Storms have to be considered when you consider risk... Life has to move forward.”*

Several senators urged stronger communication with residents, including members of the West End Alliance and communities near Bovoni and Fortuna. Loranger acknowledged shortcomings with an apology to fellow community members and is increasing outreach beyond what regulations require.

As senators stressed the need for transparency, WAPA reaffirmed that its focus is on rebuilding the public’s trust by providing reliable, understandable information and producing measurable improvement in the quality of service. The Authority emphasized that these solar projects are positioned to deliver meaningful reductions in fuel consumption, provide immediate daytime generation capacity, and stabilize feeders—similar to what residents of St. Croix already experience when connected to local solar generation.

These benefits, together, move the Territory toward more reliable service and operational stability at a pace the community can see and feel.

Knight closed by emphasizing that this work is part of a long-term strategic plan centered on financial discipline, modern infrastructure, and renewable integration that directly benefits customers. This phase of solar development is not a test run; it is the opportunity to apply lessons learned—past and present—to deliver real, tangible gains in reliability.

Following the hearing, CEO Knight added, *“Power is personal in the Virgin Islands. It’s the comfort of a cool room, the safety of a lit home, the peace a family feels at night. I haven’t forgotten that. This work isn’t about projects—it’s about people. We will rebuild trust by proving that reliable power is within reach.”*

As this work accelerates, WAPA and its partners remain focused on honest communication and steady, responsible progress. Rebuilding trust and delivering a dependable power system for the Territory remain at the heart of every decision we make.

The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority Communication’s Department is committed to reaching, informing, and connecting with the youngest members of the community to the eldest, through meaningful, transparent and effective communication.

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About WAPA: The Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority is an autonomous agency of the Virgin Islands Government which produces and distributes electricity and drinking water to residential and commercial customers in the territory. WAPA was created by the Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands in 1964 through Act No. 1248. Today, WAPA generates electrical power at production plants on St. Thomas and St. Croix and distributes electrical service through smart grids to customers on St. Thomas, St. Croix, St. John, Hassel Island, and Water Island. Potable water is distributed to almost 13,000 customers through water lines and standpipes. WAPA also has the responsibility of installing and maintaining streetlights.