

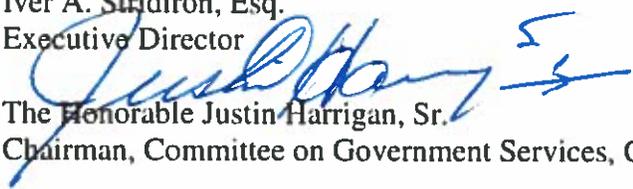


Legislature of the Virgin Islands  
**COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT SERVICES,  
CONSUMER AND VETERANS AFFAIRS**

Senator Justin Harrigan, Sr. - Chairman

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Iver A. Stridiron, Esq.  
Executive Director

FROM:   
The Honorable Justin Harrigan, Sr.  
Chairman, Committee on Government Services, Consumer and Veterans Affairs

DATE: September 1, 2016

RE: 8/22/16 CGSCVA Committee Report

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The Committee on Government Services, Consumer and Veterans Affairs met on Monday, August 22, 2016 at the Cleone Henrietta Creque Legislative Conference Room on St. John to receive an update on the limited barge service between St. Thomas and St. John and its impact on Virgin Islands residents and businesses.

Please find attached the 8/22/16 CGSCVA Committee Report.

For more information, contact Committee Coordinator, Amrika Williams at (340) 693-3586 or amwilliams@legvi.org.

Cc: All Senators      Chief Legal Counsel



# COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Hearing  
 Monday, August 22, 2016  
 6 P.M.  
 Cleone Henrietta Creque Legislative Conference Room  
 St. John, VI

**PURPOSE:** To receive testimony on the impact of ferry shortages on St. Thomas-St. John car ferry route

**ROLL CALL FOR ATTENDANCE:**

Committee Member	Present	Absent
Senator Myron Jackson, Vice Chair	1	
Senator Neville James, President		1
Senator Terrence Nelson	2	
Senator Tregenza Roach	3	
Senator Samuel Sanes		2
Senator Janette Millin Young	4	
Senator Justin Harrigan, Sr., Chair	5	
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Non-Committee Member</b>		
Senator Almando Liburd	1	
Senator Jean Forde	2	

Chairman Justin Harrigan, Sr. called the hearing to order and stated its purpose; he then called the testifiers into the well.

Invited testifiers in attendance were Mr. Carlton Dowe, executive director of the V.I. Port Authority; Mr. Steven Aubin, interim executive director of the V.I. Waste Management Authority; Mr. Kurt Nose, general manager, Heavy Materials Co., LLC; Ms. Arlene Chalwell, deputy chief for St. John, V.I. Police Department; Mrs. Carmen Hedrington, president, V.I. Car Ferry Operators Association, and Mr. Jose Penn of Penn's Trucking Services, who testified as a concerned citizen. Mr. Brian Smith was a walk-in testifier; neither Mr. Penn nor Mr. Smith had prepared testimonies.



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Invited testifiers from the U.S. Coast Guard and the Hotel and Tourism Association did not attend but sent written testimonies, which were read into the record.

At issue was the limited services that affected the car ferry companies earlier this year when only one of the three ferries was functional. The ferries are necessary not only to transport vehicles between Red Hook, St. Thomas and Cruz Bay, St. John, but are needed for the transport of building materials, hauling waste from St. John to the landfill on St. Thomas, and general everyday commodities.

The Committee heard testimony that all the ferries were recently up and running, but testifiers expressed concern over a repeat of this situation. Deputy Chief Chalwell, for example, said the VIPD on St. John was affected because vehicles which needed maintenance couldn't be taken to the motor pool on St. Thomas, and office and cleaning supplies "could not be received in a timely manner." She suggested that the V.I. government "try to allocate and procure funds to operate, service and maintain a small barge for mainly governmental entities" between the islands of St. Thomas and St. John.

Mr. Aubin testified that the VIWMA's "greatest challenge with respect to this issue has been the daily transportation of municipal solid waste from St. John to the Bovoni landfill on St. Thomas. Although other WMA divisions are impacted, the aforementioned service is at the forefront." However, Mr. Aubin applauded "the efforts of the barge companies that have done their best to maintain services with the available fleet of barges."

Testimony from the U.S. Coast Guard was read into the record (no representatives from the USCG attended) and placed some of the problems of overdue inspection of the car ferries, and the determination of violations during said inspections that would keep the vessel in dry dock until such violations were corrected. Many Senators present were irked that the USCG did not send a representative.

However, Mrs. Hedrington of the VI Car Ferry Operators Association testified that "service was not interrupted, it was slowed down," and that "currently, we have three car ferries in full service and there are no lines, no waiting."

Senator Harrigan noted that the hearing was not only to address the recent problems, but to establish solutions to prevent a recurrence. He expressed his appreciation that the three car ferry operators were working cooperatively: "There is strength in numbers," Senator Harrigan said.

"I felt this was important," Senator Harrigan told the testifiers at the conclusion of the hearing. "I'm glad you all came out and put your statements on the record."

*All testimonies and relevant meeting documents are available on the 31<sup>st</sup> Legislature Committees drive (U:).*