

TUESDAY 11/18/25 TESTIMONY OF MS. YOLANDA TITUS RE PROPOSED SOLAR FARM IN FORTUNA ON ST. THOMAS

Good morning members of the 36th Legislature. My name is Ms. Yolanda Titus. I am a prime example of why solar farms placed smack dab in our neighborhoods are NOT a sound idea, but rather a recipe for unrecoverable disaster.

I am one of the persons who resided over by the Donoe area at Wintberg Heights during the time of the 2017 Category 7 Hurricanes that devastated this island. I lived there for 17 years. Before that solar farm was built in about 2014, we had no concern of harm during hurricane season. Not even from loose trees, etc. After the installation of that solar farm, we saw unimaginable destruction. Extensive damage was caused by both Hurricanes Irma and Maria, but that of Irma was the worst because that's when the solar panels bust my roof and they landed all over on the porch downstairs, blocking the doors and crushing my brand new car. The massive and heavy panels became like cement blocks thrown at the high speed of the hurricanes themselves. Those panels of that solar farm damaged everything in their path! Debris flew from Wintberg Heights to Smith Bay and no doubt stretched out its arms to areas left and right of its path! Now, with those solar panels, when they fly, they become like locomotives! They're not just simple, because they bust the roof of my house! Then, it was as though a fire hydrant had been turned on! Water came gushing through my roof with great intensity! It was only myself and my minor children there, so I was the only adult in an upstairs and downstairs house; bedrooms downstairs. My minor children downstairs. Naturally I had to think fast, or we could have all drowned! I rushed my minor children upstairs and managed to break a big hole in a window there-- as downstairs was quickly filling up with the heavy downpour of water. While upstairs, I could see outside, but I could not escape because the adjacent solar panels from the farm had crashed down into Wintberg Heights and blocked many doors of the residents there. I could see my brand new car outside, just three days old, crushed beyond repair. Those solar panels from that farm barricaded us all. The damage was beyond control. When we tried to get outside, it was not possible because as with many neighbors, those panels had blocked both my front and back doors. So I had to get the eldest of my minor child to break that glass window even more, and as clean as possible so we could crawl out of it. He even got cut.

My children went outside and started looking for help-- only to find a dead person down by Al McBean ballpark in Old Tutu! Solar panels were flung **EVERYWHERE!!!** When we were all outside, we had to use whatever we could as face masks because of the immense fiberglass blowing from the solar panels. We could not even use the cistern water for any means-- not bathing, not drinking, nothing! Because when I turned on my pipe to use it, fiberglass was coming out of the faucet. I realize that because the strange look of grayish glass was strained and determined to be such. Our skin was all messed up from the loose fiberglass. We had to cover our faces for **weeks** because that fiberglass just lingered! I had no access to my household water supply. I had to buy cases and cases of water due to our compromised system.

Subsequently, a class-action lawsuit was filed. From 2017 to present, **nobody** has paid us yet! I have lost everything I had; even for the 17 years I resided there, I had to move to somewhere else and pay more money. No one gave me any help; not even FEMA. I did everything on my own.

I live with that drama still. I do not want this experience to follow me from Wintberg Heights to where I now own my own home down in Fortuna, and that is without apology.

On top of all that, we found out through phone inquiry that everywhere that's solar panel dropped, they poisoned the ground!!! So since this poison in the ground because it contains lead, this and that, that means my mango, kenip, any tree I grow there is going to be poisoned. So I don't want any solar farm in my neighborhood bringing down my property value. I will find the pictures if I lay a hand on my old phone. I wish we were respected in such a way that I had time to give it to a professional to get the videos and photos out, but because this matter was sprung on us out of the blue, the time for that was not possible.

Senators, this project is NOT fit for Bordeaux nor Fortuna. We have begged this government for more roads in and out. No go. We begged for so much other necessary things. Slow go. But here comes one hell of a rush for an unsolicited solar farm! Put a solar farm somewhere else off the beaten path, like a cay out there; because we who were born and raised down there in Fortuna and otherwise live there demand to be respected. Who don't live down there, don't bring it down there! This is my points on that and up to yet I haven't been paid in regards to the same concept, and still they put back up the same solar farm in Donoe/near Wintberg Heights! Who allows this?????

So I don't know what's going on with this high-tech government but somebody's going to pay me because of all that damage I incurred and still haven't gotten anything. My children were then minors and now they are adults. We who suffered need to be paid; not sit as target with concern of a similar experience. No good comes out of solar farms with its fiberglass and no match for our hurricane zone. Sure I love to save a buck, but I much rather save a life!!! There is nothing you can tell me to convince me that all those 110,000 panels can be moved in time upon VITEMA's warning of an upturn in wind speed; the ramification of runoffs; chances of cancer or other illnesses; why this spot was chosen, etc.

Fortuna and Bordeaux are sites for food generation, security and sustenance to this island. Not for solar farms, but for food farms. We do not need solar farms just to save a buck. **WHAT WE DO NEED IS THE RESPECT OF OUR "NO" BEING ACCEPTED, AND (IF HE TRULY WANTS TO HELP WAPA) THIS DEVELOPER MOVING ON TO SAFER CHOICES OF ENERGY PRODUCTION AND COSTS REDUCTION.**

Thank you. I am available to answer any of your questions