



**Virgin Islands Legislature  
Committee on Health, Hospitals and Human Services  
Honorable Senator Ray Fonseca, Chairman  
Wednesday April 3, 2024**

**Testimony of  
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Executive Director  
Territorial Hospital Redevelopment Team  
Virgin Islands Government Hospital and Health Facilities Corporation**

Good afternoon Honorable Senator Ray Fonseca, Chairman of the Committee on Health, Hospitals and Human Services, Honorable Senators of the Committee on Health, Hospitals and Human Services, other Honorable Senators of the 35th Legislature, Senate Staff, fellow hospital testifiers, and the listening and viewing audience. My name is Darryl A. Smalls, Executive Director of Facilities & Capital Development for the Territorial Hospital Redevelopment Team (THRT), which I serve under the leadership of Chairman, Christopher E. Finch of the Virgin Islands Government Hospital and Health Facilities Corporation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify today before the Committee on Health, Hospitals and Human Services with respect to the Recovery Efforts as it pertains specifically to the transition of the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital to the JFL North Facility as well as the construction and development of the Charlotte Kimelman Cancer Center, and the Myrah Keating Smith Community Health Center.

As the Executive Director of the THRT, my primary role is to manage and oversee the planning, programmatic design, final design, bidding, project management, construction, procurement and close out for the redevelopment of our Territorial Health Facilities to include the Juan F. Luis Hospital (JFLH), the Roy L. Schneider Hospital (RLSH), the Charlotte Kimelman Cancer Institute (CKCI) and the Myrah Keating Smith Community Health Center (MKSCHC).

As you heard in the previous testimony this afternoon by Mr. Doug Koch, Chief Executive Officer of the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital & Medical Center, patients, and all inpatient services successfully transitioned on April 25, 2023, from JFLH into what is now known as JFL North. Despite the herculean undertaking, the transition was seamless due to the collaborative effort of the entire staff of JFLH, the THRT and the many community partners.

During my last testimony before this Committee, I reported on several important milestones that remained. I am pleased to report today that the construction of the Critical Administration Building has been successfully completed and staff will soon transition into this new facility no later than April 30, 2024. This facility will serve as the primary entrance to JFL North and will provide connectivity between JFL North and the Virgin Islands Cardiac Center (VICC). At 6,500 square feet, this two-story temporary structure includes two elevators, provides working spaces for physicians, nursing and support staff who must be present 24/7.

In addition, a site located on Hess Road has been leased that will provide space for all remaining non-clinical functions that must be transitioned out of JFLH. These functions include Dietary Storage, Medical Records, Business Office, Finance, Materials Management, and the Executive staff of JFLH. The administrative functions will be housed in a 15,000 SQFT two story structure along with a warehouse of more than 5,000 SQFT. This location is slated to be move in ready no later than June 2024.

The development and construction of the 5-acre leased lot to the east of JFL North is another undertaking that is essential for the demolition of JFLH to proceed. Once developed, this site will provide parking for staff and visitors, a critically needed building to provide on-site storage for food and medical supplies, medical records storage, and support services for Facilities Maintenance. At present, these services will remain within JFLH until these structures can be developed. Bids to develop the 5-acre lot were received on Wednesday March 27, 2024. These bids will be evaluated to determine the one that is deemed to be responsive, is cost reasonable and has met all the requirements as set forth in the solicitation. Once that determination is made, a notice of award will be issued. The development of this lot is vitally important to the day-to-day operations of JFL North as this site will address the critical challenges we now face.

As I transition to the St. Thomas/St. John District, I am happy to report that the long-awaited reconstruction of the Charlotte Kimelman Cancer Institute (CKCI) has finally commenced. The groundbreaking ceremony for CKCI was held on November 4, 2023. THRT officially issued the Notice to Proceed (NTP) to J. Benton Construction, LLC on March 2, 2024, with an effective start date of March 4, 2024. This project is slated to be completed by September 3, 2025. The total contracted construction cost is \$ 29,180,045.21. In addition to the construction of the facility, I

am pleased to report that FEMA awarded us \$ 5, 561,063.53 with the 98% Federal Cost Share of \$ 5,449,842.26 for the replacement of major medical equipment that was destroyed in the hurricanes, to include the Linear Accelerator and the CT Simulator. While we did in fact receive this notification on April 1<sup>st</sup>, it was definitely not an April Fool's joke.

As it relates to CKCI's progress, J. Benton Construction, LLC has completed the enabling work to ensure a safe construction zone and perimeter around the center. This includes the installation of a perimeter 6' silt fence, completion of the site logistics plan, and set up of office trailers.

Phase 1 is completely ensuring that CKCI is an isolated standalone structure. This means that all connections to and from Roy Lester Schneider Hospital will be demolished. This includes the demolition of the existing shared walls on the CKCI side, demolition of all utilities and plumbing, and the removal of the shared stairwell in Doctor's Parking.

Phase 2 of the project is preparation for the layout and installation of the new structural columns and beams for the additional offices. This will be followed by Phase 3, which is the demolition and installation of the utility yard foundation. This area will serve as the new location for all mechanical equipment and the stand-alone water tanks that will supply CKCI. The vegetation, soil, and any other decaying material will be excavated to the necessary grade to create the foundation footing for the slab.

The Myrah Keating Smith Community Health Center (MKS), which was also severely impacted, has received a Fixed Cost Offer from FEMA in the amount of \$37,302,222.54. The reconstruction effort for MKS is currently included within the St. John vertical bundle as a part of the Office of

Disaster Recovery's Territorial reconstruction initiative which is projected to be solicited by the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Quarter of 2024.

THRT, FEMA and the Office of Disaster Recovery have remained and will continue to remain vigilant and steadfast throughout the redevelopment of our facilities across the Territory. Similarly, THRT along with TBOD and the Executive Leadership Teams of both JFLH and SRMC continue to work collaboratively to address all issues that may arise especially with respect to the Medical and Clinical programming efforts of these four facilities. As with any construction related projects, we have encountered numerous roadblocks; however, we face each challenge with the mission to make the best decisions with the information we have at the given time, to ensure that we are constructing the most efficient, standardized, resilient, sustainable state of the art healthcare facilities for the people of the Virgin Islands. Our residents deserve no less.

As I conclude my presentation, I must personally thank Ms. Kristen A. Hodge, Recovery Director, JRO-USVI for her continued support of our hospitals and Mrs. Adrienne Williams-Octalien of the Office of Disaster Recovery for her unwavering support as the liaison between the hospitals and FEMA. Equally important I want to give thanks to the Territorial Board, the Executive Leadership Teams of JFLH and SRMC for their support to the Territorial Hospital Redevelopment Team and to the consummate professionals of the Territorial Hospital Redevelopment Team.

This concludes my presentation. I will remain available to answer questions you may have at the appropriate time.