



| Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure, & Planning2

Legislature USVI

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0:00:00 But I do recognize as a former teacher, people have to be trained as well. We're not going to put people into spaces and just assume that they know how to utilize them. So that's all in the plans moving forward as we get nearer to the actual opening of our facilities to incorporate that in as well. But as far as in artificial intelligence, coding, and all the things that we are moving towards, yes, that will be a focus as well. Well, that makes me very, very happy because at the end of the day, you know, as representatives of the people, we want to make sure our children have every advantage. And be competitive. Exactly. Yes. I'm all for that. Thank you so much, Mr. Chair, for the time. Thank you very much, Senator Francis Heidegger. Senator Novel Francis. Mr. President, you're recognized for your one burning question.

0:00:48 Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. In the essence of time, I just wanted to ask the commissioner, what is the level of engagement being utilized to capture the input of our student bodies? Not enough. I just had that conversation with Chanel the other day at that same conference where I had the opportunity to speak. There was actually a group of students that piloted a design program where they designed their own school. And one of the things that they mentioned was the fact that schools aren't inviting to students but don't represent students. And so I've had the conversation with the student council since I meet with them monthly about being more actively involved. And so I have some volunteers that are going to join the new school advisory board. But having the students engaged in the design and the conversations about programming is on the top of our list. Thank you very much.

0:01:45 I realized that during the recent protests that in fact I believe that's a necessary voice that we have ignored or left out, I will say, of the past. So yeah, that's something we definitely need to bring into the mix. Thank you very much for the time, Mr. Chair. Very good hearing. Thanks. Thank you very much, Senator Francis. I think we've come to that point in time. We are just about to wrap up, but I just wanted to just talk about one thing, one issue. I was looking at 60 Minutes, not this past Sunday, but the Sunday before the last.

- 0:02:23 And a big part of what they were talking about in one of the segments was how important proper ventilation in buildings was. And the importance of having effectively functioning HVAC systems and they actually were connecting COVID-19, the transmission of it with poorly ventilated buildings. So I just, I just, and I know you are, but I just wanted to say it and I was compelled to say it. When we're building these brand new modern schools to make sure that we pay particularly close attention to the ventilation systems and the HVAC systems.
- 0:03:05 I mean, that is absolutely critical. And the insulation, Senator, part of the many, many myriad of issues we have today is because we've installed air conditioning units across the territory and have not insulated these classrooms properly. And now we have condensation, which leads to air quality issues. And I have to admit, I'm one of them. I used to install ACs out to my school as a principal, not asking maintenance a thing. So, you know, education is power. And so now we're taking the opportunity to educate our folks. And before we install any units, we've got to make sure that they're insulated rooms with the proper electrical capacity. And then we will be able to install air conditioning units.
- 0:03:50 Absolutely. I mean, we've learned a lot of lessons since 2017, for sure. We're going to be exploits for the next, let me not even say the next one, but we have learned a lot and we have a playbook that we should be hopefully compiling that'll make us that much more effective and efficient the next go round. But ladies, thank you very much for taking the time and spending a few hours with us today. I appreciate the work that you do. And sometimes the job is thankless, I know. But we appreciate what you've been doing. We've accomplished a lot and we have a lot more to accomplish. I'm going to give you, ladies, a 30-second wrap-up before we conclude this meeting this afternoon.
- 0:04:33 Thank you, Senator. I want to thank you all for the opportunity to be here, to have the discussion. And we welcome any input and partnerships that you would like to have as we work to improve the conditions of our schools in the territory. It's a new day for VIDE and I'm truly excited to be a part of it. I'm just looking forward to these improved facilities for our faculty and staff as well as our students as we transform public education in the territory. This is transformation, 100 percent, and we're excited. Thank you very much, Dr. Wells-Hedrington.
- 0:05:11 And again, thank you, Mr. Chair, for another well-run meeting and again for spotlighting the recovery. I would do battle with these two ladies any day. We collaborate and the schools are definitely a priority for this recovery and we will definitely push it forward because it is transformation. We spent the day with you and it is because this is what we do all day every day and all of the SWAT team members out there who push for the recovery to happen and you guys could actually go home now. And thank you so much and we will continue to build a legacy of resilience.
- 0:05:47 Thank you very much, Ms. Wells-Hedrington, I mean, oh, boy. Thank you very much. Ms. William Zaklin, Director, I appreciate you. The Committee on Disaster Recovery Infrastructure and Planning Meeting of November 6th. Okay, okay, okay, Madam Secretary, I want to thank everyone for all that they've done in support of this meeting, central staff for sure. This is a crew that does a lot of the heavy lifting, you know, making us look good.
- 0:06:23 They work behind the scenes, so I appreciate you in a massive way. The Committee on Disaster Recovery Infrastructure and Planning Meeting of November 6th, 2023 is hereby adjourned. The Committee on Disaster Recovery Infrastructure and Planning Meeting of November 7th, 2023 is hereby adjourned. The Committee on Disaster Recovery Infrastructure and Planning Meeting of November 6th, 2023 is hereby adjourned. The Committee on Disaster Recovery Infrastructure and Planning Meeting of November 6th, 2023 is hereby adjourned. The Committee on Disaster Recovery Infrastructure and Planning Meeting of November 7th, 2023 is hereby adjourned. The Committee on Disaster Recovery Infrastructure and Planning Meeting of November 7th, 2023 is hereby adjourned. The Committee on Disaster Recovery Infrastructure and Planning Meeting of November 7th, 2023 is hereby adjourned. The Committee on Disaster Recovery Infrastructure and Planning Meeting of November 7th, 2023 is hereby adjourned. The Committee on Disaster Recovery Infrastructure and Planning Meeting of November 7th, 2023 is hereby adjourned. The Committee on Disaster Recovery Infrastructure and Planning Meeting of November 7th, 2023 is hereby adjourned. The Committee on Disaster Recovery Infrastructure and Planning Meeting of November 7th, 2023 is hereby adjourned. The Committee on Disaster Recovery Infrastructure and Planning Meeting of November 7th, 2023 is hereby adjourned.

People named in this transcript

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3x **Senator Novelle Francis**
heard in this transcript as: Francis, Novel Francis

2x **Senator Francis Heidegger**