



Committee of the Whole

Legislature USVI

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0:00:00 . Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

0:02:00 Thank you. Thank you.

0:03:00 Thank you. Thank you.

0:04:00 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

0:05:30 Thank you. ¶¶ Thank you. ¶¶ Right now.

0:08:00 Thank you. We'll be right back.

0:09:00 ¶¶ Thank you. ¶¶ Thank you. ¶¶ so ¶¶

0:12:30 so so Thank you.

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0:15:00 . Thank you.

0:16:00 Thank you. Thank you. Oh, my God. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

0:19:00 Thank you. Thank you.

0:20:00 Thank you. Oh, my God.

0:21:00 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

0:24:00 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

0:26:00 so so so Thank you.

0:28:00 Oh, my God. Thank you. [2 such phrases repeated 8 times · standby audio before the proceeding, transcribed by the recogniser as speech]

0:32:00 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

0:34:00 Oh, my God. We'll be right back. so Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

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0:47:30 ¶¶ Thank you. ¶¶ ¶¶ Thank you.

0:50:00 Li lo la la le lo te lo dai Li lo la la le lo te lo dai Thank you. Thank you. All right.

0:51:36 Li-lo-la-la, li-lo-te-lo-la, li-lo-la-la, li-lo-te-lo-la. Oi, amigo. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. so so Thank you. Thank you. guitar solo so

0:56:15 Oh, my God. Thank you. [2 such phrases repeated 11 times · standby audio before the proceeding, transcribed by the recogniser as speech]

1:01:45 Oh, my God. Thank you. ¶¶ so ¶¶ so Thank you. [3 such phrases repeated 9 times · standby audio before the proceeding, transcribed by the recogniser as speech]

1:08:15 so guitar solo Thank you. We'll be right back. Oh, my God. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

1:13:15 Thank you. Thank you.

1:14:15 Good morning colleagues, good afternoon, it's still 11.59, so technically it's still good morning colleagues, good morning to our central staff employees who do exceptional work behind the scenes to allow this institution to flow and to make decisions on behalf of the people. Good morning to our testifiers and a special good morning to the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands, The Committee of the Whole meeting for Thursday, April 9th, 2026 is hereby called to order. I'm Senator Milton E. Potter and as President of the 36th Legislature of the Virgin Islands, I serve as Chairman of the Committee of the Whole. Just for the edification of the general public, there are no votes taken in the Committee of the Whole.

1:15:01 Today, we will receive testimony from the leadership of the Water and Power Authority. We will receive testimony from the Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority, Office of Disaster Recovery, and the Public Services Commission. We will be moving with a sense of purpose and with the weight of our community's patients firmly on our shoulders. The residents we serve are exhausted. A grandmother on oxygen therapy calling her family in the dark.

1:15:34 A dialysis patient missing a treatment. A family losing groceries they could barely afford. A small business shutting its doors not because it failed, but because the power did. These are not hypotheticals. These are the lived realities of our constituents. Repeated, unrelented, and unacceptable. We have received, I'm sure each of us have received, any number of calls from residents in the community expressing their concerns and asking questions about the WAPA rotations, particularly here in the St. Thomas, St. John district. And just for the record, this body has really been a true partner in its effort to address WAPA's longstanding challenges over the years. We've redirected critical funding, including Medicaid-related funds to ease pressure on WAPA's finances. We've approved millions in appropriations, authorized borrowing, and financed tens of millions of dollars toward the VITAL agreement and LPGA infrastructure. We've passed legislation mandating federal technical assistance to modernize the grid. We've strengthened the Public Service Commission, restructured WAPA's governance, and reformed its billing practices. We've held marathon sessions, marathon hearings, issued subpoenas, and forced leadership to answer publicly for challenges. And we've addressed something that should have never been allowed to fester for years. The government of the Virgin Islands did not consistently pay its own utility bills.

1:17:19 This body corrected that, creating and funding the single-payer utility fund so that the government agencies remain current on their obligations to the Water and Power Authority. We've even mandated and funded the services of a turnaround company to provide objective analysis and recommend strategies to put the utility on a success track. So let me be clear, this legislature has legislated, appropriated, investigated and intervened, and we will continue to do so because that is our responsibility. We have even corrected, I should say, the government's own failures to ensure that the authority gets paid. We are now prepared to impanel a subcommittee on WAPA oversight, reliability, and rate payer protection, to more directly support WAPA in matters related to its governance, finances, operations, capital projects,

fuel, and power procurement, regulatory compliance, and impacts on rate payers and the territory's economic development. I have had conversations with both the majority and the minority leader, and they are fully on board with that initiative. I'd like to make it clear today's meeting is not about assigning blame, because frankly that will get us nowhere. It's about demanding clarity, accountability, and a credible path forward. We expect that the Water and Power Authority will come to the table with honesty, with the state of our infrastructure, transparency about what has failed and why, and a concrete commitment to the communities that depend on reliable power every single day. Communities like Coosby, Coral Bay, Tutu, Bordeaux, Frederickstead, Christianstead, and yes even Water Island. People of this territory deserve to hear in plain terms what we intend to do about it. With that, let us begin.

- 1:19:31 Madam Clerk, can we please have a roll call. Senator Marvin A. Blyton. Senator Blyton, present. Senator Angel L. Boulkes, Jr. Present. Senator Boulkes, Jr., present. Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff. Here. Senator DeGraff, present. Senator Ray Fonseca. Excuse me. Senator Fonseca, present. Senator Novelli Francis, Jr. I'm here. Senator Francis, Jr., present. Senator Alma Francis Heiliger. Present. Senator Francis Heidegger?
- 1:20:05 Present. Senator Hubert L. Frederick? Present. Senator Frederick? Present. Senator Kenneth L. Gittins? Here. Senator Gittins? Present. Senator Maurice C. James? I am here. Senator James? Present. Senator Franklin D. Johnson? Here. Senator Johnson? Present. Senator Carla J. Joseph? Present. Senator Joseph? Present. Senator Clifford A. Joseph Sr? Here.
- 1:20:32 here senator joseph senior present senator avery l lewis yeah senator lewis present senator milton e potter here senator potter present senator kurt avele here present mr chair 50 members are present thank you very much uh madam clerk we do have a quorum and we're prepared to proceed madam clerk are there any pieces of correspondence to be read into the record at this time no mr no mr chair thank you madam clerk can you please read today's agenda into the record the 36th legislature will convene in a committee of the whole to receive an update and testimony from the virgin islands water and power authority regarding the ongoing electrical service interruptions impacting the saint thomas st john district the discussion will include but not but will not be limited to a concise chronology of significant outages and rotational interruptions in the st thomas st john district over the past 30 to 60 days including causes duration and affected areas a clear explanation of the current status and condition of the generation units serving the district including unit 15 at the randolph harley power plant and any associated transmission constraints impacting st john an identification of root causes technical operational and financial underlying the recent and ongoing outages beyond general references to mechanical failure a detailed reliability improvement plan for the next zero to six months and six to 24 months including specific projects timelines cost estimates and responsible officials aimed at stabilizing and then strengthening service in the st thomas st john district wapa's policies and practices regarding customer communication
- 1:22:24 outage notification and claims for loss or damage including spoiled food and damaged appliances and any proposed changes to better protect and compensate affected customers any statutory regulatory or financial actions desired from the legislature to support implementation of wapa's reliability improvement plan invited testifiers mr maurice muay board chairman vi water and power authority mr carl knight executive director vi water and power authority mr eugene jones executive director vi housing finance authority mrs adrian williams actalin director vi office of disaster recovery and miss sandra satori executive director vi by Public Services Commission. Mr. Chair, this concludes the reading of today's agenda.
- 1:23:19 Thank you very much, Madam Clerk. Before we proceed, I'm going to ask the testifiers, beginning from my right, moving to my left, to just put your name and your position title on the record. Good morning, Mr. President. My name is Colin Brown. I'm the Director of Transmission and Distribution at the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority. Good morning, Mr. President. My name is Kevin Harrigan. I'm the power plant superintendent for Randolph-Hardley.
- 1:23:53 Good morning, Mr. Senate President. My name is Maurice Mouyeh, and I'm the Board Chair of the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority. Good morning. My name is Carl Knight, the CEO and Executive Director of the VIA Water and Power Authority. Good morning. I'm Lorraine Kelly, Chief Financial Officer of the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority. Good morning, Senate President and Senators. My name is Sandra Sottori, the Executive Director, Virgin Islands Public Services Commission. Good morning. Boyd Spreng, General Counsel, Public Services Commission.
- 1:24:27 Good morning. Thank you very much. Well, I guess it's afternoon now. Thank you very much, testifiers. I know ODR Executive Director is on her way, so she should be here shortly, I think, occupying that seat. So we will proceed, however. I'm going to ask CEO of Water and Power Authority, Sakal Knight, you may proceed, sir, with your testimony. Thank you.
- 1:24:54 Good day, Honorable Milton Potter, President of the 36th Legislature of the United States Virgin Islands. Other Honourable Senators present, the listening and viewing audience, I am Carl Knight, Executive Director and Chief

Executive Officer of the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority. Hereafter, we will be referred to as WAPO, the Authority. Joining me today are members of the Authority's management team, the Superintendent of the Randolph-Harley Power Plant, Mr. Kevin Harrigan, the Director of Transmission and Distribution, Mr. Colin Brown, our Chief Financial Officer, Ms. Lorraine Kelly, also joining us today is the Chairman of the Governing Board, Mr. Maurice Mouillet. We are here at your invitation to provide an update from the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority and to ensure our community has clear answers regarding the recent outages. The last two months have, in fact, been very difficult, plain and simple. For our customers, for businesses, for families, and for our families, for our employees.

- 1:26:02 To every resident who has lost sleep, food, business, or peace of mind, because the power was not there when you needed it, I want to say clearly that I am sincerely sorry. We understand that frustration. We live here, too. During this period, our employees have worked tirelessly, often through the night, to stabilize the system under real strain as they confronted a myriad of issues. What we have experienced these past weeks was not one issue but a series of events occurring back to back that exposed the fragility of our already stressed electrical system. Between the period of Monday, February 2nd until Thursday, February 5th, the Virgin Islands experienced intense thunderstorms, if you may recall, that resulted in prolonged power outages. While the rain was unusual for that time of the year, the accompanying winds and lightning were even more disruptive. The islands experienced consistently high winds during that period, with wind gusts as high as 33 miles per hour. Power outages were caused by branches in the lines, blown fuses due to lightning strikes, broken insulators, and other typical storm-related damage. The most intense showers occurred in the early morning hours that Tuesday, and that delayed our efforts to restore customers that had lost power on Feeder 7A late Monday night on St. Thomas. Most of the customers on St. John and St. Croix were restored by Tuesday night. However, restoration efforts on St. Thomas were further delayed by considerable vegetation in the lines on the north side of the island. On February 5th, WAPA experienced a blowout on the underground portion on Fjord 13 on the
- 1:27:54 waterfront around 9.30 a.m. As a result, areas that had been previously restored lost power again for most of the day due to the limited capacity of feeder 12. When feeder 13 trips, all of the B, C, D and E feeders are served only by feeder 12 and due to its limited capacity, up to 5 megawatts of customer load is shed through rotations. Feeder 13 was restored at 6.36 p.m. A line crew was brought in from St. John on February 6 to support the St.
- 1:28:36 Thomas line crews on the remaining trouble calls and address scattered outages. On that same Friday, February 6, at 5.29 p.m., the transmission line between Red Hook and Cruise Bay tripped, creating an island-wide outage on St. John. The transmission and distribution team tested the terrestrial section of the cable and red hook and found no damage. On Saturday morning at 6 a.m., the team inspected the St. John portions of the line, similarly found no damage. The submarine portion of the transmission line also successfully passed testing. It was later determined that the line was not at fault.
- 1:29:20 A burnt fuse caused its protection system to misfire, shutting it down unnecessarily. Power was restored to St. John at 5.23 p.m. on Saturday, February 7th and that concluded one of the longest weeks in recent history for the Water and Power Authority. I am deliberate in pointing out the testing of the transmission line from Red Hook to St. John because it provided verification that the line was in excellent condition at that point. The cable is approximately 14 years into what is an expected 50-year life expectancy. On Saturday, March 14th at 9.57 p.m., the transmission line from Red Hook to St. John was deliberately cut with a mechanical device. If I could have media put up the images we provided earlier.
- 1:30:19 If you look at the images on the screen, you can see a blowout on the transmission line. That line in particular on the left, that was feet of 13. You can see it's irregular. You can see it's burnt. You can see that that looks like an electrical failure on the line. When you look at the line on the right, that was the St. John transmission line. It's not a blowout, it's a deliberate circular cut. There's no electrical failure there, no burnt insulation, just a cut through the insulation, which is what led us to realize that it had been deliberately cut. Thank you, Media. The transmission line from Red Hook to St. John was deliberately cut with a mechanical device. St. John was once again plunged into an island-wide outage. Realizing how long it would take to repair the damage to the existing line, a decision was made to return to service the previously abandoned transmission line that had previously served the island of St. John. night, the field team completed the tie-in of the Red Hook portion of the line. Early Sunday morning, the field team completed the connection of the St. John end of the cable.
- 1:31:40 After testing, service was fully restored to St. John at 11.46 a.m. on Sunday, March 15th. About three hours later, power transmission to St. John was disrupted yet again, triggered by a fire in the junction box where the lines are connected in Red Hook. Evidence suggests that this was a direct result of the damage caused by the event the previous night, but that damage was not immediately apparent. At this point, the field team began working on both cables to determine which would yield the quickest repair. The existing cable was ultimately returned to service, but had a damaged phase. The field crew was innovative enough to utilize one phase from the previously abandoned cable and two phases from the existing

cable to restore full service to St. John. The field team completed those repairs and restored power shortly after midnight on Tuesday, March 17th.

- 1:32:37 Finally, on Thursday, March 19th began what is approximately a two and a half week prolonged period of rotational outages caused by the inability of the Randolph-Harley power plant to produce sufficient power to meet the customer demand in the St. Thomas St. John District. This event occurred on March 19 at approximately 11.45 a.m. when Unit 15 experienced an electrical fault and tripped offline. This destabilized the plant and caused the other generation units operating at the time to also trip, resulting in a district-wide outage. The apparent damage was quickly assessed and parts were sourced to repair or replace the damaged components.
- 1:33:20 When Unit 15 went offline, we simply did not have enough generation available at certain times of the day. At peak demand, we were short by about up to 5 megawatts. Rotations were not the goal, but instead they were the safeguard to prevent a full system outage. WAPA currently operates 10 generation units in the St. Thomas St. John District. Three of these, Units 27, 23 and 15 are the legacy heavy duty turbines that produce large shares of power critical to maintaining reliable service. The remaining capacity is supported by smaller, more efficient Watsila units, which together provide approximately 57 megawatts of generation. At the time of Unit 15 tripping offline, Units 23, Unit 27 and Watsila Engine 5 were all offline for maintenance repairs. There were three successful restarts of Unit 15 during this outage event, but the unit performed erratically and in each case failed to stay on line for longer than 24 hours. Every time the unit tripped offline, it resulted in a district-wide outage.
- 1:34:34 On Monday, March 30th, a decision was made to pivot and focus efforts on the repair of Unit 27. Unit 15 was kept offline as of that Monday. Repairs on Unit 27 were successfully completed on Monday, April 6, at approximately 1 p.m. That additional generation has allowed us to end the rotational outages. We're continuing to monitor the unit closely and operate cautiously to ensure stability. With Units 23 and 27 unavailable, Unit 15 had been running continuously since September 2025 and with a brief down time, it actually has been running consistently since January or February of last year.
- 1:35:23 This is because it was the only large unit available for most of that period of time and WAPA was unable to remove it from service for routine maintenance without risking wider outages. It is also the only gas turbine in the Harley plant that can utilize LPG as a fuel. To recap, early February storms brought lightning, high winds, vegetation damage causing multiple feeder outages and delays in restoration. Electrical failure on feeder 13 reduced our ability to carry load, forcing temporary rotations.
- 1:35:59 Transmission disruption to St. John later traced to equipment malfunction. It was not line failure. It required full system testing before restoration. There was a deliberate act of vandalism in March that cut the transmission line to St. John, triggering that island-wide outage. And most significantly, on March 19, Unit 15 failed, triggering a district-wide outage and a prolonged period of rotational service interruptions. Let me be direct about the core issue. Our system is operating with aging infrastructure, limited redundancy, and very little margin for error. Unit 15 was commissioned in 1980. It has served this community longer than any current employee at the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority. This unit is older, probably older than most of our employees. It has significantly passed its expected use for life, and its retirement has been contemplated for several years now. FEMA has agreed to replace the unit as part of the Prudent Replacement Plan for the Randolph Harley Power Plant.
- 1:37:11 For months, we haven't been able to provide the maintenance that the unit needs, and it's hard to justify large investments on a unit that is ultimately slated for retirement. As of 2021, the unit is deemed obsolete, meaning the manufacturer no longer produces that model turbine and spare parts are now mostly sourced from the aftermarket. That is not a sustainable position for any utility. These incidents were all problematic. Each incident was unique in nature. And while they are illustrative of the challenges faced by WAPA, they are also all solvable.
- 1:37:51 I understand that what people remember is the outage and not the explanation, but it's important to say this clearly. This was not neglect. This was a system under pressure, responding to multiple compounding failures. All things considered, our teams restored service repeatedly, safely, and as quickly as conditions allowed. We are not standing still. The authority has a clear path forward that will provide tangible improvements to our delivery of reliable service in the St. Thomas St. John District. They are firm, long-term plans, intermediate plans and short-term plans. We can start with the short-term plans and per hour invitation defined as zero to within six months on St. Thomas.
- 1:38:37 We are nearing the completion of construction of the bypass to FIDA 13's transmission line. The construction of this bypass is approximately 95% complete. You've probably observed the work going on behind the Snyder Hospital. The project is fully funded by FEMA through its Public Assistance Program. Short term, within the next six months on St. John, we're looking at the installation of emergency standby generation for that island.

- 1:39:10 The authority is pursuing an expedited path for the installation of emergency standby generation. Several vendors have presented suitable and viable proposals. This project is funded by FEMA through its public assistance program as well. The repair of the Great Bay 34.5 kV transmission line to St. John. That submarine line was damaged several years ago. The authority has identified the location of the damage to the line and has identified a contractor capable of conducting the repairs. A vendor has been engaged already in the manufacturing of the necessary inline splices. This project as of right now is currently unfunded, but we are proceeding and we will speak to that later in the testimony. Temporary repair of the 13.8 KV Ridge Road distribution circuit at Cabrita Point. This submarine cable provides an alternate means of energizing FIDA 7E on St. John. The circuit was damaged during Hurricane Irma. FEMA has agreed to fund its permanent replacement as part of the horizontal bundle of underground projects for the east end of St. Thomas. However, construction is not expected to commence for another 12 months. The authority is instead pursuing a temporary repair that will make the line available for emergency use within the next six months. A contractor has been identified to conduct those repairs. This project is also currently unfunded. Territory-wide, we are pursuing the installation of distribution automation devices. These devices will allow WAPA to isolate and restore electrical service to customers in sections both locally and utilizing SCADA.
- 1:41:09 These devices can detect and isolate faulted areas of the power system, allowing for quicker service restoration and ultimately leading to fewer and shorter outages for our customers. This project is funded by HUD through the Community Development Block Grant for Electrical Grid Stabilization and is administered by the Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority. We are pursuing the installation of new distribution transformers. WAPA right now has a large inventory of what we refer to as mild steel encased non-CSP transformers.
- 1:41:45 Those transformers are prone to corrosion. This project aims at replacing those pole-mounted transformers that are older than 20 years with stainless steel tanks. The new transformers will be of the type completely self-protected, fitted with internal protection and lightning surge protection. This project is also funded by HUD through the Community Development Block Grant for Electrical Grid Stabilization that is administered by the Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority. As far as intermediate plans, somewhere between the next six months and the next 24 months on St. Thomas, we are looking forward to the installation of temporary generation in the Randolph-Harley Plant. This project is funded by FEMA through its Public Assistance Program and is being administered by the Office of Disaster Recovery through its Super Project Management Office. We're looking forward to the development of the Fortuna solar farm. VI Electron has already begun construction. That is a 25-megawatt solar farm in the state of Fortuna, and that project is funded through our existing power purchase agreement with VI Electron. We also anticipate the start of construction on the development of the Bovoni solar farm. VI Electron is also pursuing that project, a 10-megawatt solar farm in Estate Bovoni. That project is also funded through a power purchase agreement with VI Electron. We are pursuing the installation of an additional battery energy storage system at the Randolph-Harley Power Plant.
- 1:43:12 The plant currently has an 18-megawatt hour of battery storage capacity. The goal is to add another 18-megawatt hours of storage capacity. That project is funded by FEMA through its Public Assistance Program and is being administered by ODR through the Super PMO. We're looking at the installation, looking forward to the installation of a battery energy storage system at the East End substation. Specifically, we're looking at a 15-megawatt, 30-megawatt-hour battery storage system that will provide the ability to service feeders 9C and 7C. That project is also funded by HUD through the CDBG e-Grid fund that is administered by VIHFA. In the intermediate term on the island of St. John, we are looking forward to the development of the St. John solar farm. VI Electron is pursuing that development of a 10-megawatt solar farm. That project is also funded through the existing power purchase agreement we have executed with VI Electron. As we look down the road to a two to three year planning window, we expect to have the permanent replacement of Units 14 and 15 in the Randolph-Harley Power Plant with at least 32 megawatts of new generation. That project is funded by FEMA through its Public Assistance Program and is being administered by ODR through its Super PMO Office. We're looking forward to the rebuild of the transmission feeders 11 and 12. Following the damage of feeder 11 during Hurricane Maria, there has been extreme stress on the two active transmission lines. This has also eliminated the level of redundancy that was provided when all three lines were active. This project is funded by HUD through the Community Development Block Grant CDBG eGrid, administered by VIHFA. We're looking forward to the development
- 1:45:15 of the St. Thomas-Mavoni Eastern Best and Microgrid Project. This project will provide an alternative energy source to a portion of southeastern St. Thomas. This project is to be funded through the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, with the solar and wind energy resources funded through existing power purchase agreements with independent power providers. The development of the St. John microgrid. This project would allow St. John to island independent of the Harley power plant by combining utility scale solar, conventional generators, battery energy storage systems to meet customer demand. It's primarily funded by FEMA through its public assistance program with the solar energy being funded through the previously mentioned existing power purchase agreement with VI Electron. There is a reality that

speaks to the plans both short term, intermediate and long term specifically for the St. Thomas-St. John District.

- 1:46:24 There is however a reality that we cannot ignore and I want to take this moment to remind the community. For many years, the authority has been losing money on every barrel of oil that we purchase. This is an inconvenient truth because I think everyone in this room can agree that our electricity rates are currently high. It creates a real conundrum because we cannot solve our problem by simply raising the rates. WAPA has been operating for years in a position where the cost of goods, services, labor, fuel, they're all increasing, as we can see in our community.
- 1:47:14 The gap has been managed for over a decade by deferring maintenance, prioritizing critical vendor payments, cutting operating budgets, etc. Those budget cuts, well, they have resulted in inadequate staffing, sometimes a shortage of tools and equipment, a shortage of fleet vehicles, and inadequate training. Realistically, there is no overnight fix. That is the true challenge. How do we responsibly reduce operating expenses without placing a burden on our customers or eroding the quality of the service that we provide. It is a difficult challenge, but one that we are skillfully trying to navigate.
- 1:48:04 To assist the authority, this body must recognize that reality. We can resolve these fiscal woes, but it will require focus and persistence to the finish. In conclusion, Senators, the buck stops with us. We accept that responsibility fully. Our job is to provide reliable, affordable service and regain the trust of our community. To get to the finish line, we cannot do it alone. We need partnership. We need a stable regulatory environment. We need action on the suggested legislative measures that we've presented in last year's budget presentation. We need timely progress for our critical infrastructure funding. We need the continued backing for projects like the Ridge Road and Great Bay repairs for St. John.
- 1:49:01 I ask this body to support Senator Angel Bolkis' proposed bill that would fund those two projects that would immediately restore redundancy to the island of St. John. We need community support for our developing solar farms. We can meet every goal that we've outlined above if we are all working together. I want to thank the many members of the community and our governmental partners that have been very supportive during these last few weeks. I thank the employees of the Authority for being unwavering during these very stressful times.
- 1:49:39 me, the mechanics in our power plants can fix anything. Both the electrical and water systems have had many late nights and early mornings out in the field and in the power plants. But they've consistently answered the call to duty and I truly appreciate them. They deserve recognition and our customers deserve results. We are wholeheartedly committed to delivering both. I thank you for the opportunity to testify here today and I look forward to your questions.
- 1:50:11 Thank you very much, the CEO. The next person on the line-up, HFA? Testimony We'll save the testimony until the director of ODR, Ms. Ockland, you prepared to proceed with your testimony?
- 1:50:43 Ms. Ockland- Good afternoon Honorable Senator Milton E. Potter, Chairman of the 36th Legislature's committee of the whole fellow testifiers and the listening and viewing audience i'm adrian l williams octolin director of the virgin alice office of disaster recovery and before i begin i would like to state on record that addressing the territory's power generation needs is the utmost priority for the odr we have made great strides towards helping the virgin alice water and power authority to advance its recovery efforts the odr works collaboratively with fema and wapa to assess and analyze the power generation needs of the territory and develop a comprehensive plan to improve the quality of life quality of service to the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands in February 2025 those efforts resulted in the final approval and obligation of two prudent replacement projects one for the replacement of the generation assets at the Randolph Harley power plant in St. Thomas and the other for the replacement of generation assets at the estate Richmond power plant on St. Croix After notification, the ODR's Super Project Management Office immediately began working with WAPA to draft a joint solicitation which strategically bundled both projects together in an effort to expedite the work and attract sufficient interest. ODR released that joint solicitation in June of 2025, and in December 2025, ODR selected RG Engineering Javelin-Grammercy Ventures Joint Venture as a progressive design builder to design and replace the power plants in both districts. The contract is in the final stages of negotiations, and we anticipate that it will be executed shortly. upon execution RG will immediately begin to work to procure and install temporary generation at both power plants prioritizing Randolph Harley while concurrently advancing system studies equipment sourcing and designing efforts to determine the most optimal long-term generation solutions to the territory ODR in collaboration with WAPA is in the process of identifying and sourcing generation assets for both the temporary and permanent power installations, which includes a short-term plan to facilitate emergency power generation on the Island of St. John.
- 1:53:12 To that end, ODR and WAPA have proactively prepared an amendment to FEMA, which once approved, will allow WAPA to source and procure power generation assets that can be deployed throughout the territory to support immediate generation needs. Additionally, ODR has engaged with both FEMA and DPNR to facilitate an expedited environmental approval needed to facilitate the installation and operation of those units. Honorable Senators, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding the status of the Prudent Replacement Project. We value your time and

consideration and anticipate collaborating with this body to advance our recovery efforts. Remain available to answer any questions you may have. Thank you. Thank you very much, Director Williams-Octelan, for your testimony.

1:54:02 I'm now going to ask Madam Clerk if you can read the testimony of Mr. Eugene Jones, Executive Director of the VI Housing Finance Authority, into the record. Testimony by Mr. Eugene Jones, Executive Director of the Virgin Islands Housing Authority. as requested the authority appears before you today to provide clarity regarding the status of all funds awarded appropriated received obligated and expended in connection with the virgin islands water and power authority following the 2017 storms the authority received the community development block grant disaster recovery mitigation and electrical grid grants cdbg disaster recovery in 2023 the office of disaster recovery assumed programmatic oversight of the disaster recovery grant as a subrecipient and as such will speak to the status of those projects cdbg mitigation and electrical grid the cdbg mitigation and electrical grid grant funds administered by vihfa are intended to support activities that increase long-term resilience to natural hazards and reduce risks to life property and economic stability particularly in areas impacted by federally declared disasters of the 774.1 million dollars in mit funds 145 million was awarded to wapa and fully expended for the acquisition of the vital infrastructure of the 67 million in electrical grid funds wapa applied and was approved for 35.7 million of the rebuilding and installation of feeders 11 and 12 distribution automated devices transformer replacements and battery energy storage systems bess these projects are currently in the environmental stage awaiting consultations from our partnering agencies the department of

1:56:11 planning and natural resources and the virgin islands port authority and testing once the consultation and testing results are received vihfa is poised to engage in a hud required seven-day public notice period following the public notice period hud has a 15-day approval processing period that culminates in vihfa's receipt of an authority to use grants for grant funds AUGF which is hud's formal approval documentation that will allow wapa to begin project implementation in conclusion as of this testimony there are no payments pending vihfa's approval on behalf of wapa and or related vendors the authority remains firmly committed to advancing all eligible projects with efficiency accountability and adherence to hud regulations Thank you. This concludes the reading of the testimony, Mr. Chair.

1:57:11 Thank you very much, Madam Clerk. I know my colleagues were rightly a little irritated when I said I was going to have Madam Clerk read the testimony of Mr. Jones into the record, because rightfully so, there are any number of highly compensated important people working for the VI Housing Finance Authority who could have been here physically to read a testimony and to answer questions. But I just felt that the information was important enough for the general public to hear it. But we are very disappointed that no one from the Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority decided to come here, face the public, because it's not facing us, but it's really answering to the people of the Virgin Islands.

1:58:02 So it is very disconcerting, disheartening. Colleagues, we're going to go to a seven-minute round. We're going to go to a seven-minute round. Prior to the seven-minute round, I'm going to recognize you for your point of information. One second. Senator Bulquez. You may proceed with your point of information, Senator Bulquez. Thank you so much, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon, colleagues, people of the Virgin Islands, central staff, and the testifying panel here before us. In the testimony from the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority, It was mentioned in their testimony that on March 14th, the transmission line was deliberately, using that as a key word, cut with a mechanical device. And of course, this attack is an attack on the infrastructure of the authority. And based on my research, the destruction of any energy facility or their property is under federal law under 18 U.S. Code 13, Section 1366, with willfully damaging or attempting to damage the property of an energy facility, such as an electrical substation, power line, transmission line, is actually a federal offense, and this law is often used in infrastructure attacks or copper theft. Well, it's also punishable by 5 or 20 years on different penalties.

1:59:50 But my question is because I heard in the testimony it was only referred to the Virgin Islands Police Department. I'm curious to know why that was not referred to the Federal Bureau of Investigation or any other federal authorities and has it been classified by the authority as a federal crime and what is the status of the investigation and has the facility been secured since then so that night senator we did file a police report the acting line superintendent at the time is a Fernando Joseph filed a police report after he saw the damage done to the cable the next morning I I notified Director of VITEMA, Daryl Jashin. He convened a meeting of VIPD along with the Virgin Islands Fusion Center that investigates those sort of incidents that keeps an eye out for terrorist acts, et cetera. I did share with them that I thought the matter had a nexus and should be referred to the FBI for investigation, and it was an attack on critical infrastructure. So I did meet with Commissioner Mario Brooks and Chief of Police Deborah Hodge, along with the Director of the Fusion Center and the Director of ITEMA the very next morning to discuss the incident and the fact that I thought it was a serious attack on critical infrastructure. And has the property been secured since the crime? We, that's something I won't discuss in a public setting, it's probably not appropriate to discuss in a public setting. Well, what I don't want, Chief Executive, Mr.

- 2:01:38 I want to discourage, for the point of information, I want to just keep it very tight and very concise. And you can, you're going to have time to really drill down during your, during your testimony. so i don't want to you can finish your thought but just i appreciate it mr chair it's just that you know i just really want to make sure that this doesn't happen again uh you know it it changed a lot of lives um over 72 plus hour period um and we just want to make sure that the infrastructure is safe um so that's why if he's not liable to to say so right now on the floor i understand but at least i would like to get uh through the chair uh to the rest of the myself and from the colleagues that information. We certainly don't want to have a repeat of that incident.
- 2:02:26 That's a catastrophic incident for us as well, having that many customers out. But I don't want to discuss security vulnerabilities and how we've addressed them in a public setting. Thank you. Thank you very much. Senator Blayden, you recognize your point of information. Senator Blayden Thank you. Thank you so much, Mr. Chair, and good afternoon to my colleagues. Good afternoon, testifiers. Director Knight, I can't understand what you're saying, but at the same time, we are talking about lives that have been affected in so many ways. And you don't have to go into any detail, but that was my line of questioning also because my question was, are we even at least monitoring that area right now and what is being done to secure it because of national security in terms of St. John because that's a separate island apart from St. Timothy and St. Croix, and we must do something immediately, instantaneously to quail that type of activity. And if we say we are, it will probably divert them from trying to do it again also. So you don't have to give details. But I think it's important enough, and the people will feel more safer that, yes, they are addressing it, and they are on top of it. Some, you know, you don't have to give details because you are correct. But at the same time, I mean, we need to know that, you know, our people are well protected. Thank you so much for the time, Mr. Chair. Mr. Thank you, Senator Blyden. You want to respond? Mr. You know, I mean, what I'd like to say is we're taking steps towards securing the site.
- 2:03:51 That's probably as much as I should reasonably put on the public record. Thank you. Senator VLA, you recognize your point of information. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon to the people out of Virgin Islands. I think the question that was asked previously by the Senator from Sinjin, was it referred to the FBI? It was really a yes or no? It was not referred to by WAPA. was it referred to the fbi by the police department i um let me let me add confer my security um personnel to see if they they have knowledge of that i personally don't have knowledge of of that this was a criminal act that could be labeled as terrorism against an entire island because electricity was caught to that entire it was cut to the entire island so i would I would think that everybody in government would be saying this needs to be referred to the feds because we need help, because we don't want this to happen again. If it wasn't referred to the feds, that's sending a different message, that I don't know what that message is.
- 2:04:57 If it wasn't referred to the feds, why wasn't it? Thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much, colleagues. Your concern is understood. So hopefully Mr. Knight you can give us some feedback at some point as to whether or not Mr. I will try to find out, but again let me say I refer the matter to our local law enforcement. I advise them of the seriousness and the critical nature. I involved our emergency management agency and I involved our fusion center. I think the question should be posed to them as to how did they respond to that me bringing to their attention and attack on our critical infrastructure. Thank you for your response. Yes, thank you, Mr. Senate President and colleagues of the 36th Legislature. I would like to say that the board is well aware of this problem. Executive Director Knight has kept us informed of the issues.
- 2:06:00 I would like to say that he is correct that when something like this happens, we have to be very as correct as we can in terms about what we discuss regarding how we may secure and exactly the path to restoration as well because we don't want this to happen again so in addition to that I would like to say that once the board is notified that this happened we did provide some questions and give our concerns to the executive director and his team to ensure that when we do repair those cables to St. John coming from St. Thomas and also on the St. John side, that we do a better job going forward to secure them. I would say that this has been the case since these cables were laid and now we have the opportunity to better secure these facilities going forward. And with Mr. Brown and Mr. Knight's team, I think he will ensure that this will take place in the future. So I just wanted to give you the board's perspective on that, because I think that is very important. And that's why I'm here today to support the authority with this request to be present this afternoon.
- 2:07:22 Thank you very much. Mr. President, if I could just, I just want to be very clear. So in my meeting with the local law enforcement officials, I did ask that the matter be referred for federal investigation. I told them what I thought the nature of the crime was, and I did request that it be referred to the feds for investigation. Thank you for that clarification, but you haven't received any feedback as to where it was. I have not. Senator Avery-Lewis, you recognize me for your point of information. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Mr. President, and thank you, Mr. Chairman.
- 2:07:53 and good afternoon colleagues, good afternoon testifiers. Mr. Knight, good afternoon. Good afternoon. Mr. Board Chair, Moise. Moise. Yes, Senator. Moise. I heard your response, but let me carry it a step further. As the board authorizes Mr.

Knight to look into securing not just that facility, but part of the security at all facilities, St. Thomas, St. John, St. Croix, Water Island. And we look into it, whether it's cameras, manpower, whatever, you know. I know you're going to tell me you're strapped for cash, but this is something that we really need to look into. And I really need to hear from the board because the people at the Virgin Island think the board is the 15 elected senators and the governor and lieutenant governor. So you're all going to speak up and support Mr. Knight. So this is your opportunity here. Now, tell me how you authorized Mr. Knight to secure the rest of the facilities.

2:08:53 Respectfully, Senator and Legislature, this is why I am here today. Exactly why I am here today. I will say once we were notified, and the Executive Director can tell you how many times I emailed him at night, often late at night. I had three questions. What happened? Do we follow a certain protocol to make sure that these facilities are secured? And if we're under that jurisdiction, which actually I know that we're not under that jurisdiction, do we follow those rules?

2:09:37 The reason I asked those questions was because we are not under that jurisdiction. There's NERC, the National Electric Reliability Corporation. They manage all critical infrastructure across the United States. Unfortunately, we are not under that jurisdiction. We have the opportunity to abide by that jurisdiction as best as we can. And that's why I asked the question that evening.

2:10:05 So the board is well aware of the work that is taking place to repair the lines because right now we have one line to St. John. Hold on, hold on. And we want to make sure that when those lines are repaired... Wait, wait, hold on. No, you hold on for me. Hold on, hold on, Maurice. One second. Yes, sir. Colleagues. Sir Maurice. Maurice. Yes, sir. My question was, has the board authorized Mr. Knight to harden... Wait, Mr. Knight. To harden the infrastructure, the security at the different facilities that WAPA run, whether it's where they put the lines, where they put the poles, you know, and then we can carry it a step forward or how we harden the even, the online infrastructure.

2:10:52 So we make sure we're breached and so forth. But right now, the critical part was somebody went in and tampered with a line. That caused confusion. That the whole island was out of power. Same time has been back and forth, but that's, my question is, what are we doing to harden? and we're adding more cameras, we're adding more security personnel. That was the question. Has the board authorized Mr. Knight to do this? So, let me just step in, Senators. Let me try and be as clear as possible. We are already, without board authorization, we immediately took steps and we continue to take steps in securing that facility.

2:11:31 I just simply do not want to discuss in any considerable detail what those steps are. But we have taken steps. Let Mr. Knight conclude. Yeah, we're taking steps, and we are securing the facility. Yes, they were. Colleagues, I'm going to choose to move on. And I didn't want you to tell me. The FBI has, in fact, been notified. Excuse me, Mr. Knight. I did not want you to sit down here to tell me we put a camera in this corner, we put a man in here, over here, or whatever. Sir Lewis. Have you taken steps? Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you. Colleagues, this might be a long day, and I don't want to. We haven't even gone to the first round of questioning as yet. So I don't want to get distracted by points of information and not get to the actual questioning.

2:12:17 So I'm going to ask you to hold off with your points of information. We may have a second round. So you'll be allowed to save your questions for when your round comes. And we will give you an opportunity for a second round to elaborate on whatever other questions you may have. But I'm going to start my round of questioning with Senator Alma-Francis Heiliger. You're recognized for your seven minutes. Thank you. I thought I had to turn into a pointer inquiry queen in a minute because this has taken a while. But thank you so much, Mr. Chair. Thank you to my colleagues. Good day to my colleagues, the people of the territory, to the testifiers, staff, everyone within the sound of my voice um i was here listening to the responses and i'm gonna call bs on all of this that's just my personal feelings and i i even i as a senator knew about a year and a half ago st john cable was barely hanging like i had this discussion about a year and a half ago like st john was barely holding on by a prayer so when are you gonna come pull up a picture to tell me all of a sudden they get caught i i'm just not buying it i will wait till whenever this investigation come out and we'll go from there because you know and i i i almost take it kind of in my opinion crazy that if something like this that affected an entire island and when my colleague initially asked the question about the fbi i just wanted to hear was it reported or not i heard i speak to this person to that person to this person to this person and i i just didn't hear if anything was really done because i own a

2:14:16 radio station and do you know that anything that deals with federal disruption it is a criminal act somebody calling into my station and just blocking and just ringing it ringing it just blocking people from using it that's a criminal offense and I could on my own get up and contact the FBI so I i didn't realize we had so many levels of bureaucracy to contact the fbi i mean i i have picked up the phone and called them and spoke to them myself called them in the puerto rico office had conversations so i had no idea that it was all of these levels just to contact the fbi when i've done it so it this conversation kind of sounds strange to me but like i said i i'm going to pray that some kind of investigation is happening because if

what you said truly happened i'm the type of person what would be the motive for somebody to want to go in cut a line that would disrupt our people over in st john so so a lot of things in my head certain things don't add up but I'll wait for this investigation to happen like quite a bit of these other investigations that have happened over the years. But um I want to ask some questions quickly. You said that there's a system that potentially to give St. John their own mini-grid. There's a potential to get that set up. Is there a time frame and is there a possibility of how long now when i said time frame i'm talking about potentially this project when it potentially could be started and then also was there any assessment done as to how long it would potentially take to get completed yeah the um the project has already started the design phase is

2:16:24 on the way the um portion for coral bay is about 60 completed in design frank's bay is about 30 and completed in design. The microgrid which you're referring to has component parts. So one component of that is the generation. We're trying to fast track the generation. So I put that within a six month window that we can actually fast track the generation portion of the project. It includes a solar renewable portion which is probably more in that six month to 24 month time frame. And it also includes the battery energy storage which is probably in that six month to 24 month time frame. But the generation will allow independence for power production for the island of St. John. And eventually, we just want to coordinate those three sources of energy.

2:17:09 So roughly, based on what you're saying, within six months, they could potentially be generating their own power? Yes, that's what we're shooting for. And 24 months to finish the whole project. That sounds about right. Understood. This is on the record, so I will be following up and monitoring. That's fine. Good. But I also want, you know, have you guys ever looked at the, would you consider the water part of WAPA privatized? No, we have a water distribution business.

2:17:43 We purchase water that's produced through a contract, but we distribute the water. Through a contract to another company. We have a contract for the production of water, but we distribute the water. We are responsible for. let me let me say this and i'm trying to my time one minute 30 seconds oh god previously wapa used to do all of this and then a whole chunk of it was outsourced and you guys just deal with the distribution part is that correct because you guys purchase it from a private company that now runs the contract and i'm trying to look at every aspect what are your thoughts? Because let's be real. WAPA don't run good. It just doesn't. We have dumped hundreds of millions of dollars into this entity. It is what it is. It just does not run good. And I'm starting to think that maybe if that part is removed from the government side, now I'm not saying we have to give it up, but y'all were willing to let go the production part of the water what are the possibilities of that part the government runs directly potentially going under contract like you did because something we have to start looking at other alternatives because what we have been doing for decades is not working and it's destroying the fabric of this territory it's disrupting the everyday lives of the people of this territory 30 seconds and i can't keep coming in here i've been to so many wapa meetings with you guys i've heard every solution every idea every coulda woulda shoulda maybe yes no rate going up rate going down propane let me buy this it's it's non-stop but at the end of the day the customer

2:19:36 is not being made whole and that's the bottom line i feel like i'm being held hostage by a company that i am paying for a service that is so lousy that i don't even have a choice but to accept it time because this is all this community basically has and then what ends up happening let me just quickly wrap up you can wrap up when when you have a situation of the the larger customers are so fed up with wapa they come off of the grid they go set up their own solar system or whatever the case is then all of a sudden we are in a quagmire because you guys are not pulling in enough money and then all of a sudden it fall right back on the rest of the people in this territory you're not doing maintenance because the money getting default i mean it's a lot of things that are happening so i need to actually start having serious conversations about how we're going to get this fixed because the constant talking, talking, talking is not working.

2:20:45 But you could respond and I'll listen. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you very much, Senator Francis Heidegger. Certainly, I would love to have conversations about how we can get this fixed. Approach me and let's have a conversation. I can give you some real insight on how we get this fixed. Your question about the part that the government, which part are you referring to? What are you, be more specific, what are you referring to? No, no, you said that the part that the government owns, turning that over, private, I thought that was your question. No, no, no, I'm saying, okay, what I was saying is that water and power authority, the water part is basically being run and generated by a private company and you guys distribute it.

2:21:27 It's not what you said. It's not. That's a simplification. We have the bulk of the water business that's still on us. We deal with the customers, the lines, the meters, the accounts. The only thing we have is the source of production, instead of producing it through the very energy intensive ID plants that we used to, that used to be coupled with our energy production and our steam boilers. When we got rid of the steam boilers and we moved, we had to decouple. So we produce water. What did I say was wrong? Another company produces the water, y'all distribute it. That's all I said. The water, we have the bulk of the water. The bulk of the business and the cost is in the portion that we control.

- 2:22:04 But that's not what I stated. Okay, I'm sorry. It was simple. They produced the water. Y'all distributed. Let's talk, Senator. I'm always open for an in-depth conversation. No problem. But the conversation needs to be had so we can get these things done. Thank you very much, Senator Amofansis. You're going to have a second opportunity for a quick lightning round after we finish this round. Okay, thank you. There you go. Mr. Knight, the Emergency Standby Generation for St. John. Yes. You said several vendors have presented suitable proposals. Have you selected a vendor?
- 2:22:39 As of this morning, yes, we have selected a vendor. We have been doing due diligence with a particular vendor, and we have our eyes on five small generating units, two, three megawatt, one, two and a half megawatt, megawatt and two megawatt units that we're looking to acquire. So we're going through the process. I think Ms. Williams-Octelan spoke to some requirements in order for us to get authorization to make that acquisition, and they're available now, and we're ready to make that acquisition.
- 2:23:11 Okay. When do you think St. John will actually have backup generation operational on the ground? To level set expectations, probably not sooner than four months from now, but it's probably around that six-month time frame that I gave the senator. It shouldn't take us much longer than around six months, certainly not longer than nine months. Within the current year, we should be able to have backup generation on St. John. Okay. Thank you. Thank you for your response.
- 2:23:39 Senator Franklin D. Johnson, you're recognized for your seven minutes. Good afternoon. Thank you very much, Mr. Che. Good afternoon to my colleague. Good afternoon to the testifiers. Good afternoon to the viewing and listening audience. um mr knight i want to follow up on what my colleague was just talking about and i want you to be try to remember i don't you you might not have been there but in august 21st 2019 wapar had a press release where the agency stated that they have entered into a 2.7 million dollar contract with Wassella for two standby four megawatt generator and two megawatts of battery backup storage for St. John. Somebody tell me from 2019 to now, what happened to the plan?
- 2:24:29 Who decided to change the plan and where are the generators for St. John? Certainly. You're right. I wasn't with the company at the time, but I did make the same inquiry. the there was a plan that was proceeding there was a consultant that was guiding some of the decision-making and I think there was a point in time when the question that the physical dimensions of the unit whether they could place it in the in the area that was earmarked there was questions about transporting the unit into the Coral Bay area and logistically how that would be done. Long story short, the consultant gave a report that suggested that that was not the best purchase and acquisition for the authority. The board at the time I think made a decision to discontinue pursuit of those generators and as far as I know the process stalled after that without an alternative being put on the table. So we're picking it up with designs who had already begun and we're picking that up and trying to finish those and we have made a decision on generators and we won't be deterred. I have concurrence from the board to proceed with what we're trying to do with St. John right now.
- 2:25:48 You know, it's a shame to hear what you say here today because from 2019 to now it's just nearly about seven years and we sat there thinking that St. John didn't need these generators, is it was wrong for anybody to stop it and left that just light doormat for seven years this is real now today you came and you you you had a good bit saying here in your testimony and my problem with it is nothing have a time frame on it you got you talk about installation of distribution automation device you talk about installation of new distribution transformer you talk about the permanent replacement of unit 1415 with at least 32 megawatts you talk about rebuild of transmission feed 11 and 12 you also talk about the development of the saint thomas bovoni eastern best microgrid but nothing has a time frame on it and when when folks come here to the legislature and you tell me of all your plans i need to hear timeline i need to hear a starting date i need to hear a finishing date because all this is for north it means nothing to me or to the people who are listening if you don't have a time to start and a finish date so help me with some of this and with these transformer do you have transformer and island now because we We run the candle from hurricane season. So what's the status on Transformer? And then please tell me about all of these things that you spoke about here in your testimony today here as time frame.
- 2:27:34 All right. So we try to put, in keeping with the invitation for this hearing, we try to put our projects into buckets short term, less within six months, medium term and long term. So these projects in some cases, so Transformers, we have Transformers, but not sufficient for our needs and not sufficient for any major event. This project that I referred to here is a \$3 million purchase of Transformers, but I can't put a specific timeline. As soon as I get access to the funds, I can start to, I can put in the order for the Transformers. As soon as they arrive on island, we'll start to install them. That is a process that shouldn't take us longer than six months, but I don't have access to the funds right now. If you heard the testimony that was read into the record by the Housing Finance Authority, they said that that project is one of those that is going through environmental review. With these projects, until WAPA has full access and control, it's hard to put specific project schedules. We do know that we're about to start soon on the put-and-replacement projects. Once those kick off in earnest, we'll be able to provide full project schedules as to what the contractor says that looks like. I did, however, sort

of indicate that certain things like the splicing of those lines to St. John, the emergency generators, the completion of the FIDA-13 bypass, those are all projects slated to be completed within the next six months. In some cases, that's as specific as I can get without actually having my hands on the necessary funding. In the case of FIDA 13, we're waiting for the parts to be shipped from Europe to complete that project, so maybe I can get you a timeline on the delivery of those. But it is difficult to pin down a start date and a completion date until projects kick off in earnest and contracts are signed. Now, you also spoke about the St. John Generator in your testimony that you're going forward.

2:29:39 Yes. This is fully funded by FEMA. Is it right for me to say that? It will be fully funded by FEMA. That's correct. Any date in mind as to · you say it's about 30% in the phase of the billing? I'm not waiting. There is a microgrid, which Senator Francis Heiliger spoke to. that requires some more engineering planning and design the acquisition and installation of the generators I don't need to complete that that design in order to be able to install and put them in service and we're proceeding there's some an amendment that has to be done with FEMA that basically we have resources earmarked for the Holly plant we have to make an amendment in order to earmark some of those resources to serve st. John directly on 30 seconds and And we're working on that. As soon as I get the green light, we're prepared to make the acquisition and to fast track that acquisition.

2:30:41 You know, I really would appreciate that somehow, somewhere in time, that this information is given to the people of this territory, at least for the island of St. John, so people could have a kind of time frame as to when these generators that were supposed to be here or be in order i should say from 2019 and to date we still didn't have them and if we did go along and continue that process these wires that was cut would have never put the people in saint john in the problem that we put them in for three and four days without power and that's why sometimes when we talk and we talk and you know people everybody blame the legislature what are you doing to wapa the most people do is when we bring in you we actually this question and we try to get fruitful information and truthful information but when you're going to have these delays it doesn't does doesn't do good to none of the people in this territory so if you do have time frame i'd appreciate that we could get those as soon as you get them and let the people them know what's going on thank you very much thank you very much mr chair thank you very much uh senator franklin Jansen.

2:31:53 Director Actalin, I wanted to ask you, you stated that FEMA approved the Prudent Replacement Projects in February 2025, it's now April 2026. Why has construction not begun? Contract is still in the final stages of negotiation, how long has it been in that stage? So, Senator, the process starts with putting together a solicitation, and we had to go through the solicitation process. We put it out to bid. There were evidence that we were not going to get enough bidders and enough responders to that solicitation, so we had to extend the solicitation. These big projects are not 30-day solicitations. We solicit for at least 60 days. And of course, it has to be evaluated. When we got into the award stage with RG, they had to provide their documentation. That took longer than we anticipated. We are at the final stages. There were just two points left for agreement, which we found a solution. So right now, we're expecting the company to come back and accept so that we can execute the contract.

2:33:13 Thank you for your response. Senator Kenner-Gittins, you had a point of information. Senator Kenner- Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm just trying to get some clarity. Will we be getting any testimony from the Board itself and from the Public Service Commission, or are they just here to answer any potential questions? Senator Kenner- You're not going to get a specific testimony from the Board. We did have, we're working that through right now regarding the PSC. We are going to provide you with a testimony from the Public Services Commission. I will allow them an opportunity to read it into the record. We didn't receive it. I think it was sent, but there was some issues with who it was sent to, so we just cleared that up. So we're about to have the · it's unusual, but we have to put a pause on testimonies and allow Ms. Sandra Satori, our executive director, to read the PSC's testimony into the record.

2:34:16 Thank you. So just to be clear, there's no testimony from the board itself? No. No. Thank you. Thank you. We're going to just go in a brief three-minute recess just so we can make sure everybody has gotten a copy of the PSC's testimony. So the Committee of the Whole meeting will stand and recess for three minutes. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

2:37:53 Oh, my God. ? ? ? Oh, my God. ¶¶ Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. so so Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

2:44:47 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

2:46:17 Thank you. Thank you.

2:47:17 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

- 2:49:17 Thank you. Thank you.
- 2:50:17 Thank you. Good afternoon once again. Committee of the Whole is back on the record. We're now going to proceed directly with the testimony from the Public Services Commission. Executive Director Ms. Sandra Sottori, you may proceed with your testimony.
- 2:51:04 Good afternoon, Honorable Milton E. Potter, President of the 36th Legislature and Chairman of the Committee of the Whole. Good afternoon, Honorable Kenneth L. Gittins, Vice Chairman, Honorable members of this body, the staff, my fellow testifiers, and the viewing and listening audiences of the Virgin Islands. I am Sandra L. Satori, Executive Director of the Public Services Commission, and this afternoon I am accompanied by both Tishan Hendricks, our Assistant Executive Director, and Boyd L. Spreen, our General Counsel. On behalf of the Public Services Commission, I thank you for the invitation and the opportunity to appear before you today regarding the ongoing electrical service interruptions affecting the St. Thomas St. John District. We acknowledge the seriousness of this moment and the urgency expressed in your letter, Senate President. We also recognize the frustration, the hardship, and the uncertainty that residents and businesses across the territories are enduring. The persistent rotational and island-wide outages have imposed an unacceptable burden on our community. have suffered the loss of food and essential supplies, households have experienced damage to appliances, and businesses have incurred lost revenue. Many of our residents, particularly the elderly, the medically vulnerable, and those with limited resources have faced heightened health and safety risk. These impacts are not immaterial or without consequence. They are immediate, they are tangible, and they are deeply felt across every sector of our society. The PSC shares the Legislature's concern and its commitment to ensuring that the people of the Virgin Islands receive safe, reliable, and reasonably priced utility services.
- 2:53:21 As the territory's autonomous regulatory body, the Commission is charged with overseeing the utilities under its jurisdiction, including in this case the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority, to ensure compliance with applicable statutes and regulations, and to uphold accountability, transparency and responsible utility operations in the public interest. We cannot overstate this key fact. These outages were entirely foreseeable and preventable. However, there is no instant cure now that we have arrived at this difficult situation. The return to service of Unit 27 is a great relief, but it is only a temporary relief without additional capacity. Unit 27 will allow WAPA to meet demand, but not provide backup or spare generation for service or maintenance. At the present time, there are three major questions and issues.
- 2:54:22 One, what can be done to make sure that the situation, the regular blackouts and power outages, does not happen again in the near future? How and why did we get to this place? This is an important question so that the errors, the same errors, are not repeated. And three, what long-term steps are necessary to ensure a reliable and efficient future? So what can be done in the short term to stabilize electric production? WAPA needs to have sufficient, reliable generation capacity, and it certainly does not right now. The legislature and the public should have an understanding of the current state of WAPA's generation transmission and distribution systems. This includes candid acknowledgement of capacity constraints, operational challenges, maintenance deficiencies, and any other factors contributing to the ongoing outages. To assist in that, we've attached to the testimony brief summary of the generation capacity available in each of our districts. The The Legislature should require the presentation and validation of Comprehensive Recovery and Stabilization Plan.
- 2:55:43 Such a plan must include specific actions to address immediate generation shortfalls, a detailed maintenance and repair schedule for critical infrastructure, contingency measures to minimize the frequency and the duration of outages, clear performance benchmarks and accountability mechanism and a realistic and transparent timeline for achieving service reliability. For many years, WAPA's standard was that it should have sufficient generation capacity to operate with its two largest units of unavailable. In theory, this is WAPA's current status in practice. In practice, it is not. Unit 23 has not been a reliable generation unit for many years. It has been out of service for substantial periods of time and repairs have been costly. For example, Unit 23 was returned to service in June of 2024 after Here we'd suffered rotational outages from its absence. By March of 2025, we had a district-wide blackout when Unit 23 failed.
- 2:57:02 By May of 2025, Unit 23 suffered another major breakdown and has not been available since. These are only the most recent issues. Unit 23 repair and maintenance issues go back to at least 2014, and there have been millions of dollars spent on its repair. When Unit 23 is available to run efficiently, it must be run under sufficient load.
- 2:57:34 However, it produces such a large proportion of the generation required that any issue with the generator causes district-wide blackouts. Unit 15 is not only old, but has also been substantially overworked and under-maintained. WAPA has acknowledged that in its own press releases and testimonies. Unit 15 is a sister unit to Unit 16 and 18, both of which have failed and have been retired in the last several years. 16 and 18 have been cannibalized for parts to keep Unit 15 on St. Thomas and Units 17, 19 and 20 on St. Croix operating. The only short term road to additional capacity which the Commission is aware of is the acquisition of additional mobile generation capacity, either by lease or by purchase.

District 27 was itself a leased unit, along with several other leased units that operated on St. Thomas from 2012 through 2020.

- 2:58:50 Additional leased units can be installed within a matter of weeks with sufficient resources. It would certainly be preferable if any new units were capable of operating on LPG or propane, as WAPA is currently set up to use that fuel and it is considerably more cost effective than diesel. But reliability is critical, so diesel may be the only option in the short term. The only existing short term projects which offer relief are the solar projects at Fortuna and Bovoni, particularly the Fortuna project. That project is sufficiently large in capacity and in battery storage to afford stability to the grid and the ability to turn off generators during daylight hours for maintenance. The prudent replacement projects do not promise short-term relief. Those are long-term efforts and should not be expected to produce any additional stability or safety margin in the next two years.
- 2:59:59 The prudent replacement decisions and the plans acquired will be, as was testified to today, will be a sufficient factor in rates for decades to come. How and why did we get to this place? This is an important question so that the same errors are not repeated and we do not find ourselves back in this place on St. Thomas, St. John or on St. Croix. The Public Services Commission has been urging and seeking to enforce long-term planning and changes in the generation equipment for at least the last 22 years.
- 3:00:40 At the same time that Unit 23 was being funded and acquired, WAPA fought in the courts to avoid PSC oversight or even the obligation to plan. By 2015, the Public Services Commission had both provided funding for and mandated the performance of a management audit and an integrated resource plan or IRP. Both are regular tools of utility management. Both of those studies identified more than \$50 million in annual fuel savings by the modernization of WAPA's generation. A decade later, only a portion of this plan has been implemented, the Watsilla Generators on St. Thomas. Those are, as we now see, were not enough. Although it has not suffered the current level of outages, St. Croix should not be forgotten. All three of the legacy plans on St. Croix, Units 17, 19, and 20, are the same type and vintage as Unit 50, and the already expired Units 16 and 18 on St. Thomas. The leased Agreco units and the solar projects are the only progress made towards newer, more efficient and more reliable generation.
- 3:02:08 Aside from the purchase of the used Unit 27 on St. Thomas, the only generation that WAPA has purchased since Unit 23 in 2004 are the Watsila units on St. Thomas. And none of those Watsila units were purchased using WAPA rates and revenues. The first phase of three units was purchased using the gas tax revenue under Title 33, Section 3039A. The second phase of four Watsila units was made with FEMA providing the major funding. So we must note that due to the decisions of the Virgin Islands Supreme Court, the Public Services Commission did not have the normal authority and jurisdiction over WAPA that a Regulatory Commission would expect. The PSC could not order WAPA to buy a new generation, and could not stop controversial decisions, such as the VTOL amended agreements. Only in December of 2021 was this issue addressed, and the Commission unequivocally granted that authority through Act 8471. However, by 2022, WAPA was already in dire straits, and options were limited.
- 3:03:33 In early 2022, we had a price spike in fuel, which resulted in ongoing GVI subsidies to prevent further rate increases in what were already the highest U.S. rates. By early 2024, we were again on rotational outages, and in April 2024, Governor Bryan declared a state of emergency. During this, and despite the mandates of the Virgin Islands Energy Act of 2009, WAPA had not moved forward on any serious amounts of renewable energy until 2023. After many months, years in some cases, of WAPA reporting to the PSC that it was nearly ready to sign power purchase agreements without resolution. The Public Public Services Commission ordered completion of the PPAs within 30 days. All of the current projects are the result of that action. All of the solar projects have been privately funded.
- 3:04:39 So what long-term steps are necessary to ensure a reliable and efficient future? WAPA needs to become an asset to the Virgin Islands, providing reliable and affordable power to permit economic growth and stability. Currently, WAPA is a significant liability. WAPA is without credit rating or cash. It already has high rates and it is questionable if raising rates will actually produce additional revenues or simply result in further defections from WAPA's grid and sales. Solar and battery costs continue to decline and the ease of system operations has significantly improved. WAPA cannot survive as the power company just for those of us who don't have the resources to exit the grid. WAPA needs new generation for base load, even more pressing on St. Croix than on St. Thomas St. John.
- 3:05:39 WAPA should continue to outsource renewable energy to reduce the volatility of fuel prices. In taking these steps, WAPA needs both planning and to move expeditiously. WAPA has significant liabilities which must be addressed. The legislature has acknowledged these issues in mandating the preparation of the turnaround management reports. The Commission converts broad legislative directives into enforceable action. Plans are not simply discussed. They are formally filed, scrutinized, they're approved with conditions, and monitored against measurable benchmarks. Timelines must be realistic and binding, not aspirational. When performance falls short, the PSC has the authority to require

corrective action and ensure accountability. Additionally, the PSC plays a critical role in identifying and minimizing delays in real time that can arise from procurement processes, contracting requirements, fuel supply arrangements, and infrastructure approvals. Equally important, the PSC ensures that all stakeholders, including the legislature, including WAPA and including the public, are operating from a single transparent set of facts. Through required reporting, open proceedings and documented decisions, the Commission creates a clear and consistent record of the territory's status and progress. This transparency is essential not only for effective decision-making, but also for restoring public trust. We note that the Office of Disaster Recovery is currently conducting the prudent replacement process for grant-funded new generation. To date, ODR has not responded to commission requests for information or consultation.

3:07:48 At present, the PSC is actively conducting legislatively-mandated rate investigations for all regulated utilities. These proceedings are a critical component of restoring stability and accountability across the territory's utility sectors. The investigation of these electric systems is already underway, with a hearing examiner formally engaged and agreements for new technical consultants in place. These rate investigations are not merely administrative exercises. They're designed to ensure that utilities are properly structured, financially sound and operationally capable of delivering reliable service through proactive planning rather than the reactive responses that have too often categorized the current experience. Through these proceedings, the Commission will evaluate cost structures, infrastructure needs, operational efficiencies, and long-term capital planning to ensure that utilities are positioned to anticipate and prevent crises, not simply to respond to them. The necessity of the PSC in this moment cannot be overstated. The Commission serves as the autonomous referee between policy and operations, between the directives of the legislature and the execution responsibilities of the Water and Power Authority. Without this independent oversight, even well-intentioned efforts can become fragmented, delayed, or ineffective. The PSC ensures that barriers, whether procedural, regulatory, or operational, are identified early and addressed decisively.

3:09:47 However, for this to work, the PSC must have the full support and the backing of this legislature. Efforts that reduce or constrain the capacity, the authority or the reach of the Commission directly undermine its ability to carry out these mandates and ultimately to protect the public's interest. Strong objective regulation is not an obstacle to progress. It is a prerequisite for it. We appreciate the committee's clear directive that this hearing move beyond general updates.

3:10:27 The public deserves and the PSC fully supports the establishment of a clear, time-bound and measurable plan to restore reliable electric service. To that end, we believe this hearing must accomplish three critical objectives. One, the legislature should require WAPA to present and validate a comprehensive recovery and stabilization plan. Two, the legislature must establish a shared and undisputed understanding of the current status of WAPA's generation, transmission, and distribution systems. And in three, WAPA must define a forward-looking strategy that ensures long-term system resilience, financial stability, and capital funding.

3:11:29 In closing, again, the PSC fully supports the Committee's goals and WAPA's goals of achieving a clear and undisputed agreement on the territory's current position and the path forward. The urgency of this situation demands nothing less. The Commission is committed to ensuring that today's discussion results in concrete, actionable outcomes that provide real relief to the people of the Virgin Islands. And so we thank you, Mr. President and Honourable Members for your leadership on this issue and look forward to a productive and solutions-oriented dialogue. This concludes our testimony. Thank you very much, Executive Director Satori. I know that the document that we have, I was following your presentation, the document that we have in front of me, at least the one that I have, has to that end, we believe that this hearing must accomplish three critical objectives and that it moves directly to, in closing, the PSC fully supports the Committee's goal of achieving a clear and undisputed agreement on the Territory's current position and the path forward.

3:12:44 So we don't have those three delineated. I did state them just now in the testimony. The fact that the legislature should require WAPA to present and validate a comprehensive recovery and Stabilization Plan, that the legislature must establish a shared and undisputed understanding of the current status of the generation, transmission and distribution system, and that WAPA must define a forward-looking strategy that ensures long-term system resilience. And I think that third responsibility is truly a responsibility of all of us as stakeholders, whether it's the legislature, the Water and Power Authority and the Public Services Commission. But in order for us to do that, we must have the support of the legislature.

3:13:30 Thank you for that. I would like you, even though you stated it clearly, I'd like you to submit that document with those three specific points so that I'll share it to my colleagues also. But I wasn't lost on the fact that you mentioned, Director Sattori, that the Office of Disaster Recovery has not been responsive to commission requests for information and consultation regarding, we know that the Office of Disaster Recovery is currently conducting the prudent replacement process for grant funded new generation ODR has not been responsive to commission requests for information or consultation.

- 3:14:11 That's correct. We did reach out. In addition to requesting the information directly from the Water and Power Authority, we also submitted correspondence to ODR requesting that same information, simply so that we can review them and the Commission can continue to make prudent decisions regarding the utility. Thank you. Excellent. Director Actalyn, any response to that? Sure. Because I mean, that would be something, I think, vital and critical, that sort of communication link between the Public Services Commission, the subject matter folks, and you, so can you? Yes, gladly. When I heard that in a testimony, I went back and I just searched my email to see if I had missed a request. I have no request from the PSC. I encourage them to resubmit it, and I will share my email address so that I can send it.
- 3:15:07 But we have not received such requests. A formal request. Okay. Thank you for that. And I want to give you, before we go to the testimony, additional testimony from my colleagues, I mean inquiries from my colleagues, I wanted to give you, Executive Director Knight, the opportunity to put on record the matter regarding the FBI. Thank you Mr. President. I thought I had clarified it earlier. When the question was asked I said I don't have knowledge as to whether the matter was referred. I've since gotten confirmation that yes, Wayne Bryan, the Director of the Fusion Center, who would have oversight over terrorists and those sort of activities, did refer the matter to the FBI. Yes, the FBI has been notified of the incident.
- 3:15:52 Okay. Thank you for that. It's important for that to be on the record. I'll now proceed to Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff, you're recognized for your seven minutes. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon, colleagues. Good afternoon, testifiers. All of you listening and present. You know, I will start with the people first. In the testimony from Executive Director Knight, all I heard was high winds, vegetation, blackout, a blowout. Limited capacity and vandalism cause a problem. The people still suffer. So for the Chairman Moyet, has there been any discussion with the executive director in regards to possibly working on some kind of credit or so for the people of the territory who suffered from these blackouts, territory-wide, and people who put food in the fridge and had to trough food, people who troughed the refrigerators and different things like that.
- 3:17:05 Has there been any discussion regarding that with your CEO? Good day, Senator DeGraff. Yes, we've had such discussions with the executive director. We are always in discussions about this with the executive director. I'll let him answer a little bit further as to the steps that the management team is taking. No, I want you to tell me. I want you to tell me. No, we have talked to him about it. We have. Okay, so what is your mandate to him? You're the board chair. Right. The board gives a mandate to the executive director.
- 3:17:36 We give directives to the executive director, and he goes about the day-to-day operations to execute on that. Right, so I will let him... What is your directive to the executive director regarding giving the people credits for some of these? The directive from the board was, what are we going to do with regards to the outages and what that does to people's equipment, whether it's residential, commercial, or industrial. Now, the executive director takes that and works with his team to develop a plan that would be presented to the board in committee for us to consider. So you have not received a plan yet? We have not received a plan, but we are actively in discussions with the executive director in terms of what that can and should look like, and it comes to the board thereafter.
- 3:18:28 Okay, executive director Knight, what directive do you receive, and what is it going forward, and when will you be ready with that plan to give it to the board? Let me get to the bottom line, Senator DeGraff. the um we are a public utility um we do not have we do not turn a profit we do not make a profit any any expenses any credits any payouts any attempt to compensate anyone for anything ultimately has to be borne by either the rate payers or be back right here at this body asking for for subsidy there's no profit line in the budget that i can say i'm going to reduce my profits and pay out a credit. So the decisions ultimately has to come as a government, just as after any hurricane or emergency when disaster snap is paid out. It's not paid out by the utility, it's paid out by the government apparatus supporting its residents. We stand ready to support any efforts in that regard. Okay, so excuse me, so then there's no plan going forward for the people? I don't see how I can craft, effectively craft a plan that doesn't wrap us of the same resources to keep the power reliable. Thank you, sir.
- 3:19:49 How much megawatts is generator 27? One megawatts is produced. Mr. Arrigan? Good afternoon, Senator DeGraff. Unit 27 is rated for 22 megawatts. 22 megawatts. And 23. How much megawatts? Unit 23 is rated for 42 megawatts. 42, and Unit 15? Unit 15 is rated for 24 megawatts. And what's the peak megawattage in St. Thomas, St. John District? What's the peak megawatt per day?
- 3:20:22 Right now? Correct. Per day. The peak megawatts is 55 megawatts. 55 megawatts. Yes. So you have 22, 42, and how much was it? 15? 24. 24 24 megawatts that's rated capacity yes rated capacity then your backup is seven generators that produce 57 megawatts based on the testimony of the executive director the executive director said um which together provide approximately 57 megawatts of generation seven generators does that make any sense well let me add a correction it's not um the seven generators do not provide backup uh right now they're okay so that's an additional 57

correct so you have 57 megawatts 22 24 and 42 with a peak of 52 yes correct so if we have a peak of 52 i don't understand then how you calculate it so you're telling me 57 oh man sorry get up 57 plus 22 plus 24 plus 42 you have way more electric current that you can that you generate on a regular basis to cover your total if all units if all units are operable at that time so if if you read my all you don't need to be a purple based on what the gentleman said don't need to be operable at the same time you can run generator um 23 with 42 megawatts a turbine generator 42 megawatts and you can run that one and 15 and take care of the entire 52 megawatts of running time

3:22:20 that's correct both units are unavailable right but i'm saying when they're available those two alone you don't need the others right but we still have major problems we haven't had a period where all those units have been available since installing our new capacity so that's what i'm saying the new capacity is only the the the watt sellers how much megawatts how much much watt sellers we have three seven seven seven what's it let me let me um it's so complicated and you're making it out to be first of all no wait wait one second one second one second see because this is what i'm trying to say this is what we're trying to get to that that we consider the truth and we're listening to what your testimony is so if you say seven generators a capacity of 57 megawatts 52 megawatts is your peak in the in this district those seven generals alone should run the generation without you could shut down the other three because you have 57 megawatts but in my testimony i pointed out the water set of five was off at the time when the other three were offline that's what happening now that's what's happening now but i'm talking about from the time we got the the watt sellers up and running those three turbines could have shut down for maintenance whatever because you had maximum you have 57 megawatts to cover 52 peak that's simple math if it's more complicated than that tell me and then we yeah i mean the fact is we have not had this kind of a prolonged generational outage due to unavailability of units in at least not in my tenure in wapa um i think we've had periods where we've lost a couple units and within a few hours we've been able to restore those units so you have points where we've had to rotate but the reality is it was a perfect storm i also need to tell you that um 23 and 27 they run on diesel it's not our preferred choice of fuel because you could see what happening with fuel prices right now um so it's not getting the most economical balance in the plant is one thing and the availability of the units is another thing and so yeah it's important for the public

3:24:44 to know we have tons of generation capacity potential we have to keep the units maintained we have to keep them online thank you uh just to close out mr chair so i'm just saying though the watsillers are brand new to the territory brand new seven of them could take care of what we need that's one and so through the chair i would like to get the maintenance uh reports um from whopper to to be presented to us uh board chair moyer moyer could you produce the the maintenance reports, all of that the board should be able to have access to, the maintenance reports of the Watsillers and the other turbine generators. Please, through the chair. Thank you for the time, Mr. Chair. Thank you very much, Senator Duane de Graff. Senator Ray Fonseca, you're recognized for your point of information. Yes, thank you. I wanted to follow up. If I may, if I may, Senator President Potter, can, for the sake of Senator de Graff, can And Mr. Harrigan, make a quick point of clarification so you could be on the record in this body. Is that okay? Absolutely, I'll allow that. That's okay?

3:25:57 Okay. Yeah, so while our install capacity is well over our system demand, we have not had a period in time where the Wartzilla engines have been installed and operational, as well as our aging infrastructure being operational as well. So right after Hurricane Ernesto, there was a very short period where we had multiple standby units due to the operational status of Unit 23. However, once the issue started to happen with the commissioning for the second phase of the Wartzilla engines, that kind of went away.

3:26:39 then we lost unit 23 and during that time our install capacity remained the same but actually what we could produce and operate drastically was reduced please recognize some of the graphs Mike yeah yeah okay I got you but like I was saying seven watt cellars are brand new they're old watt cellars the turbine engines are the old ones you have seven brand new generators that can cover our peak output something wrong something is wrong i don't have to be a engineer electrician or so something is wrong without a doubt that's all i say that's the facts what i want to hear that's the truth What I want to hear, what is wrong, what is going wrong, that we have the generators, we have the output capacity, and we are not doing what we're doing, and we're comfortable with abusing our residents by leaving these power outages happen.

3:27:49 That's my problem. Senator DeGrafford, I'd encourage you to come and visit the plant so we can actually have a real conversation about this matter. I would. Please. I would. Thank you. Thank you. So before your point of information, just piggybacking off of what's in the graph mentioned, I just wanted to understand, have the Watt-Siller generators ever functioned at maximum capacity? I mean, I don't know if that's the... Yes, the Watt-Siller generators did function at maximum capacity, and I've made a point of saying that even during this incident, six out of the seven were the only generators, six Watt-Siller generators They're the only thing that carried the load for St. Thomas, St. John for the last two and a half weeks.

- 3:28:31 So we've gotten, you know, now the four newer units are about a year old, but the older Phase I units are getting to be about, what, five years now? More than that. They're more than five years old. So, you know, they're still fairly new, but, you know, understand that they didn't just get installed. We're actually at a point where we need to take them down and start to look at overhauls for those units. just need to put some context on that conversation and yeah it is um whack-a-mole trying to with the new generation came just in time because without those watsillas we'd have been in a world of hurt and we needed those watsillas to give us some capacity to take down those larger units so we can actually do the necessary maintenance on those units those three units are all past their maintenance intervals and needed to be taken now when we don't take them down when we don't schedule their outages they take themselves out and so that's what's been happening to us so the six out of the seven that are functioning are functioning to their maximum capacity maximum potential or are they functioning but not functioning to the levels that they should that that's really my question the simple answer is yes i have to point out mr harrigan being the the technical person that he is The three phase one units that are now ready for their 50,000-hour maintenance overhaul, instead of seven megawatts, they're giving us closer to six megawatts. Once we do that maintenance overhaul, they'll be back at their rated capacity.
- 3:30:00 The four new ones are at nine megawatts, which is their rated capacity. Okay. Thank you for your response. Senator Fonseca, you're recognized for your point of information. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wanted to follow up on the question from the senator from Savant. Unit 15, what's the capacity? Unit 15 is rated for 24 megawatts. 24. And Unit 27 was what? 22 megawatts.
- 3:30:31 You see, Mr. Chairman, I have a problem with that because Mr. Knight came before this Committee of the Whole October 29, 2025. And he gave this committee testimony that unit 27 has 18 megawatts. Today he's saying it's 22. Unit 15 had 18 megawatts. Today he's saying it's 24. So I don't know what to believe. Whether I believe your written testimony from October, which all the senators have a copy, or do I believe what you're saying today?
- 3:31:11 today. If what you're saying in October, then the senator from Savan is right. They did not have the capacity and they don't have the 50-something megawatts. So, I have a problem with that. Explain me the difference from what you gave me in October as to what you're giving me now in April. Thank you. And you can answer in the chair's time. So what Mr. Knight was providing was the operational capability, which at the time was 18 megawatts.
- 3:31:49 No, it says the available capacity. You need to read what you sent us. That's correct. Available capacity means that's what's available. You're now telling me it's 22. You're telling me it was 18. That's rated capacity. That's a difference. No, the rated capacity was 26. look at what you gave me you gave me the rated and you gave me the available, the available was 18, read what you gave me in October Senator, you know there's no need to confuse the public I don't come here to lie there's a nameplate, rated capacity that is what Mr. Harrigan just told you is what the maximum capacity of those units are, what I gave you is at that point in time, at any point in time like I just explained with the Watsillas they're derated to six megawatts. At that point in time, that was the available capacity of those units. Based on maintenance and other conditions, ambient air temperature, you name it, that was the production we were getting from those units at that time. With maintenance, you get back up to the name plate capacity. What Mr. Harrigan put on the record was name plate capacity. What you're speaking to is available capacity.
- 3:32:59 No, you're totally wrong. There's not an inconsistency between the two statements. Nope. It says nameplate capacity, 26 megawatt, available capacity, 18. What you gave me gave me both the nameplate capacity and available capacity. Look at your testimony to this committee. Can you let me speak? Can you let me speak? Both of us can't speak at the same time. I respect your ability to speak, but please let me ask my question uninterrupted. Look at your testimony of October 29, 2025 that you gave to this committee.
- 3:33:38 Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you very much. Sure, Senator. We'll take a look at that and see if there are any errors there that need to be corrected. No problem, sir. Thank you very much. Senator Anger-Bokes Jr., you're recognized for your seven minutes. Thank you so much, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon to everyone. During the course of this discussion, we've heard that the funding has been approved, projects are planned, contracts are being finalized, and coordination is ongoing.
- 3:34:14 But despite all these things, the lights still are going out. And while we may speak about timelines and phases and approvals, the people who are living with these outages are feeling the brunt of it. And the disconnect, in my opinion, is no longer about planning. It's really about performance. And we've got to come together, all the stakeholders in the energy sector, whether it's the PSC, WAPA, Energy Office, this body, and others, to really look at this from a holistic standpoint on how we're going to move forward in these Virgin Islands. Because the way it's been going for decades is not necessarily the best. We know that back in February 2025, Ernst and Young conducted or concluded their report to WAPA and suggested that the utility needed \$375 million to stabilize. They also mentioned as of March 2025, WAPA carried \$87 million in unpaid vendor bills, \$88 million in long-term debt, and \$27 million in deferred That's about \$577 million. It is now April 2026. I want to start by asking what are those numbers today? Have we improved or have we

worsened?

3:35:50 Good afternoon, Senator. This is Lorraine Kelly, Chief Financial Officer. The debt structure has vastly improved. When I was at the last hearing several months ago, ago, I reported that over a five-year history, we have reduced half a billion dollars in debt. Let me give you the updated numbers. Currently today, we have \$208 million of debt. Approximately a year ago, that was \$30 million higher. We have paid down \$30 million of debt. Two years ago, about 18 months ago, to be precise, in that time frame, our accounts payable for the total amount that we owed vendors, including local and United States vendors, was approximately \$400 million. Today, that ranges between about \$100 million and \$112 million, depending on the circumstances of whether the accounts payable report was just after we got a fuel invoice, which is our largest invoice. But it is currently ranging between 100 million and 112 million. So we have vastly improved and reduced those payables through a combination of renegotiation of contracts, as well as better management of cash and cash procurements. And in addition to that, in terms of requesting and asking then certain vendors to be able to accept a certain amount of funding and pay down a discount i would want to and i appreciate the numbers and the clarity and but i do want to maximize as much of my time as i can um

3:37:39 you know while i appreciate the numbers and i'm glad that you're going in the right direction i do have concerns about obviously outages just like everyone else is there anyone on the panel that can provide us how many outages and for how long did they take place uh in the last um two or three three months does anyone have that data so i think um we could get you more precise data take us um we're time to talk over your ceo night but where can the general public find that data if in fact it exists and and if not to the chair if you can provide it to us we would definitely want to look at that as well we do not necessarily publish the data but we do um at your request we can we can provide that data the the control room um does keep very meticulous data our plants keep data on outages uh we keep data on both tnd as well as generation outages so we could certainly compile it for you okay very well chairman muir i see you want to yes yes senator bocas i think what would be helpful is um during our next board meeting um when we could find some time to talk about that certainly in open session i think that that may be a helpful i would appreciate that because as we know data drives policy and from that vantage point i think it would be very important for my colleagues and i to be able to see the trends as well even though that that's something that the board would regularly look at i think it's important for us to also understand the trends we will that that will be something i'll make sure we will add to our april board meeting thank you very much you're welcome now when we talk about delays in this grid stabilization and and the projects that are within the whole

3:39:28 grid stabilization obviously the longer we take to stabilize the grid the more it incurs costs it's going to become more expensive um how much additional fuel or even emergency generation and cost has WAPA incurred due to these delays? Not necessarily in fuel, if I understand your question correctly. I think, so the cost that we incur, the one that no one tends to acknowledge is lost revenues, right? So every time I have an outage, I'm losing revenues because I can't sell power. Those are users that would have been using power, but for the fact that I can't produce it. So it's not necessarily fuel, that's actually a savings. One minute, 30 seconds. Where I'm really losing is the revenues because I can't sell power.

3:40:17 I ask the question because you mentioned that WAPA loses money on every barrel of oil recently too as well. So what is the exact... Yeah, that's not recent. That is just a function that the LIAC does not cover the full expense of our fuel purchases. And that's been for quite some time now. So that's been a consistent trend for the last several years. We just under-recovered the LIAC consistently. In reference to, you know, some of us here in this body have requested a state of emergency, and it didn't seem to be something that the executive branch wanted to institute.

3:40:59 But from your operational standpoint, do you believe that you need to continue operating the way that you are, or do you believe going into a state of emergency would be more beneficial to the authority at this given point in time? The only benefit of a state of emergency would be to put financial resources into WAPA. For the most part, I've read off a litany of projects, short-term, mid-term, and long-term, that are funded. We do have some funding gaps based on this most recent emergency, but those long-term projects, et cetera, there's capital dollars. Our shortfall is really operating dollars. Working capital is where we're short, not short of funding for capital projects. It's really working capital, keep making our expenses. It's not helpful because as we negotiate with vendors, as we negotiate with investors, we don't want to send messages that discourage them or have them put extraneous terms on us because they feel that we're operating in a state of emergency. These proceedings, today's proceedings, and every public statement ultimately is read by an audience or listened to by an audience a lot more vast than the U.S. Virgin Islands and we don't want to send the wrong signals. As Ms. Kelly has pointed out, our finances are improving.

3:42:26 We don't want to send signals that suggest that we're heading in the wrong direction. And so while we've had this crisis, we don't think of this as being a reoccurring issue. We are in a very precarious position right now without generation capacity. But to the point of Senator DeGraff and even Senator Fonseca, you know, we do have in the plant right now

sufficient generation on a good day to more than meet our needs we just have a convergence of maintenance issues that have conspired to ultimately put us in the predicament that we're in if we can resolve those maintenance issues we have enough generation right now without the new generation to carry the plant mr chair with your indulgence please thank you very much mr chair in relation to the transmission lines i have a br 1082 uh to hopefully repair one of the cables but what is the vigor associated with repairing all of the four cables that run between saint thomas to saint john because we know that the one cable that we have now is a combination of two cables that were connected together to actually create one so for the listening and viewing audience you can see how critical um that transmission line is at this given point in time so what is the figure associated with repairing all of those four cables between saint thomas and saint john so we we're working on on estimates so the one the one cable we would abandon once again once we no longer need it we'll put it back into um back into retirement because it was near its useful life that's why it was replaced um it's probably about a half a million to do the repairs on the existing cable. We do suspect that the fault is in the submarine portion of the cable, and that's why we can't

3:44:18 get to it, but we would require a specialized vessel to come into the territory to allow us to be able to effectuate those repairs. Those vessels have a long lead time, and so the most expeditious way for us to move that project to build redundancy in St. John's to actually repair the other two existing cables. I should point out to this body, and I neglected to put some in our testimony, we are working with our partners at VINGN to put in a brand new cable using NTIA grant funds. They have a need to put in telecommunications, and we can always piggyback on that telecommunication cable to provide power to St. John's well. And so that's a project that we're hoping falls into that six to two-year time frame with our partners at VINGN.

3:45:07 Six months to two-year time frame, that intermediate time frame. That's a big difference. Thanks for the clarification. Senator Balquez, if I may just add one point, I don't know if this is widely known. I have said this before on a couple of occasions when I've been in a hearing Senate situation. situation, the authority, WAPA, consistently year over year has an issue with funding between November and April. It is a result of the GVI having funding shortages during that four or five month period. It happens year over year. old when, you know, right now we've got the GVI owes us \$18.8 million. We have not been paid streetlight funding for 16 months, not one penny. And the legislature has supported us and tomorrow we're actually going to present the package for the \$4 million. Thank you greatly for the legislature to supporting us to be able to provide that. However, there is a structural gap. And year over year, this seasonal issue where the GVI funding in large part comes in April, it means that WAPA has three, four, five months every year where we are stretched. That needs to be resolved. In my opinion, the funding cannot come month to month to month without recognizing that there are certain months in the year where there are shortages. And I've said this before, WAPA is the birdcage in the bird in the birdcage that the miner is taking down in the mine, the carry in the coal mine. When the oxygen gets low, the bird falls and, you know, the miner knows to get up to full oxygen. WAPA is the bird in the cage we are a representation of all the gvi agencies struggling at those times of year because their budgets are highly dependent on when their cash flow comes in we are the recipient of all of the agencies combined i don't know if there's another agency maybe um port authority and maybe potentially um waste management but we are one of the few agencies that depends on the the health, financial and economic health of every single agency at the same time to pay us. And when they all collectively have a crunch economically and financially, so does WAPA. That portion, I have said again and again, needs to be resolved. And when the budget is established, I've had conversations with the CEOs and the executive directors of many of the other agencies who have told me on day one of submitting the budget to you that the budget that they've submitted to the Senate does not account for the total cost that they know they will have to pay WAPA for the year. That's a problem.

3:48:34 Thank you. Thank you for your strong point, Ms. Kelly. With regards to the single payer utility fund, how has that been working? Is that working? Thank you for that question. That has been working. Relatively consistently, the requirement is for the money to be paid on the 15th. Just for full disclosure, in the last three months, two out of the three of them, we did not get payment on the 15th. debt payment is approximately you know 2.1 2.2 million dollars we require and that payment is to be made on the 20th of each month and we fund it on the 19th if we do not get that payment from the g from the department of finance timely um we are in a crunch and very often we have a combination of payroll and debt and a fuel payment all in the same week, and when that happens, if those GVI agencies don't pay us on the day that they're required, we are in a crunch.

3:49:44 Understood. Thank you. Point of information, Senator Avery-Lewis. Thank you. So Mr. Knight Day's single rate payer is not working? I think Ms. Kelly said it is working. It's much more reliable than what had existed prior to it so it's sometimes a little late but not the months late that we used to be and i remember wapa waiting 18 months or longer for education to pay their their portion of the bill we don't have those issues anymore but we do rely in real time uh cash management we rely on the timeliness of those payments i remember the former chief of staff for the governor made sure

those payments went through you know and i remember we had a windfall of money in here called the upper funds yes a whopper was a big recipient of those because i couldn't pay plenty roads wrong here and different things remember mr knight i don't know if i remember it as being a big recipient we were one of the recipients a large recipient so i couldn't get to do a lot of things but you see a for a lot of things but she didn't talk about when we were generous uh uh you know you know i i um no no no your cfo had to laugh a lot of things 18 million we were now but you didn't talk about when we bail whopper outs and our different things our annual operating expenses are about 325 million a year when you talk to me about 18 million like let's put it in context but i hear i hear your point point point made thank you senator lewis senator hubert frederick you're recognized for your seven minutes thank you very much mr chair pleasant good afternoon colleagues testifiers viewing and listening audience uh i uh my office of course and central staff always give a shout out to those good people uh let's start off with uh the arpa money wasn't it like around 200 million dollars wapa received in that neighborhood not not 77 78 70. lorraine kelly um i will confirm with

3:51:52 my staff um and there may be some arpa funds that potentially predate me but if my recollection is correct it was something in the region of 77 to 80 million dollars but i i will get a confirmation on what those numbers are and the reason why i remember the governor was very adamant in saying that he was making sure he was paying uh wapa to avoid any rate increases to the rate payers during that time during the covet period and uh uh it seemed like it it came up to a substantial amount and some some reasoning around that figures in my head so let's let's clarify that um let's let's go back to uh the psc um i i really i'm an ex-official member on on the psc as well and the relationship between wapa and the psc has had its um challenges over the years and we're all working towards the same goal here to to get a reliably efficient utility and the more efficient WAPA is, the more the PSC can get their assessment paid and everything.

3:53:05 Where are we in terms of that relationship? Have we gotten to the point now that we could work together? I see we're still not getting all the information we need, but are we getting to that point now that we've crossed the hurdle and we could start working That's a question for the PSC? Yes. The PSC has always had, you term it as a strained relationship, the PSC has always had a working and workable relationship with the Water and Power Authority. Currently, the Public Services Commission has a very, very healthy and working relationship with the Water and Power Authority. That doesn't mean that we don't have issues. We will both have issues. The bottom line is that the PSC, the Public Services Commission, the legislature in this case is working toward the same goal. Our mandates and our requirements puts us in a position where, you know, on a regular basis it may seem a bit confrontational, it's not. We request the information that we need. If we're not getting the information, we go directly to, you know, the Water and Power Authority.

3:54:26 Okay, so let me just cut you out there real quick, though. WAPA is having issues collecting monies from the central government, and it's hampering their operations, their cash flow. Correct. You're having issues as well, because if they don't get paid their money, they can't pay their assessment in a timely manner. So it trickles down when one person doesn't pay, then it affects the whole system of payment within our government. And that's one area that we need to get to where everyone could be operationally functional. And I think the PSC is suffering because they don't have the money to do what they need to do. WAPA doesn't have the money because the central government isn't paying what they should.

3:55:11 I want to correct that. That's the second time you made that statement. And I don't want to · you're going to make sure the central government don't pay me if you keep repeating that. To Senator Lewis's point, single payer has been working, and we do get paid by the central government. A lot of what we are owed falls into the semi-autonomous or street lighting, because it's just a deficit as to what the central government acknowledges is their responsibility versus the actual cost of providing a service. So I just want to correct that. What's the payable right now that the central government owes you?

3:55:44 Is that the central government owes? Yes. We have a total amount owed from the GVI and component units of 18.8. The single payer is currently... That's due. 2.8 million and sorry, the other component units are 2.8 million, the single payer is \$2.6 million and \$11.5 million for street lights that we've not been paid in 16 months.

3:56:17 And that \$2.6 million is within, what, 30 days, current? The \$2.6 million is single-payer within a couple of them are two months, but for the most part, one month. Yeah, so that's within one month. The bugaboo is the street lighting component. Okay, good. In terms of the audits, where are we with the audits? What's the most recent audit that's been completed? Lorraine Kelly, Chief Financial Officer. The last audit that was completed was June 2020.

3:56:52 We have engaged BDO to complete 2021 and 2022. That is currently in process. We expect that to be done. Obviously, the auditors work at their speed, not necessarily ours, but we expect that to be done and completed this year, hopefully before september and that's what we're expecting from them and we're about to start an rfp process for the fiscal years 23 4 and 5 to invite um both our current audit firm as well as new audit firms to bid on the remaining years to bring us current and our plan is to do back-to-back audits as soon as one finishes the following week we will start the second audit and get current is the funding in place for these audits yes it is okay great um on and miss uh williams octon in terms of the mitigation funding that's available that were towards uh energy resiliency how much of that money um in your

	testimony you didn't mention anything about um dollar amount but how much have been given to wapa 30 seconds i would have to get the the final number on the mitigation portions of of the numbers but the mitigation projects right now I was working for micro grids for the island of St. Croix most of the other funding is with the public assistance for mitigation rolled up into the numbers that we have for the projects that we're working on right now and with the projects that we're doing with these schools and the hospital another hospital have their own power generation backup system will each school have their own as well yeah they are but backup power is something that is part of the overall plan so we can make the schools more resilient okay great so that should
3:58:46	help us in terms of if we have another scenario like we had this past week that's going to be helpful all right and Senator Frederick I have those numbers for you. For ARPA we received a total of \$110 million. The \$77 million that I was recalling was specifically for fuel and the remaining \$33 million was towards other vendors including Seven Seas and Haugland. Thank you very much. \$110 million and \$70 million.
3:59:21	And that upper funding for the 77 million of fuel was when the war broke out in Europe and skyrocketing of fuel prices. Yeah. Now we've got a war breaking out now and we're going to be facing that. And fuel prices have skyrocketed. And so we're going to be preparing for that, I hope. There's really no way to prepare for that. I try to say to my testimony, like, let's understand we are trying our best to hold the line against a rate increase. But that means the sacrifices that we have to make as a company. And so sometimes that impacts our customers. We try our best to insulate our customers from that impact. But that's the only way we can do it. The fuel cost is going up. And we haven't petitioned the PSC for an increase. We haven't done so for quite some time. haven't done so in my tenure um but i just need this body to understand that that is the reality right is if you don't want rates to go up understand that we're going to have to make really tough and difficult decisions which is where we're at right now quick question on unit 24 23 and 27 do you have the maintenance money to re to repair those units i'm sorry the maintenance budget yeah for those two units um yes we are working on we've already started the maintenance on 23. We've completed the maintenance on 27. What was the other unit?
4:00:51	I know 15 is running, but it needs to be... No, 15 is the one that just failed, and that was an unplanned failure, so we don't necessarily have the budget for those repairs. But we have budgeted for 27, and we've concluded the repairs, and we've budgeted for 23. Senator Frederick, your time was called, but I'm going to let you... I'm so sorry. Thank you very much. How much... How long do we have before those units are turn around and get back up? We don't have a diagnosis yet on 15. 27 is online. 23, what's your best guess, Mr. Harrigan? We haven't done the inspection, full inspection yet, but usually a repair of that magnitude would be at least 52 weeks.
4:01:38	Two weeks? 52 weeks? Yes. A year? One year, yes. Yeah, that's a whole year. okay and then i know you said number five the wasila was down right yeah

People named in this transcript

SUSPECTED, and a finding aid only. Names were matched by machine against the spellings used across all 426 of our transcripts, and the title is the one used in the room. Being named here is NOT evidence that a person attended or spoke · only that the name was said. Speech recognition mishears names, so a spelling may be wrong even where no alternative is offered.

9x	Senator Dwayne DeGraff heard in this transcript as: DeGraff, Duane de Graff, Dwayne M. DeGraff
6x	Senator Ray Fonseca heard in this transcript as: Fonseca
5x	Senator Hubert Frederick heard in this transcript as: Frederick, Hubert L. Frederick
5x	Senator Marvin Blyden heard in this transcript as: Blayden, Blyden, Blyton, Marvin A. Blyton
4x	Senator Alma Francis-Heyliger heard in this transcript as: Alma Francis Heiliger, Alma-Francis Heiliger, Francis Heiliger
4x	Senator Angel L. Bolques, Jr. heard in this transcript as: Angel L. Bolques Jr., Balquez, Bulquez
4x	Senator Franklin D. Johnson heard in this transcript as: Johnson
3x	Senator Angel L. Bulkes Jr

heard in this transcript as: Angel L. Boulkes Jr., Boulkes Jr.

3x **Senator Carla Joseph**
the surname alone also matches: Clifford Joseph; Karla J. Joseph
heard in this transcript as: Carla J. Joseph, Joseph

3x **Senator Francis Heidegger**

3x **Senator Kenneth L. Gittens**
heard in this transcript as: Gittins, Kenneth L. Gittins

3x **Senator Marise C. James**
the surname alone also matches: Javan James; Giovanni James Sr
heard in this transcript as: James, Maurice C. James

3x **Senator Milton E. Potter**

3x **Senator Novelle Francis**
heard in this transcript as: Francis Jr., Novelli Francis Jr.

2x **Senator Angel L. Bolkis Jr**
heard in this transcript as: Angel Bolkis'

2x **Senator Clifford Joseph**
heard in this transcript as: Clifford A. Joseph Sr

2x **Senator Kurt VLA**
heard in this transcript as: VLA

2x **Commissioner Mario Brooks**

Bills and acts referred to

Matched by number against our own acts corpus. The number is what the recognition heard, so it may be wrong; where it resolved, the title is the one the Legislature gave the act.

Act 8471 Act 8471 · May 4, 2021 · An Act amending the Virgin Islands Code title 3, section 273(a) relating to the Public Services Commission to establish the Commission as a semiautonomous agency; amending title 30 section | to eliminate certain businesses from regulation as a utility and to subject the Waste Management Authority to regulation; authorizing the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority to hire a turnaround management company; adding chapter 9 to provide for resolution of customer complaints against wireless telecommunication providers; and for other purposes related to the Public Services Commission, and the Water and Power Authority, enacted by the Thirty-Fourth Legislature of the Virgin Islands at its Regula