

# Legislature of the Virgin Islands



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The Honorable

**Angel Bolques, Jr.**

**Senator-At-Large**

**36<sup>th</sup> Legislature of the Virgin Islands**

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Committee on Culture, Youth, Aging, and Parks

**VICE-CHAIRMAN**

Committee on Economic Development & Agriculture

**MEMBER**

Committee of the Whole

Committee on Rules & Judiciary

Committee on Homeland Security, Justice & Public Safety

Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure and Planning

Sub-Committee on Energy & Infrastructure Development



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## **Senator Bolques Shares Customs Options Provided by CBP to Address Package Delivery Delays in St. John**

**U.S. Virgin Islands** — In response to the continued disruptions in package deliveries affecting residents and businesses on St. John, Senator Angel L. Bolques Jr. is sharing critical updates and options provided by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). These updates follow a constructive teleconference between Senator Bolques and CBP officials, during which the agency outlined several pathways to help alleviate delays.

"I want to thank CBP for proactively sharing these options and clarifications, and for their continued partnership in helping us find practical ways to ease the burden on our residents," said Senator Bolques. "This dialogue is essential as we work toward timely solutions that restore access to critical goods and services."

Senator Bolques is also pleased to report that cargo processing for the port of St. John has now resumed for local customers, marking an important step forward in restoring direct service and reducing the logistical strain on island residents.

**During the briefing, CBP officials shared the following key options and updates to support more efficient customs processing:**

- **Importer Bond Option** – Allows for streamlined shipment processing through bonded clearance.
- **Consolidated Entry Summary Process** – Simplifies documentation for multiple small consignments.
- **Excel Manifest Submittals** – Supports faster clearance using manifest templates for consolidated shipments.
- **Required Documentation** – Bill of Lading, invoices, and excise tax clearance remain mandatory and are encouraged to be submitted online.
- **15-Day Clearance Window** – Couriers have 15 days from delivery authorization to finalize documentation when a bond is in place.

- **Submission Gaps** – CBP noted that many required clearance documents are often missing or not submitted by courier services, creating delays.
- **Personal Shipment Guidance** – Individuals can request a Bill of Lading and invoice from the courier and process clearance directly to help save time.
- **Excise Tax Process** – Excise tax clearance must still be completed through the Bureau of Internal Revenue's portal: [excise.bir.vi.gov](http://excise.bir.vi.gov).
- **Simplified Option for Low-Value Items** – A 6% standard fee is available for low-value personal items to expedite processing.
- **Need Assistance?** – CBP encourages residents to call (340) 774-2510 with questions.

Senator Bolques also raised concerns about delays in critical shipments such as medical supplies. CBP confirmed that they are prepared to prioritize medical and emergency shipments when properly flagged by shipping or courier services. However, CBP noted that these items are often not marked appropriately, resulting in unnecessary delays.

In ongoing conversations, Senator Bolques has urged courier companies to be more transparent with their customers and to refrain from shifting blame to federal agencies. "CBP has been clear: courier services must follow updated clearance rules and accurately inform their customers," he stated. "The previous practice of delivering packages before proper customs clearance is no longer acceptable under current federal regulations."

"As your Senator-at-Large, I remain committed to ensuring that residents across the Virgin Islands receive fair treatment and timely service," said Bolques. "I thank CBP for its cooperation and will continue working with them and the community to resolve challenges as they arise."

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#### **St. Thomas**

- Entry Branch & Import Specialists: (340) 774-2510 / (340) 774-2520
- Vessel & Clearance: (340) 774-6755
- Sandfill Cargo Office: (340) 714-1600

#### **St. John**

- CBP Terminal (The Creek): 1-877-305-8775

#### **St. Croix**

- Main Office: (340) 773-1490
- Gallows Bay Port Terminal: (340) 773-1011