



Craig W. Barshinger  
30<sup>th</sup> Legislature

# Legislature of the Virgin Islands

Office of Senator-at-Large Craig W. Barshinger



**Chair:**  
Energy and Environmental  
Protection Committee

**Vice Chair:**  
Housing and Government  
Services Committee

**Member:**  
Health, Hospitals, Human  
Services and Veterans  
Affairs Committee

**Member:**  
Public Safety, Homeland  
Security and Justice  
Committee

## VIA HAND DELIVERY

February 12, 2014

The Honorable John P. de Jongh, Jr.  
Governor of the U.S. Virgin Islands  
Government House  
21-22 Kongens Gade  
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00802

Dear Governor de Jongh:

The Daily News reported the following on December 30, 2013:

*Financial audits for fiscal years 2012 and 2013 discussed at a Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority Board Meeting reveal that the utility suffered a net loss in its electrical system of \$9.9 million in 2013 and that the amount the V.I. Government owes to the utility for electricity has increased to a total of \$25,458,791. An audit of the water system reveals that the utility earned a profit during the same time period.*

It is time for you to execute **Act No. 7562** ("The Single Payer Fund"), which I jointly sponsored with Senator Terrence "Positive" Nelson. The Legislature passed and overrode your veto of this legislation which requires the Executive to set aside sufficient money to pay all Virgin Islands Government ("Government") WAPA bills on time, from a single-payer fund.

The Government is a deadbeat WAPA customer. By using WAPA as a bank of convenience, we doom ourselves to poor electricity reliability. This is not in dispute. When its biggest customer fails to pay on time, WAPA diverts funds that should have

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been used for maintenance, to pay for fuel. Then the equipment breaks down, months or years later, leaving paying customers without service.

What is the status of **Act No. 7562**? Where does the Department of Finance stand on setting this up?

As a sponsor of the Bill and Chairman of the Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection (“Committee”), I request that you report to the Legislature, through the Senate President:

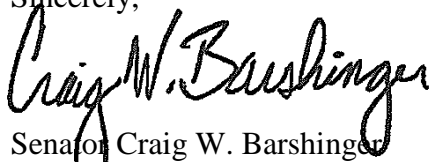
1. The uncontested, past due balances owed to WAPA by the Government, per department and agency;
2. The projected debt owed over the next six (6) months to WAPA by the Government, with breakouts for all departments and autonomous and semi-autonomous agencies; and
3. Your plan for bringing the outstanding balances current.

If there are any contested WAPA bills, please describe and quantify.

I hope to see that very shortly, the Government will be current on all debts to WAPA, with the exception of the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital and Medical Center (“Hospital”). The Committee is interested in working with the Administration to solve the Hospital’s energy problem. In a recent roundtable, we discussed two immediate avenues.

Thank you. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Sincerely,



Senator Craig W. Barshinger  
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection

cc: All Senators  
Hugo Hodge, Ex Dir/CEO, VI WAPA  
Gerald Groner, Esq., Chairman, WAPA Board of Directors  
M. Thomas Jackson, Chairman, VI Public Services Commission