



Legislature of the Virgin Islands

Senator Michael P. Thurland
Office of the Senate Vice President
28th Legislature

Thursday, May 07, 2009

Good Evening, Mr. Miguel Rolon, Distinguished Guests, Fishermen and all others present. My name is Michon Fabio, Rules Committee Coordinator for Senator Michael Thurland. I bring greetings on behalf of Senator Thurland is currently out of the Territory and could not attend this important meeting tonight. Senator Thurland would like to commend the St. Croix Commercial Fishermen's Association for all the work they have done in cooperation with the Caribbean Fisheries Management Council to assist in the development of a Management Plan for our fisheries. Fishing is a part of our culture it is a tradition and a trade that is passed down from generation to generation, and if we allow these measures to take place we will be losing a part of our heritage. Fishermen please know you have Senator Thurland's continued support through and to the end of this process.

Senator Thurland is familiar with your plight and has publicly stated that he is against permanent closures and seizure of fishing grounds within our Territorial waters. When these closures take place and upset the livelihood of so many we lose an important source of jobs, income and resources for our Territory. Senator Thurland is confident that through your continued collaboration we can create a comprehensive management plan for our fisheries. Data from the Virgin Islands fishermen should be used in regulating the Virgin Islands fisheries. We must ensure that your input is respected because any threat to our ability to provide for our families and community by outside forces will be met with the adequate means of defense. Protecting our local limited resources and productivity is a concern of Senator Thurland. As we navigate ever so carefully through this global recession we must be vigilant in protecting and keeping our resources. Best Regards for a successful meeting and may the outcome be beneficial to all parties involved.

Chairman:
Rules and Judiciary

Vice Chairman:
Economic Development, Energy and
Technology
Financial Services, Infrastructure and
Consumer Affairs

Member:
Education, Youth and Culture
Planning and Environmental Protection