



Shawn-Michael Malone  
Senator

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**Member:**  
Labor and Agriculture Committee

Public Safety, Homeland Security  
& Justice Committee

Economic Development, Energy &  
Technology Committee

Health, Hospitals and Human Services

May 7, 2009

Honorable Louis P. Hill  
President  
28<sup>th</sup> Legislature of the Virgin Islands  
Capitol Building  
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00802

Dear Senate President Hill:

As Chairman of the Committee of Planning and Environmental Protection I write to request that you convene a Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Legislature to discuss the proposed amendments to the Fisheries Management Plan for the Virgin Islands as mandated by the Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization Act. They have been the subject of recent public hearings to review the scooping documents with the proposed amendments in both districts.

After discussions with stakeholders at the hearings, it was strongly recommended that all fifteen members of our Legislature be made aware of the vital issues affecting the fishing industry of the territory and the potential negative impact of these proposed amendments. Time is of the essence because the federal law requires that by January 2010 a fishery management plan must be in place. It is imperative that these hearings be held close to June 23, 2009 when follow-up public hearings are scheduled to occur on St. Croix.

The following individuals should be invited to attend the meetings: Commissioner Robert Mathes of the Department of the Planning and Natural Resources; Acting Director of the Division of Fish and Wildlife, Ruth Gomez; Regional Director of the National Marine Fishery Service, Dr Roy Crabtree; the Chairman of the Caribbean Management Council, Miguel Rolon; the Executive Director of the Caribbean Management Council, Eugenio Piniero; the President of the St. Croix Commercial Fishermen Association, Edward Schuster; the President of the St. Thomas Fisherman's Association (STFA); the Chairman of the Board of the STFA, Julian Magras; and Chief Scientist of the STFA, Dr. David Olsen.

In an effort to eliminate the negative impact these proposed federal regulations can have on our fishing industry, these hearings can significantly improve the level of cooperation between the National Marine Service, the Caribbean Fisheries Management Council and the Virgin Islands' fishing industry. If my office can be of assistance in coordinating these hearings, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to your timely response to this most pressing issue.

Cordially,

Shawn-Michael Malone  
Chairman, Committee on Planning and Environmental Protection  
28<sup>th</sup> Legislature of the U.S. Virgin Islands

Xc: All Senators  
St. Thomas Fisherman's Association  
St. Croix Commercial Fisherman's Association



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Office of  
Senator Shawn-Michael Malone

**For Immediate Release – No. 21/2009**

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**SENATE PLANNING & ENVIRONMENTAL CHAIRMAN CALLS FOR  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HEARINGS TO ADDRESS  
AMENDMENTS TO FISHERIES REGULATIONS**

**(Charlotte Amalie, U.S. Virgin Islands, May 8, 2009)** Senator Shawn-Michael Malone, Chairman of the Senate's Planning and Environmental Protection Committee of the 28<sup>th</sup> Legislature, has written Senate President Louis P. Hill calling for Senate Committee of the Whole hearings on the proposed amendments to the Fishery Management Plan for the Virgin Islands.

In a May 7, 2009 letter to the senate president, Senator Malone wrote, "After discussions with stakeholders at the hearings it was strongly recommended that all fifteen members of our Legislature be made aware of the vital issues affecting the fishing industry of the territory and the potential negative impact of these proposed amendments. Time is of essence because the federal law requires that by January 2010 a fishery management plan must be in place. It is imperative that these hearings be held close to June 23, 2009 when follow-up hearings are schedule to occur on St. Croix."

In calling for the Committee of the Whole Hearings, Malone said, "It is clear from the meetings held this week in both districts by the Caribbean Fisheries Management Council (CFMC), on the proposed amendments to the territory's Fishery Management Plan, there is a lack of cooperation between federal and local authorities."

"In an effort to eliminate the negative impact these proposed federal regulations can have on our fishing industry, these hearings can significantly improve the level of cooperation between the National Marine Service, the Caribbean Fisheries Management Council and the Virgin Islands' fishing industry. If my office can be of assistance in coordinating these hearings, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to your timely response to this most pressing issue," Senator Malone concluded.

**PRESS RELEASE**