

U.S. Virgin Islands: Environmental/Infrastructure Impact Fee

ARDA-ROC Fights Unreasonable Fee for USVI Timeshare Owners

As one of its four legislative pillars, ARDA-ROC consistently opposes any effort to impose unreasonable taxes or fees on timeshare owners. ARDA-ROC believes an excessive tax or fee is not only unfair to timeshare owners who already pay property taxes at the highest assessed rate in the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI), but will also hurt the local economy by making the region a less attractive tourism destination.

Effective May 1st, the Environmental/Infrastructure Impact Fee (Fee) in the USVI will impose a \$25 per night fee for each night a timeshare unit is occupied. Enacting such an excessive fee will likely cause a dramatic negative effect on the 70% occupancy rate experienced currently in the USVI. The region then becomes a less-attractive vacation destination when compared to other Caribbean locations that do not have this type of fee, or may charge a substantially lower amount. As occupancy rates fall, tax/fee revenues and consumer spending drop over time, reducing the number of jobs and contributions to the local economy. Over the last 25 years, timeshare has been the only sector of the USVI tourism industry that has witnessed sustained growth and development. This Fee would unravel that history quickly and definitively.

ARDA-ROC has collaborated with the Chamber of Commerce of St. Thomas-St. John, the Chamber of Commerce of St. Croix, the USVI Hotel and Tourism Association, and owners to work with the USVI Legislature on a reasonable solution that will support the growth of the local tourism industry.

ARDA-ROC has Worked Within an Aggressive Timeline:

- **December 16, 2016** – The Governor introduces the Environmental/Infrastructure Impact Fee legislation in a special session to move the law quickly through the legislature. With ARDA-ROC's efforts, the bill was defeated.
- **January 10, 2017** – The Governor again introduces the Impact Fee bill in a new legislative session. ARDA-ROC meets with the Governor, Commissioner of Finance, Director of the Bureau of Internal Revenue, Commissioner of Tourism, and a Senator at the Government House to express its opposition to the bill and to discuss the severe implications of this fee.
- **January 31, 2017** – ARDA-ROC provides testimony before the Senate Finance Committee of the USVI Legislature in opposition to the bill. ([For the full testimony, click here](#))
- **February 23, 2017** – ARDA-ROC again provides testimony in opposition to the bill before the Senate Rules and Judiciary Committee of the USVI Legislature. ([For the full testimony, click here](#))
- **May 1, 2017** – ARDA-ROC filed a lawsuit against the USVI government to challenge the constitutionality of the Fee. ([For the full complaint, click here](#)) ([For the press release, click here](#))

ARDA-ROC will continue to work with partners, owners, and the USVI Legislature on a reasonable solution that will support the growth of the local tourism industry.

USVI Taxes/Fees on Timeshare Owners:

CURRENT:

- Real Estate Property Taxes – assessed at the highest rate in the Territory
- Waste Management Fee – required to pay for removal of waste

NEW:

- Environmental/ Infrastructure Impact Fee - \$25 fee per night, effective May 1, 2017

U.S. Virgin Islands 31st Legislature Contacts

Help us fight this fee by writing a letter of Opposition to local USVI Government Leaders. Here are some points to include:

- It is an excessive and discriminatory fee only imposed on timeshare owners and their guests.
- Timeshare owners already pay the highest assessed real estate property tax in the territory.
- This Fee will drive people to book their timeshare and future vacations in other markets to avoid the additional \$175 per week fee that it will cost to vacation in the USVI.
- This Fee will not produce the revenues that the USVI Government anticipates. Instead it will discourage tourism to the USVI, hurt local jobs and reduce revenue to the local economy.
- In a competitive Caribbean marketplace, this Fee will hurt the image of the USVI as a vacation destination and cause a negative impact on the USVI brand.
- The Fee will hurt the USVI timeshare industry that has been the only sector of the USVI tourism industry that has seen sustained growth and development of the last 25 years.

Note: clicking an email address below will open a new email for you to send a letter to the government official and a copy will be sent to ARDA-ROC. If you do not wish to copy us, please delete the address usviadvocate@arda-roc.org from the bcc line.

GOVERNMENT LEADERS WHO SUPPORT THE FEE

The Honorable Kenneth E. Mapp
Governor of the U.S. Virgin Islands
EMAIL: kenneth.mapp@go.vi.gov

SEND LETTERS BY MAIL: 21-22 Kongens Gade
Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas VI 00802

The Honorable Osbert E. Potter
Lieutenant Governor of the U.S. Virgin Islands
EMAIL: osbert.potter@go.vi.gov

SEND LETTERS BY MAIL: 1131 King Street, Suite 101
Christiansted, St. Croix VI 00820

The Honorable Beverly Nicholson-Doty
Commissioner of the U.S. Virgin Islands
Department of Tourism
EMAIL: bnicholson@usvitourism.vi

SEND LETTERS BY MAIL: P.O. Box 6400
St. Thomas, VI 00804

Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett

SEND LETTERS BY MAIL: House of Representatives
331 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

SENATORS WHO SUPPORT THE FEE

SEND LETTERS BY MAIL:
#1 Lagoon Street
Complex Fredereiksted, St. Croix 00840

SEND LETTERS BY MAIL:
Capital Building, Charlotte Amalie
P.O. Box 1690
St. Thomas, VI 00804

The Honorable Neville James
Senate Majority Leader
EMAIL: njames@yahoo.com

Senator Myron Jackson
EMAIL: mjackson@legvi.org

Senator Sammuel Sanes
EMAIL: samuelsanes@yahoo.com

Senator Marvin Blyden
EMAIL: senatorblyden@gmail.com

Senator Kurt Vialet
EMAIL: kvialet@legvi.org

Senator Brian Smith
EMAIL: bsmith@legvi.org

Senator Nereida Rivera O'Reilly
EMAIL: teamnellie@gmail.com

Senator Jean Forde
EMAIL: jforde@legvi.org

Senator Novelle Francis
EMAIL: nfrancis@legvi.org



Send letters of Support and thank the Senators that have opposed this Fee and continue to support the growth and health of the local tourism economy.

SENATORS WHO OPPOSE THE FEE	
SEND LETTERS BY MAIL: #1 Lagoon Street Complex Fredereiksted, St. Croix 00840	SEND LETTERS BY MAIL: Capital Building, Charlotte Amalie P.O. Box 1690 St. Thomas, VI 00804
Senator Terrance Nelson EMAIL: tnelson@legvi.org	Senator Tregenza Roach EMAIL: troach@legvi.org
Senator Alicia Hansen EMAIL: ahansen@legvi.org	Senator Dwayne Degraff EMAIL: ddegraff@legvi.org
Senator Janette Millin Young EMAIL: jyoung@legvi.org	

You can become a powerful voice for your timeshare ownership with ARDA-ROC. Together we can work to preserve, protect and enhance vacation ownership.

[Donate Today!](#)