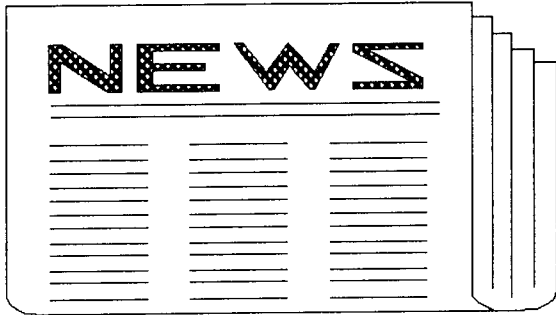


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# PRESS RELEASE

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## REDFIELD DEMANDS ACCOUNTABILITY IN FEDERAL EDUCATION AID

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REPUBLICAN SENATOR HOLLAND L. REDFIELD II SAID TODAY THE EDUCATION COMMISSIONER AND HER UPPER ECHELON ADMINISTRATORS SHOULD BE HELD FULLY ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE LOSS OF MILLIONS IN FEDERAL EDUCATION AID DUE TO TOTAL MISMANAGEMENT AND INEPT ADMINISTRATION. "WE AS A GOVERNMENT CANNOT EVEN HOLD OUR HANDS OUT CORRECTLY FOR FEDERAL DOLLARS AND THEN FOLLOW THROUGH WITH SPENDING IT IN A TIMELY MANNER," REDFIELD SAID.

REDFIELD SAID IT'S TIME FOR THE GOVERNOR TO STOP PLAYING MR. NICE GUY AND GET TOUGH WITH COMMISSIONERS AND DEPARTMENTS WHICH ARE CONTINUALLY FAILING IN THEIR MANDATED RESPONSIBILITIES. "IF THE ADMINISTRATION CONTINUES ITS PRESENT COURSE, THE FARRELLY ADMINISTRATION WILL LEAVE A LEGACY OF INEFFICIENCY, BROKEN COMMITMENTS AND THE WHOLESALE SQUANDERING OF OPPORTUNITIES LOST TO THE PEOPLE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS," HE SAID.

"AS A LEGISLATOR INDIVIDUALLY, AND IN THE LEGISLATURE COLLECTIVELY, WE ARE FACED WITH THE ARDUOUS TASK OF FINDING ENOUGH MONEY TO PAY THE BILLS AND KEEP EMPLOYEES ON THE PAYROLL. THEN ALONG COMES THIS REVELATION, CONFIRMED BY DELEGATE DE LUGO, WHICH IS BOTH PAINFUL AND MADDENING TO COMPREHEND," REDFIELD SAID. THE SENATOR REFERRED TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT THURSDAY BY DELEGATE TO CONGRESS RON DE LUGO THAT THE V.I. EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HAD LOST \$1.2 MILLION IN GENERAL EDUCATION ASSISTANCE FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, BECAUSE FEDERAL AUDITORS SHOWED THAT THE TERRITORY HAD FAILED TO SPEND MORE THAN \$7 MILLION IN PAST APPROPRIATIONS.

"THIS HAS GOT TO BE AN UNMITIGATED EMBARRASSMENT FOR OUR DELEGATE. WITH OTHER STATES AND JURISDICTIONS COMPETING FOR SCARCE FEDERAL AID, THEY MUST LOOK UPON THE VIRGIN ISLANDS AS A JOKE," REDFIELD SAID.

THE SENATOR SAID THE TAX-PAYING PUBLIC HAS GOT TO LOOK AT EDUCATION'S LOSS OF FEDERAL FUNDS WITH DISDAIN, AND DEEM IT UNACCEPTABLE TO CONTINUE IN THE FACE OF THE SUBSTANDARD CONDITION OF OUR SCHOOLS. "PARENTS OF SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN HAVE GOT TO SPEAK OUT, AND DEMAND THAT THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION BE GIVEN A REAL OPPORTUNITY FOR SUCCESS. THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HAS GOT TO LIVE UP TO ITS FUNDAMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY TO DO ALL IT CAN, TO USE ANY AND EVERY RESOURCE, FEDERAL AND LOCAL, TO MAKE THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM WORK AS IT SHOULD FOR OUR CHILDREN," REDFIELD SAID.

"THIS ISSUE GOES BEYOND MY PERSONAL FEELINGS FOR THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, OR THE COMMISSIONER. IT GOES TO MY RESPONSIBILITY AS AN ELECTED LEADER TO FULFILL MY COMMITMENTS TO PEOPLE WHO ELECTED ME, AND CHILDREN WHOSE LIVES ARE EFFECTED BY THE ACTION, OR INACTION, OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT," REDFIELD CONCLUDES.