

The BUG Project

The U.S. Virgin Islands has one of the highest electricity rates in America, no incorporated towns, and a legislature elected at-large — accountable to no one neighborhood. **Bottom Up Government (BUG)** is a citizen-driven, non-partisan civic initiative demanding two structural changes before the 2026 General Election.

THE PROBLEM — TWO INSTITUTIONS

GVI (Government of the Virgin Islands) — 15 at-large senators. No municipal layer. No community has its own elected local council, zoning board, or public safety board.

WAPA (Water & Power Authority) — A vertically integrated monopoly, no member ownership, chronic rate increases. Ratepayers pay ~43¢/kWh. Deferred fuel deficit exceeds \$147 million.

THE BUG SOLUTION

TEA Territorial Energy Act	MCA Municipal Corps Act	8 Member-Owned CRECs
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Two acts. Eight cooperatives. Four incorporated towns. **Devolution from the top down to the community up.**

WHO WE ARE

An unregistered, unorganized, unaffiliated association of like-minded VI inhabitants and advocates. A **VIG** (Voters, Issues, Education, GOTV) party. Non-partisan. Founded by the Christiansted Revitalization Planning Task Force, June 2026.

B · U · G
Bottom Up Government · USVI · 2026

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www.bottomupgovernment.org

Don't Agonize, Organize. Mobilize for Success...

BOTTOM UP GOVERNMENT

FRONT PORCH POLITICS

A Citizens Advocacy Coalition Network

A POP-UP VIRAL POLITICAL MOVEMENT

COMMON SENSE

ADDRESSED TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE US VIRGIN ISLANDS

On the following interesting

SUBJECTS.

- I. *Thoughts on the present State of Virgin Islands Affairs.*
- II. *Of the Reform of the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority.*
- III. *Of the Re-establishment of Municipal Government in the Territory.*

MISSION STATEMENT

ORGANIZE AND TRAIN COMMUNITY ADVOCATES THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY

VOTER EDUCATION — COMMON SENSE**

NON-POLITICAL VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE

NON-PARTISAN GET OUT THE VOTE (GOTV) CAMPAIGN

*BOTTOM UP GOVERNMENT

Bottom Up Government = Power And Respect This Year (PARTY 2026)

An unregistered unorganized unaffiliated network affiliation of like-minded VI inhabitant/advocates.

**COMMON SENSE

A pamphlet published by The Christiansted Revitalization Planning Task Force stating the cases for WAPA reform and re-establishment of municipal governments in the US Virgin Islands.

Foreword

The **2026 USVI General Election** will be a major turning point in citizen rule of the Government and its Agencies instead of continuing to be ruled by the existing colonial civic and public infrastructure, ...or it won't.

A Civic Leadership Advocacy Initiative has been launched by the Christiansted Revitalization Planning Task Force to create a parallel campaign to the 2026 General Election — advocating for citizen and voter support and candidate pledges to implement the initiative in the next VI Legislative Session.

All'aWe know we want FIX WAPA!!!! and FIX DE DAM POTHLES!!!

It's time to consider two serious grassroots initiatives generated among Crucians who have been brainstorming solutions — no grants or expensive consultants involved:

I. WAPA Reform

Break up the territorial monopoly. Replace it with member-owned **Community** Rural Electric Cooperatives financed through federal programs already available to the Territory.

II. Re-establishment of Local Governments in the USVI

Incorporate Christiansted, Frederiksted, Charlotte Amalie, and Cruz Bay as municipal corporations with elected town councils, local budgets, and community-scale accountability.

Excuses or Progress? It's up to the voters. When the Spirit of Juneteenth 2026 manifests on St. Croix, let's make a community decision for Progress — that by Juneteenth 2027 All'aWe will be building our communities' paths to equitable civic responsibility.

— Common Sense Foreword · Christiansted, June 2026

A Pop-Up Studio and Administration Office at the Comanche Hotel have been donated to the Task Force by Club Comanche, Inc. for campaign production, distribution of materials, and small planning meetings.

To volunteer for the Just Fix Dem! Team, email "Interested in the Initiative" with your contact information to:

Learn More · Get Involved · Read Common Sense

www.bottomupgovernment.org

Bottom Up Government · Front Porch Politics

The TEA Act

WAPA has failed. For decades, residents and businesses have paid among the highest electricity rates in the U.S. while receiving unreliable service and zero ownership stake in the utility that controls their lives.

WHAT THE TEA ACT DOES

The **Territorial Energy Authority Act** — drafted by the Christiansted Revitalization Planning Task Force — restructures WAPA into three separate entities:

ENTITY 1 Genco — Generation Company Power production & bulk supply to the territorial grid.
ENTITY 2 Disco — Distribution Company Territorial grid delivery to 8 member-owned CRECs at a regulated wholesale rate.
ENTITY 3 8 CRECs — Community Rural Electric Cooperatives Member-owned. Locally governed. Ratepayers become voting owners. 4 STX · 3 STT · 1 STJ.

HOW IT GETS PAID FOR

- **USDA Rural Utilities Service (RUS)** low-interest cooperative loans
- **IRA Direct-Pay Tax Credits** for renewable energy investment
- **Green Bonds** for capital infrastructure
- **\$4.7 Billion** in already-secured federal energy infrastructure funds

WHAT COOPERATIVES ALSO DELIVER

- Member-owned broadband via existing WAPA poles and easements
- Arrearage forgiveness — clean slate for billing errors
- Forensic audit of WAPA propane conversion before ratepayers pay
- Renewable energy transition — solar, wind, submarine cable

43¢ Current kwh rate (2025)	\$147M Deferred fuel deficit	\$4.7B Federal funds secured
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What Is Devolution?

Devolution means transferring authority, ownership, and accountability from a central government to smaller, community-level institutions — closer to the people who live with the consequences.

In the 1930s, Lyndon Johnson electrified the Texas Hill Country — not by asking a monopoly utility to care, but by organizing rural cooperatives with federal loans. The lights came on because power was devolved to the people who needed it.

— Robert A. Caro, *The Path to Power (1982)* · Preface to Common Sense

THE USVI DEVOLUTION IN THREE PHASES

PHASE I — NOW (STATUS QUO) GVI Monopoly · WAPA Monopoly · 0 Municipal Towns 84,000 residents governed by 15 at-large senators. WAPA controls generation and distribution as a single agency. No incorporated towns anywhere in the territory.
PHASE II — AFTER NOV 2026 ELECTION Devolution Initiated Legislature passes the TEA Act + Municipal Corporations Act. Governor signs. WAPA restructures into Genco + Disco. Municipal incorporation authority activated.
PHASE III — 2028+ Devolution Complete 8 CRECs operational. 4 incorporated towns with elected local councils. GVI reduced to a residual territorial role only.

WHAT DEVOLUTION MEANS FOR YOU

- **GVI:** Senators focused on territorial policy. Local issues decided locally.
- **WAPA Power:** You become a member-owner with voting rights. Your co-op, your rates, your board.
- **WAPA Water:** CRECs assume water distribution customer service — bills, outages, and service calls handled locally, not by a territorial call center.
- **Local Government:** Four towns get elected town councils, local zoning, and a community budget.
- **CRECs:** Lower rates over time. Renewable energy. Broadband. Clean-slate billing.

Two bills. One voter mandate. A generation of change.

The Municipal Corporations Act

The USVI has no incorporated towns. Residents of Christiansted, Frederiksted, Charlotte Amalie, and Cruz Bay have no elected local council, no municipal zoning board, no community budget — no government closer than the territorial legislature, elected at-large and accountable to no local constituency.

WHAT THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT DOES

The **VI Municipal Corporations Act of 2026** creates a legal framework for communities to **voluntarily incorporate as municipal corporations** with:

- An elected Town Council (5–7 members)
- An appointed Town Manager (professional administrator)
- Enumerated powers: zoning, local permitting, municipal public safety, parks, local economic development
- Dedicated revenue: local business fees, property tax sharing, grant authority

THE DEMONSTRATION MODEL

Christiansted & Gallows Bay are designated as the first demonstration municipality — a pilot with intensive oversight before territory-wide replication.

Christiansted	Frederiksted	Charlotte Amalie	Cruz Bay
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SAFEGUARDS BUILT IN

- **No new pension obligations** — municipalities cannot create defined benefit plans
- **No debt without territorial approval** — prevents Puerto Rico-style collapse
- **10% reserve fund required** — fiscal floor mandatory before incorporation
- **Oversight Board** — annual scorecards, 5-year legislative review

WHY IT MATTERS

Municipal government is an **economic development question**. Faster local permitting, place-specific land use policy, investor-friendly governance clarity, and community pride generate real economic returns for visitors and residents alike.

The economic case for a phased, capacity-first, enumerated-powers Municipal Corporations Act is strong.

— USVI Municipal Governance Economic Analysis · June 2026