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## Bryan Calls June 12 Meeting to Address Southland Horse Racing Deal Concerns and Possible Revisions

Stakeholders must submit written concerns by June 5 before a June 12 meeting on the Southland agreement, with Bryan seeking changes on jobs, revenues, horsemen protections, tax treatment, gaming provisions and oversight.

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Governor Albert Bryan Jr. has called a June 12 stakeholder meeting on St. Croix to address concerns over the proposed Southland Gaming agreement to restore horse racing in the Virgin Islands, saying the administration is prepared to consider reasonable changes while keeping the focus on rebuilding the Randall “Doc” James Racetrack and returning the industry to operation.

In a letter to Senate President Milton E. Potter, members of the 36th Legislature, Flamboyant Park Horsemen Association President Elroy Bates, St. Thomas-St. John Horsemen Association President Clinton Hedrington and Southland Gaming principal Robert E. Huckabee III, Governor Bryan asked stakeholders to submit written concerns, objections, proposed amendments and alternative recommendations by Friday, June 5, 2026.

The governor has invited the stakeholders to meet at Government House on St. Croix on June 12 for a focused discussion on the proposed agreement, including possible modifications that preserve its central goal of returning horse racing to the Virgin Islands in a responsible and sustainable way.

“We heard the concerns. We are prepared to listen, make reasonable modifications, protect existing jobs, protect government revenues and still deliver a rebuilt Randall ‘Doc’ James Racetrack,” Governor Bryan said. “But the process cannot remain open-ended forever.”

The proposed agreement is intended to rebuild the Randall “Doc” James Racetrack on St. Croix, support continued racing activity across the territory, establish a single promoter for the industry, and create a long-term framework backed by private investment and enforceable obligations.

Governor Bryan said the administration recognizes concerns raised by senators, horsemen, gaming stakeholders and the public.

“Our goal is not to force through a deal without review,” Governor Bryan said. “Our goal is to restore horse racing on St. Croix in a way that protects jobs, protects the public interest and provides certainty to the horsemen and the people of the Virgin Islands.”

The June 12 meeting is expected to provide a structured opportunity for discussion on potential amendments, economic impact, protections for horsemen, racing obligations, tax treatment, gaming-related provisions, employment issues and regulatory oversight. The objective, according to the governor, is to determine whether the agreement can still be revised in a way that allows horse racing to return in a timely and sustainable manner.

Stakeholders submitting written comments are being asked to identify the specific provision or issue of concern, explain the concern, propose any amendment or modification, state whether the issue can be resolved within the current agreement, and offer any alternative proposal that would still accomplish the return of horse racing in the Virgin Islands.

Governor Bryan said his goal is to reach a fair, responsible and workable agreement that protects the public interest, respects the role of the Legislature, addresses legitimate concerns and provides a realistic path for the return of horse racing.

“The territory cannot afford indefinite delay, and we cannot ignore legitimate concerns,” Governor Bryan said. “We must use this moment to determine whether the agreement can be improved in a way that preserves its core purpose, restores horse racing and creates a stronger foundation for the industry going forward.”

The governor urged all stakeholders to participate in good faith, submit written concerns by the June 5 deadline, and come prepared on June 12 to discuss practical solutions.

“Horse racing is part of who we are, but it will not return on memories alone,” Governor Bryan said. “It will take discipline, compromise and a shared commitment to move this industry from dispute back to racing. That is what this meeting is meant to accomplish.”

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