

Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
February 11, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.

Oversight Hearing
Policy Priorities for the Administration's FY 2021 Budget for the Insular Areas

Questions from Rep. Neguse for Governor Albert Bryan Jr. (U.S. Virgin Islands)

1. Governor Bryan, is the Virgin Islands still dealing with an outbreak of the Stoney Coral Tissue Loss Disease?

Questions from Rep. Neguse for Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios (Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands); Governor Albert Bryan Jr. (U.S. Virgin Islands); and Governor Lou Leon Guerrero (Guam)

2. Governors you know better than us that healthy coral reefs protect your islands from coastal erosion and storm damage among other beneficial effects. But these precious resources have been experiencing a variety of threats including poor water quality, over-harvesting, coastal development, disease and bleaching. The Office of Insular Affairs ("OIA") has supported coral reef initiatives on your islands in the past under recommendations from the Coral Reef Task Force. However, for FY2021, OIA is proposing cuts to their Coral Reef Initiative by more than 65%.
3. How will such a drastic cut affect your natural resources managers' ability to control and eradicate invasive species and protect your fragile environments?
4. Are there particular environment or wildlife challenges that Congress can be helpful to you in addressing?
5. Is the Department of Interior being responsive to your needs? What is the most pressing of those that is not currently funded at necessary levels?