

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS**  
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**DLCA RELEASES GAS STUDY**

The Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs has released the results of its study of gas prices for retailers on St. Croix. In January of this year, the department subpoenaed information from gas stations in the Virgin Islands, regarding their gas purchases and prices for the six (6) month period from July 2014 and January 2015. This was a time when the world and national trends revealed a decrease in oil prices and gas prices at the pump.

Commissioner Carrington stated that on one level, the study revealed what the public had already been aware of, that the prices being paid at the pump in the Virgin Islands were not reflective of the world and national trends where prices were on the decrease. On another level however, stated the commissioner, the study also reveals the extent to which the gas retailers profited while paying less on their gas purchases, by not passing on the cost of their savings to the consumer. Carrington characterized the behavior of the gas stations as less than consumer friendly. In general, the numbers profoundly illustrate that the less money retailers paid for gas on the wholesale market, the more money the consumer paid at the pump, stated the commissioner. While in a free market economy, businesses are free to charge what they choose, said Carrington, especially in these difficult economic times, businesses must operate in a principled manner.

Carrington urged the public to take a careful look at the results of the study which are being published in local newspapers, the DLCA website and Facebook page. Knowledge gained through information is critical to consumers organizing themselves to confront business practices that are consumer unfriendly. While the department has an important role to play, consumers must organize to advocate on their own behalf, he said.

The commissioner also added that in light of the continuing downward trend of oil prices, the department is issuing an order requiring wholesalers and retailers of gasoline in the Virgin Islands to submit a written request to the department prior to increasing prices at the pump. The department is also contemplating further action authorized by statute to bring relief to the consumer, said the commissioner.

**PRESS RELEASE**