

**REPEALING CERTAIN LAWS PERTAINING TO THE VIRGIN ISLANDS --
(House of Representatives - January 17, 2007)**

Mr. FORTUÑO. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support passage of H.R. 57,

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sponsored by my colleague and friend representing the U.S. Virgin Islands (Mrs. *Christensen*).

From our perspective, it is noncontroversial legislation. It allows the local government of the Virgin Islands to set their own property taxes. This is consistent with the philosophical stand of the Republicans who believe in letting local governments create their own laws without Federal intervention.

Without this bill, the Virgin Islands would be forced to adhere to an outdated and unworkable Federal Property Tax Code. I urge my colleagues to correct the problem.

I also want to take this moment and congratulate my colleague Congresswoman *Christensen* not only for seeing H.R. 57 pass today, but for her pending rise to the chairmanship of the Insular Affairs Subcommittee. I look forward to serving as the subcommittee's ranking member and addressing the many issues facing the U.S. territories and possessions.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.