



OFFICE OF INSULAR AFFAIRS

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas

**U.S. Virgin Islands' Basil Ottley, Jr., Joins Interior Leadership
Team as Insular Affairs Policy Director**

Brings Wealth of Federal and Territorial Policy Experience

Washington, D.C. (August 10, 2015) – The Department of the Interior's Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Esther Kia'aina today announced the selection of Basil Ottley, Jr., to serve as the new Policy Director at the headquarters of the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) in Washington, D.C. Ottley who also served as OIA's U.S. Virgin Islands Policy Desk Officer in Washington and as the OIA Field Representative in the U.S. Virgin Islands, begins his first day as Policy Director in the Office today.

"I am extremely pleased to have Basil Ottley join our team as Policy Director," said Assistant Secretary Kia'aina. "Basil has a wealth of policy experience at the federal and territorial levels of government. While he has a strong background of service to the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands, he also understands the complexities of issues that are facing the U.S. Pacific territories and freely associated states. It strengthens OIA to have a leadership team that reflects the diversity of the regions that fall under our jurisdiction."

As Policy Director, Ottley will be coordinating OIA and federal policies for the territories of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and administering and overseeing U.S. federal assistance provided to the Freely Associated States of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau under the Compacts of Free Association. Together with OIA's Budget and Technical Assistance Directors, they are responsible for a budget of over \$650 million dollars for the insular areas.

During his previous tenure at the Office of Insular Affairs, Ottley was instrumental in linking OIA's initiatives to address unsustainable energy cost in the insular areas with the U.S.

Department of Energy's international partnership, Energy Development in Island Nations (EDIN). This linkage has fostered the development of significant public policy and the investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. He also served as a special advisor to the U.S. Department of State on issues involving Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands that were before the United Nations. Ottley joined the Office of Insular Affairs in 2008 as the Virgin Islands Desk Officer, and later accepted the assignment of the Virgin Islands Field Representative in 2010 when Interior decided to reopen a field office in the territory.

Before joining Interior, Ottley was elected to the 27th Virgin Islands Legislature in November 2006. Ottley identifies his authorship of Act 7027, which required the VI Bureau of Economic Research to develop an economic self-sufficiency standard (living wage), as his most significant accomplishment as a senator. The act was firmly rooted in the principle that the wages paid for an honest day's work should amount to enough for an individual to live a decent and sustainable existence without government assistance or the charity of others.

Ottley earned a Masters of Public Policy with a specialization in International Development from the Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy at Duke University and a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics from the University of the Virgin Islands.

He was born on Puerto Rico, but he was raised in the U.S. Virgin Islands where his maternal and paternal families have resided for generations. Ottley grew up in the historic neighborhood of Savan on St. Thomas, attended and completed the Virgin Islands Montessori School and graduated from Antilles High School. Ottley is married to the former Kirsten Abrahams of St. Croix and they have two daughters, Serafina and Zindzhi.

The Department of the Interior is responsible for coordinating federal policy with respect to the territories of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and administering and overseeing U.S. federal assistance provided to the Freely Associated States of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau under the Compacts of Free Association. The Office of Insular Affairs mission is to foster economic opportunities, promote government efficiency, and improve the quality of life for the people of the insular areas.

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