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## Office of Senator Shawn-Michael Malone

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### **SEN. MALONE, UVI CELL TO HOLD JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE ON TOUR GUIDE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

(Charlotte Amalie, U.S. Virgin Islands, January 18, 2007) Chairman of the Committee on Government Operations and Consumer Protection Senator Shawn-Michael Malone, in conjunction with Debra Stevens of the UVI CELL Program, announced they will be holding a joint press conference on Friday, January 19, 2007 at 2 p.m. at the West Indian Company, Ltd. Dock Welcome Center in Havensight.

“The purpose of this press conference is to further apprise Virgin Islands residents, especially our taxi and tour operators, of the UVI CELL Program’s Taxi & Tour Guide Certification Program. The program properly educates taxi and tour operators about the landmarks, VI culture and other local attributes our islands have to offer. It also offers a customer service component, which is very important. I believe they are our informal ‘tourism ambassadors’. They are often the first and last to greet visitors once they arrive. Therefore, it is important they are well-versed in these areas,” Malone said. He also said, “Many of our Caribbean neighbors have made it a requirement for all in the taxi industry to take a certification class before they can legally accept passengers. I believe taxis who truly care about improving our tourism product will embrace this training.”

Debra Stevens added, “UVI CELL is poised to set the stage for a territorial movement in Virgin Islands tourism and we’re expecting a large turnout for the class beginning on Feb. 1, 2007. Space is limited and anyone interested in becoming a Certified Tour Guide is encouraged to register as soon as possible. Students who complete the training and pass the exam receive a bright yellow numbered decal verifying certification. Responsible, accurate tourism begins when tour guides are provided with the educational tools and resources they need to be successful.”

“I want to publicly thank the UVI CELL Program for their dedication to improving our tourism product, such as the GIA Program has done. As a Senator, I will do my part to assist and make the program even more attractive to all our taxi and tour operators,” Malone concluded. To register for the class, contact UVI CELL at 693-1100 or visit the <http://cell.uvi.edu>.

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