



**WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF T-MOBILE
BEFORE THE 35TH LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION, & TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

October 3, 2023

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, members of the 35th Legislature's Committee on Housing, Transportation & Telecommunications, Senators, legislative staff, ladies and gentlemen. T-Mobile appreciates the opportunity to again appear before this Committee to discuss the current status and the future of telecommunications in the Territory as well as other topics and is disappointed that it cannot appear live at the hearing due to a scheduling conflict. T-Mobile provides the following written testimony to this honorable Committee outlining T-Mobile's services and operations in the Territory.

As a result of the merger of T-Mobile and Sprint, T-Mobile extended its operation to the Territory, including its mobile network and two stores, located in St Thomas and St Croix. T-Mobile has been working to seamlessly integrate USVI operations into T-Mobile. Last year we successfully launched the T-Mobile brand in the territory, bringing top quality wireless service, competitive rate plans and best in class customer service to Virgin Islanders.

I. The status of 5G and wired broadband implementation and coverage.

T-Mobile offers wireless services for both consumers and businesses through our retail and other channels across the nation, including the USVI. This means that T-Mobile currently has no fixed broadband service and that backhaul for T-Mobile is provided by third party vendors, like for example VIYA.

T-Mobile has the most awarded 5G network in the United States. As per an independent third-party report published by Ookla®, T-Mobile is the fastest overall wireless provider in the U.S., with the most consistent speeds. In addition, T-Mobile ranks #1 for fastest median 5G download speeds, and it has the most available 5G network in the country. This is the experience T-Mobile aims to provide nationwide, and we continue to work tirelessly to offer a similar experience everywhere, including the USVI.

T-Mobile continuously searches for initiatives and opportunities that advance the public interest while investing corporate capital to building and renewing a wireless infrastructure that accommodates the growing consumer demand across the U.S. Virgin Islands. The goal is to improve speeds, coverage, and quality. This investment includes new updates to wireless towers, antennas, and small cells to transmit 5G wireless signals that form the backbone of next-generation networks. Faster, more responsive, and able to connect more devices, 5G will help unlock innovation and investment. 5G can bring a wide range of economic and social benefits to the

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USVI, including creating new jobs in technology and access to health care and education—issues and opportunities that are often underserved in smaller communities.

II. Infrastructure projects and plans for future developments.

As the wireless industry evolves to 5G, older technologies like Sprint's 3G CDMA networks have been retired. T-Mobile retired its UMTS networks to free up resources and spectrum that will help us strengthen our entire network and move all customers to more advanced technologies 4G, and 5G networks providing a more feature-rich experience for customers. As a result of T-Mobile's aggressive campaign to modernize the wireless service in the USVI, the vast majority of T-Mobile customers now have 5G compatible phones. To further maintain connectivity, T-Mobile utilizes 600MHz, low band spectrum technology on its cell sites for better indoor coverage and longer-range outdoor coverage.

In terms of coverage, T-Mobile has expanded coverage in areas that had been identified as having connectivity issues. In just the past few months, T-Mobile has invested in three new cellular sites: St. John West, Blue Mountain, St. Croix and Tutu Wintberg Peak in St. Thomas. T-Mobile also has two more sites to deploy in St. Thomas this year and a new site was approved in St. John, which is expected to be in service by Q2 2024. Additional areas have been identified and our teams are working hard to identify appropriate locations to improve coverage and capacity.

T-Mobile has also invested approximately \$600,000.00 to update and upgrade its retail location on St. Thomas and plans for similar major renovations of its St. Croix retail location in 2023. Both retail locations are set up as Emergency Hubs and are equipped with all necessary items to support store personnel to assist customers after a catastrophic event.

We are happy to report that one hundred percent (100%) of our cell sites have battery backup banks and greater than ninety percent (90%) have generators as redundancy in case of a power outage. T-Mobile is committed to safeguarding the interests of our customers, employees, and stakeholders in the event of an emergency or significant business disruption. As a result, T-Mobile maintains an enterprise-wide Business Continuity Program designed to provide effective responses to a wide variety of disruptive events. Our Response Team is ready to provide cross functional operational and logistical support in the event of an emergency for prompt situational assessment of business impacts, support requests, employee assistance, security measures, materials supply and complementary emergency resources.

T-Mobile considers the full range of natural and man-made hazards that could impact employees, customers, operations, and assets across the country. The Technology Team conducts ongoing site threat assessments, in an effort to identify potential impacts on critical sites and properties to plan for threats accordingly. When it comes to active disasters or outages, T-Mobile has a long history of moving quickly and efficiently in emergency situations to ensure our customers can stay connected when they need it the most. Every day, thousands of T-Mobile associates are always dedicated and focused on keeping our customer connections strong and



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available. We understand the importance of reliable communications and connectivity during critical events.

Even when there's no active disaster or outage, we're working behind the scenes to make sure that our network is operating at optimal levels for ever-changing demands. We regularly test and drill our emergency response teams across the nation to be able to help us stay ahead of any situation that arises.

We maintain an organized and integrated suite of disaster plans and procedures. T-Mobile has made a significant investment in our network's redundancy, reliability, and resiliency. For times when impacts are unavoidable, we have a fleet of rapid response equipment (Generators, COWs & Satellite technology) situated across the country to facilitate expeditious recovery. These multi-layered investments are designed to deliver best-in-class service continuity.

III. Customer Obsessed

At T-Mobile, we are customer obsessed. That's what inspires us and drives us to look for new ways to keep our customers seamlessly connected to what they love. In 2014, we became "The Uncarrier," a business model based on listening to the customer and addressing the industries' pain-points.

Our Customer Service, which we call Care, has been consistently recognized for its superior service by entities such as JD Power. Back in 2018 we launched our Team of Experts, where dedicated, highly-trained individuals handle a wide range of topics, sometimes working with specialists including local retail and engineering, to solve even the most complex issues. T-Mobile has been diligently working with our customers to ensure that they have the most up to date technology and to that end has run numerous promotions that allow customers to upgrade their phones in some cases for free so they can best utilize this technology.

Our approach is customer centric, where Retail stores, Engineering and Care report to the same organization. We can identify customer pain points and provide a resolution faster. Care has tech agents that can evaluate technical-impacting issues and escalate with Engineering resources, as needed. T-Mobile seeks to listen to its customers and monitors any potential issues in its social media network, customer service calls, customer service surveys to immediately address any concerns and proactively provides guidance to customers on how to request assistance from our team of experts when needed.

T-Mobile is not only investing in its infrastructure, but it is also investing in customer service. There is now a T-Mobile certified technician based on St. Thomas to ensure an available and qualified person can address any issues with our system in a timely manner. Further, to support our technician and customers, T-Mobile has established a warehouse on St. Thomas with the necessary parts to repair the system to ensure that any necessary repairs are made quickly and properly to ensure as few service interruption for our customers as possible. Likewise, T-Mobile



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has expanded the customer service hours to start at 6:00 a.m. and stays open and available to our customers until 12:00 a.m. and has engaged bi-lingual customer service representatives to better assist our customers. In regard to customer service, T-Mobile has received only 13 Trouble Tickets in 2023 from the USVI and of those 13 Trouble Tickets, only 6 related to voice and signal issues, which on a per customer basis rates lowest in the region.

IV. Our Employees are the backbone of our company

T-Mobile prides itself on ensuring that our training and benefits packages are unrivaled. We currently have retail employees with benefits packages that can include health insurance, 401k retirement savings plan with employer matching, restricted stock options, stock grants, tuition reimbursement, generous paid time off, including maternal and paternal leave, adoption and surrogacy benefits and additional voluntary benefits.

V. Community Involvement

T-Mobile is a firm believer that local partnerships can provide unmatched opportunities to strengthen our brand and build lasting relationships in their community. The team that supports the USVI market was the recipient of T-Mobile's first Difference Maker Award as the top performing market, earning funds to be invested in charitable organizations or project-based charitable efforts in their local community.

As part of this award, **My Brother's Workshop**, a highly respected local non-profit organization established in 2007 to bring hope, healing and purpose to at-risk youth in the USVI through a holistic approach of mentorship, education, counseling, on-the-job training and job placement, received a \$10,000 donation from T-Mobile.

We look forward to continuing to work in developing our network and customer base in the Territory and we are open to any questions you may have.



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