

## Testimony Outline re VI Telecommunications Services

Submitted for: St. Croix Government Retirees, Inc. by Douglas E. Canton, Jr.

To: The Committee on Housing, Transportation, and Telecommunication.  
Senator Marvin A. Blyden, Chair  
Senator Marise C. James, Vice-Chair

### Decades of Demonstrated lack of reinvestment:

50,000 customers X \$50\* = \$2.5 million Monthly / \$30 Million Yearly\* •  
(Phone service in particular)

#### Cell Phones Dead Spots / Iffy Spots • Examples:

East End • North Shore  
East End • South Shore  
Frederiksted Waterfront!  
LaValley  
Christiansted +/-  
East Airport Road Intersection  
Morningstar Hill

#### Unexplained Lack of Service:

**System reports** 'Not connected to a network'

at locations (i.e. home) where cell phone use is otherwise routine ...

#### Call Quality Issues:

- Dropped Calls
- Calls develop an echo that makes conversation impossible
- Calls where parties remain connected but can one party can not hear the other even though none of the callers changed location!!!!

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- 911** • Why does 911 does not work consistently among all carriers?  
• Why is 911 not accessible 24 hrs on all carriers?

#### When is 911 going to be addressed?

- Burglary linked to no 911
- Rape linked to no 911
- Murder linked to no 911

Do you have to be well connected for the matter to be addressed?

What good are 1st Responders to you —IK— You Can't Contact them????

No phone (applied but service not installed)

Have a cell phone but no service when you need it?

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### PSC Meeting related info:

VIYA - Duty under their service agreement to provide service  
WHEN, as of the PSC Feb, 2023 meeting,  
over **3000 applicants** were still waiting for service!!!

**3000 X \$50\* = \$150,000 monthly / \$7.5 Million Yearly\*** toward recouping installation costs ...

#### Note:

- \* \$50 is a number for discussion purposes. Some accounts may be less, some may be more.
- \* Business accounts are generally significantly more, so the calculated amounts should be viewed as conservative estimates.
- \* The proliferation of phones to children has not been factored in.

## Decades of Demonstrated lack of reinvestment:

### Power Related Issues:

#### Power outages negatively affect:

- Cell Phone Wireless Service.
  - With one carrier in particular, within 5 to 10 minutes of an outage wireless service degrades to the point where voice calls are possible but any data related services come to a crawl or just do not work.
  - Remote security services monitoring is useless.
  - Remote home Care monitoring is useless.
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#### So where do we go from here.

We have had the real world experience of being without utility provided electricity for 3 or more months after Hurricane Maria. The telecommunications providers generally were similarly impacted. Hurricane season is again around the corner.

After decades of enduring cell phone dead spots, the undermining of public safety they contribute to, and all the other issues discussed earlier, consumers are looking for substance, not promises.

#### Consumers would like to see:

- Telecommunications infrastructure strategy and plans
- Identified funding, including reinvestment by providers and;
- Action on resulting projects
- Reporting Back to the community every 6 months
  - Milestones accomplished
  - Outstanding Issues
  - Projections, including project scheduling adjustments

The community is looking for constructive collaboration between The Executive branch, The Legislature, The Delegate to Congress to bring to bear all possible local and Federal resources and private sector energies to make it happen.