



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

**August 28, 2024**

Good afternoon, 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 update on the status of present infrastructure projects and plans for future developments of telecommunications in the Territory as well as other topics. T-Mobile provides the following written testimony to this honorable Committee outlining T-Mobile's services and operations in the Territory.

T-Mobile extended its operation to the Territory, including its mobile network and two stores, located in St Thomas and St Croix. Virgin Islanders can now experience a nationwide network, award-winning customer service, and enjoy unique benefits seamlessly, along with career development opportunities in a company that prioritizes equity, diversity and inclusion at the core of its values and organizational culture.

**I. Products and services portfolio and network blueprint in the USVI.**

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.

T-Mobile is also pleased to announce that, following an ongoing analysis and integrated effort to enhance the presence in the USVI, T-Mobile for Government was recently launched. This initiative extends T-Mobile's portfolio of products and services to the territory's government branches and agencies, providing additional communication, connectivity, and efficiency alternatives. These offerings are similar to those currently available to business entities, along with all the necessary support infrastructure available to this sector.

T-Mobile has the most awarded 5G network in the United States. As per independent third-party report published by Ookla® and Opensignal®, 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 continue to work tirelessly to offer a similar experience everywhere, including the USVI.

**II. Status of present infrastructure projects and plans for future developments.**



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T-Mobile continues to pursue initiatives and opportunities that advance the public interest while continuing to invest private capital to build and upgrade wireless infrastructure throughout the United States Virgin Islands. Our focus therefore continues to be on enhancing speeds, coverage and quality of the service. These investments include upgrading wireless towers, antennas, small cells that transmit 5G wireless signals that form an essential backbone of the next-generation networks. 5G offers a wide range of social and economic benefits to the USVI, including increased access to education, remote work, public safety and healthcare.

In terms of coverage, T-Mobile has made significant strides in addressing connectivity issues within the territory. During the last quarter of 2023, T-Mobile invested in three new cellular sites: St. John West, Blue Mountain, St. Croix and Tutu Wintberg Peak in St. Thomas. We continue to work on the launch of a new site in St. John, to increase coverage and capacity of our network on the island. T-Mobile continues to identify suitable sites to further improve coverage and capacity and expect to deploy additional sites in St. Thomas during the last months of this year and the first months of 2025.

It is relevant to remark that 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.

A couple of weeks ago, while preparing for the impacts of Tropical Storm Ernesto, T-Mobile participated in the communication channels with the Private Sector and emergency agencies, including the BEOC After Actions Review. We thank the DLCA, for including us and for their constant communication.

### **III. Hiring update and Enhancement to Employee Benefits**

We are pleased to share that our company has recently recruited four new employees—three for our St. Croix store and one for St. Thomas store. These opportunities are part of our ongoing commitment to contributing positively to the local economy and supporting our community.

Additionally, we currently have an open position for a Retail Assistant Manager, reflecting our continued investment in local talent and job creation.

We are also proud to share that T-Mobile has enhanced leave benefits, designed to support our employees and their families:

- **Maternity Leave:** We offer 8 weeks of maternity leave with full salary coverage (100%) to ensure our new mothers have the time and resources they need during this important period.
- **Paid Parental Leave:** To promote family bonding, we provide 4 weeks of paid parental leave with full salary coverage (100%) for both mothers and fathers.





- **Paid Family Leave:** Our new Paid Family Leave benefit provides up to 3 weeks of partial income replacement (75% of base pay) for employees who need to take time off to care for a family member with a serious medical condition. This benefit includes a one-week elimination period, totaling 4 weeks of leave.
- **Fertility and Family Building Expense Reimbursement Program:** T-Mobile has a unique offering of infertility medical benefits for its eligible T-Mobile employees and their eligible partners, including LGBTQ+ (individuals and couples), and single-parents-by-choice, enrolled in the T-Mobile Medical Plan. T-Mobile also offers financial support to employees pursuing adoption or surrogacy processes.

These enhancements reflect our commitment to supporting our employees and their families, contributing to the well-being and stability of our community.

#### **IV. Service hubs infrastructure**

T-Mobile invested approximately thousands to update and upgrade the St. Croix retail location, similar to the renovations made to the St. Thomas retail location in 2023. Remodeling began in the first week of March and was successfully completed by June 2024. To ensure continuity of our services during the construction period, a trailer store capable of providing all on-site services, was imported and the quality of service that T-Mobile strive to provide to its customers was not interrupted. Both retail locations are now set up as Emergency Hubs, equipped with necessary items to support store personnel and to assist customers after a catastrophic event.

#### **V. Issues and challenges regarding coordination between telecommunications providers and government agencies.**

T-Mobile continues to establish its presence and brand in the Virgin Islands of United States and would like to acknowledge the assistance received from government agencies and local functionaries whenever needed.

#### **VI. Planning and utilization of federal broadband funding.**

T-Mobile has engaged with the USVI Office of Management and Budget to explore the possibility of using federal broadband funding (“BEAD”) for wireless networks, focusing on Mobility, Resiliency, Distributed Antenna Systems, and Affordability. Although T-Mobile did not participate in previous funding opportunities due to the timing of our service introduction in the USVI, we were eager to utilize new funding to deploy additional sites and enhance our network. However, T-Mobile was informed that the federal broadband funding would not be allocated for mobile wireless networks in the USVI. This funding could have supported infrastructure projects to improve resiliency and promote scalable networks that enhance mobile services.

