



**WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF T-MOBILE
BEFORE THE 36TH LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION, & TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

April 23, 2025

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, members of the 36th Legislature's Committee on Housing, Transportation & Telecommunications, Senators, legislative staff, and members of the public. T-Mobile appreciates the opportunity to appear once again before this distinguished Committee to provide an update on the state of telecommunications in the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI), highlight the progress made over the past year, and share our forward-looking priorities for supporting connectivity, resilience, and innovation in the Territory.

I. Status of Infrastructure Projects and Future Development Plans

T-Mobile continues to invest private capital to expand and strengthen its wireless infrastructure across the U.S. Virgin Islands, with a focused commitment to network resiliency, enhanced coverage, and improve service performance.

In 2024, we completed the full remodeling of our St. Croix retail location, following similar upgrades to our St. Thomas location in 2023. Both locations are now designated Emergency Hubs, fully equipped to support customers and community members, during and after natural disasters or other critical events.

On the network side, T-Mobile successfully added new cellular sites in St. John West, Blue Mountain (St. Croix), and Tutu Winberg Peak (St. Thomas). These deployments form part of our broader 5G expansion strategy aimed at eliminating coverage gaps and enhancing wireless performance across the USVI.

Looking ahead, T-Mobile plans to initiate additional network upgrades beginning in Q4 2025, and to deploy new cellular sites starting in 2026, with potential extensions through 2027. These plans are contingent upon several external factors, including regulatory approvals, tower structural assessments, customs processes, fiber delivery, and permanent power availability. In parallel, we are advancing efforts to enhance battery backup and hardening of existing infrastructure through 2026 to ensure continuity of operations during power outages or other disruptions.

II. Federal Broadband Funding and the BEAD Program

T-Mobile has engaged in constructive discussions with the U.S. Virgin Islands Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regarding the interest in aligning our network expansion initiatives with the Broadband Equity Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program. As part of this



www.t-mobile.com



engagement, T-Mobile proposed a plan centered on enhancing wireless resiliency, mobility, and coverage, particularly in areas where these capabilities are critical to ensure service continuity during emergencies and meet evolving connectivity needs.

While T-Mobile appreciates the collaborative dialogue and recognition of the proposal's merits, we understand, based on OMB's consultation with its NTIA's federal program officer, that under the Territory's current implementation strategy, this type of wireless deployment activity is not eligible for BEAD funding. As communicated to us, this approach reflects the commitments made by the Territory under BEAD guidelines and its fiber-first investment framework, developed in coordination with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

Although BEAD guidance at the federal level allows for the inclusion of non-fiber technologies under certain conditions, we recognize that each jurisdiction has discretion in determining the most appropriate path to meet its goals. In the case of USVI, that strategy currently prioritizes non-deployment fund uses.

T-Mobile continues to invest private capital to advance network resiliency and expand mobile broadband access in the Territory. Our approach is designed to complement other infrastructure efforts by providing reliable wireless coverage that supports public safety, economic mobility, and digital inclusion. We look forward to continued collaboration with the OMB, NTIA, and other stakeholders to explore how future funding opportunities may support integrated solutions that include wireless technologies, particularly in geographies where flexibility and speed of deployment are key to ensuring universal connectivity.

III. Coordination with Government Agencies

T-Mobile appreciates the continued collaboration with local government agencies and recognizes the important work underway to improve permitting and infrastructure coordination. While we often rely on trusted partners and vendors to navigate these processes, we note that recurring delays, particularly related to tower assessments, DNPR permitting, customs clearance, and power connection, have historically impacted project timelines.

To support more efficient planning and execution of telecommunications infrastructure, we respectfully recommend the consideration of Service Level Agreements (SLAs) or similar mechanism to define expected turnaround times for permitting and utility requests related to network development.

IV. Number Portability and Inter-Carrier Coordination

T-Mobile fully complies with federal regulations regarding number portability and supports efforts that facilitate smooth and timely transitions between providers. T-Mobile welcomes continued cooperation among carriers and regulatory bodies to ensure that number





portability supports consumer choice, competition, and continuity of service without technical or administrative barriers.

V. Customer Experience and Operational Updates

As part of our commitment to delivering best-in-class service in the USVI, T-Mobile recently transitioned customer service call routing for the Territory from a third-party vendor to an internal Customer Experience Center (CEC). This strategic shift enables us to provide more personalized, responsive, and regionally aligned support, backed by enhanced employee training. It also strengthens our ability to resolve issues quickly and build stronger relationships with our USVI customer base.

While T-Mobile continues to promote the convenience and efficiency of digital self-service tools, in-store engagement remains a cornerstone of our customer experience model in the Territory. Both our St. Thomas and St. Croix retail locations have seen consistent quarter over quarter increases in foot traffic, reflecting the ongoing importance of in-person service in a multi-channel environment that blends digital innovation with human connection.

These efforts, alongside our localized service enhancements, retail presence, and network improvements, are bearing tangible results; T-Mobile recorded outstanding churn rate numbers last year, the best since its launch in the territory. This milestone reflects the strong customer satisfaction, increased loyalty, and growing confidence in our ability to deliver reliable and value-driven services to Virgin Islands residents.

VI. Strengthening Digital Progress

T-Mobile is proud of the tangible progress made in the U.S. Virgin Islands over the past year and remains deeply committed to providing reliable, innovative, and inclusive telecommunications solutions that meet the evolving needs of residents, businesses, and public institutions.

We thank this Committee for the opportunity to present this testimony and for its continued leadership in advancing the Territory's digital future. We welcome your questions and look forward to our ongoing partnership in building a more connected, resilient, and equitable Virgin Islands.

