

Senate Subcommittee on Communications, Technology and the Internet

Field Hearing – August 19, 2013 – Little Rock, AR

Testimony of David Russell, Vice President – External Affairs, Verizon, South Area

Chairman Pryor, thank you for the opportunity to testify here today. My name is David Russell – Vice President of External Affairs for Verizon’s South Area. I’m here today representing the President of our South Central Region for Verizon Wireless, Dean Taylor, who had a conflict and was unable to attend. Dean’s region includes the entire states of Arkansas and Oklahoma, as well as West TN and North MS.

Verizon Wireless acquired Alltel Corporation in 2009 and our region headquarters are located where Alltel’s corporate headquarters previously were located here in Little Rock.

Verizon has invested in Arkansas in terms of advancing its network, employment and community support.

Network

Verizon was the first wireless carrier to bring 4G LTE to Arkansas. I would like to note that 4G and 4G LTE are different technologies; LTE (Long Term Evolution) is new technology and is viewed industry-wide as the global standard....the future of wireless technology.

Verizon launched 4G LTE in several cities in Northwest Arkansas in July of 2011; we were the only provider of 4G LTE in Arkansas for about the next year. We continued our aggressive rollout of 4G LTE across Arkansas in cities big and small – and announced the “substantial completion” of our 4G LTE coverage across Arkansas in June of this year.

Verizon’s wireless network covers almost 97% of Arkansas’ population and more than 99% of that network is also covered by our 4G LTE network.

4G LTE is beneficial to customers because its speed allows them a real-time experience while they’re mobile. They can upload, download, use the internet, watch videos – all at similar speeds as if they were connected by a copper landline. Verizon’s network is continuously recognized by JD Power, Root Metrics and other third parties as the most reliable in the country, and we continue to provide that reliability to our customers in Arkansas and across the nation.

Network Investment

On average, Verizon invests more than \$6 billion in its network nationally.

This year in Arkansas, we will invest around \$100 million in our wireless network to reinforce that reliability and redundancy.

Business

What does this investment mean for business or government?

- In business it means companies in any industry can be mobile, they can monitor their fleet in real time.
- First responders can provide doctors with “live video triage” while a patient is en route to the hospital.
- Police officers can access any department or state data they need from their units, and file reports from the scene.
- Live monitoring of Arkansas’ crop fields lets a farmer know when the soil needs nutrients or the crops need watering.
- As schools integrate new technology like digital tablets into the classroom, teachers rely on the connectivity and speed of LTE to support a child’s learning experience and keep them connected. Just last week I was up in north Arkansas to present the Cotter School District – in a rural and underserved area of Arkansas - with a Verizon Foundation grant for \$50,000 that will support 300 students in adapting broadband technologies to enhance Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education. Cotter is rural – but these kids aren’t missing an opportunity to learn using technology because they’re connected on 4G LTE.

Workforce

Verizon employs a diverse workforce across Arkansas, mostly in sales, but in a number of other fields. For example, Little Rock is home to a Customer Service Center that will be hiring several hundred positions this year – and we are hiring employees in other professional positions as well – contributing to Arkansas’ economy statewide.

Verizon is a Fortune 16 company that is a good corporate citizen in Arkansas – bringing new and reliable technology to the state, supporting businesses large and small, and enhancing Arkansas’ economy. Senator Pryor, we appreciate your continued leadership on many important issues to our industry, including your cosponsorship of an amendment earlier this year that would have extended the moratorium on taxation of the Internet.