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Poor Working Conditions, Unmaintained Equipment, Pay Disparity and More: Nurses on St. Croix Take to the Streets in Protest

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Ernice Gilbert **May 13, 2022**

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Nurses protested poor working conditions, disparity in pay and unmaintained equipment. By. REEMY-REEMZ PHOTOGRAPHY/VICONSORTIUM

A large group of nurses supported by concerned residents and a number of lawmakers and political candidates, protested from the Basin Triangle all the way to Government House in Christiansted on Thursday, an effort aimed at bringing attention to what the nurses have said are poor working conditions, equipment that lack maintenance, among other issues.

The nurses also spoke up against what they believe is an unfair situation where traveling nurses make as much as four times more than their local counterparts, even as local nurses are oftentimes

training those traveling nurses to come up to speed locally.

The action was the second protest by an important segment of the community on St. Croix during an election year in less than a month. On April 20, [teachers gathered at Gov't House complaining about a myriad of issues.](#)

"You can't just keep bringing travel nurses and tell us, 'oh, we can't give you a raise because that's not sustainable'. But you can stand next to somebody making four times what you make that you have to teach, that you have to continue to make sure they're doing the right thing. But they don't have money for local people. Local, loyal people. A majority of us have been here since [Hurricane] Maria," said nurse Michèle Montoya during the protest.

"Do not let them tell you that nursing and healthcare is at the forefront on their thoughts because they have left us behind," said another nurse. "... We have been open to coming to the table, we have requested to talk about our bonuses, we have pushed for nursing staff with no answers. We deserve better, our community deserves better."

Below a video of the event.