

Public Comment to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

I am writing to express my concern about the growing number of high-demand data center proposals and their impacts on Pennsylvania's utility systems, communities, and consumers.

These facilities require extraordinary amounts of electricity and water to power servers and maintain constant cooling. This level of electricity consumption directly competes with local residential, municipal, and industrial needs, placing strain on finite power, water, and land resources that communities rely on every day.

The additional demand created by data centers risks overburdening local power grids and utilities, increasing infrastructure costs that are often passed on to ratepayers. In multiple states, such as Michigan, Virginia, and Nebraska, similar projects have contributed to higher energy rates for consumers while providing limited local job creation once construction is complete. This raises serious questions about who truly benefits from these developments and who bears the long-term costs.

There are also significant quality-of-life and environmental concerns. Constant server and cooling fan operations can generate persistent noise pollution for nearby residents. Backup diesel generators and increased reliance on fossil fuel-based power plants contribute to air pollution and public health risks. Perhaps most troubling, these projects can prolong the operation of fossil fuel plants, directly undermining Pennsylvania's renewable energy goals and climate commitments.

Finally, many companies proposing these projects have not been sufficiently transparent about their environmental impacts, utility demands, or long-term risks. Communities and regulators deserve full, upfront disclosure to make informed decisions that protect the public interest.

I urge the Commission to apply rigorous scrutiny to data center proposals, prioritize consumer protections, require full transparency, and carefully evaluate whether these projects align with Pennsylvania's energy, environmental, and equity goals. The long-term health, affordability, and sustainability of our utility systems must come before short-term corporate interests.

Thank you for considering my comment and for your role in safeguarding Pennsylvania's residents and resources.

Sincerely,

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