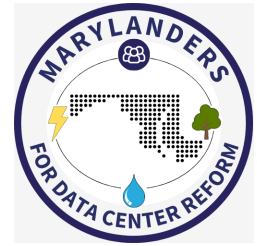


## **HB1411- FAVORABLE**

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HB1411- Data Center Planning and Transparency Act

Environment and Transportation Committee  
March 10, 2026

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

On behalf of Marylanders for Data Center Reform, I urge a favorable report on HB1411, Data Center Planning and Transparency Act.

Marylanders for Data Center Reform, created by Nature Forward, represents 50 Maryland social and environmental organizations, who are deeply concerned about the impacts of hyperscale data center development on ratepayers, water and air quality, and land use decisions. We strongly support HB1411, which requires data center development to disclose their impacts on Maryland's communities and its environments. Equally as important, it requires local governments to publicly report and exercise responsible planning needed to manage rapid growth from data center development.

This bill is common sense legislation. Currently, the State does not publicly track or report hyperscale data centers' locations or impacts on the environment and communities. This bill requires new large-scale data center developers to disclose critical logistical information to localities and the State ahead of development, and for the State to make that information publicly available. It also requires counties to take meaningful actions to increase public awareness about hyperscale data centers sited in communities. Finally, it requires all data center owners and operators to publicly disclose basic information about its operations that could have long lasting public health impacts for the communities surrounding them.

Microsoft, Google, Amazon, and Meta are the largest data center operators in the state. These corporations make a concerted effort to disguise their applications to build data centers through nondisclosure agreements. We support this bill because it requires owners and operators of data centers to submit publicly available disclosure reports containing information about their location, size, energy usage, emissions from fuel sources, water sources and usage for cooling, noise levels, and more. Currently, this information is only available when activists utilize the Public Information Act. To make matters worse, the state does not publicly track or report where new hyperscale data centers are being proposed. This ongoing lack of transparency presents a number of challenges for communities who are often blindsided by these developments.

Another important aspect of this bill is that counties and municipalities will be required to develop plans for large-scale data center development. Developing these plans before counties are approached with

proposals, allows local governments with limited resources, staff, and subject matter expertise to prepare and plan ahead of time for these large scale developments. It also allows them time to better understand and implement obscure and discrete laws that permit siting for data centers.

Having robust county plans in place saves time, administrative costs, and allows counties to gather input from informed experts to plan for development. Baltimore County is a prime example of what could happen when counties have not taken the time to properly plan and prepare. Just this year, elected officials moved to reverse a zoning law that designated data centers to be built in underserved and overburdened communities. As a result, Baltimore County has paused its plans to build hyperscale data centers until they fully understand existing regulations and whether or not data centers should move forward in the county<sup>1</sup>. The County is now formulating a process to develop a plan for data centers. Frederick, Prince George's, Montgomery, and Carroll Counties are also doing the same.

Marylanders deserve to know what is happening in their backyards and so do you. This bill increases awareness and public transparency for communities and allows local and state officials to make the best policy decisions that best protects communities by understanding the full scope of what it means to build a data center in their districts. We strongly support this bill, and its measure to increase transparency through public input processes, disclosure reporting, and information sharing. Marylanders for Data Center Reform urges a favorable report for this bill.

Respectfully,

American Descendants of Slavery Advocacy Foundation, Maryland Chapter  
Cheveley Green Infrastructure Committee  
Environmental Justice Action Team  
Friends of Lower Beaverdam Creek  
Food and Water Watch  
Climate Communications Coalition  
Center for Progressive Reform  
Howard County Climate Action  
Maryland League of Conservation Voters  
National Parks Conservation Association  
Nature Forward  
Potomac Conservancy  
Waterkeepers Chesapeake

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.baltimoresun.com/2026/02/06/baltimore-county-data-center/>