

# **HB0120 - Maryland Legal Aid- Favorable.pdf**

Uploaded by: Meaghan McDermott

Position: FAV



### House Bill 0120

Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers – Co- Location and Generation Contingency

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation Committee

Hearing on February 3, 2026

**Position: FAVORABLE**

*Maryland Legal Aid submits its testimony on HB0120 at the request of Delegate Fisher.*

Maryland Legal Aid (“MLA”) is a non-profit law firm that provides free legal services to the State’s low-income and vulnerable residents. Our 12 offices serve residents in each of Maryland’s 24 jurisdictions and handle a range of civil legal matters, including housing, family law, public benefits, bankruptcy and other debt collection matters, and workers’ rights.

**MLA urges a favorable report on HB0120. HB0120 protects Maryland ratepayers, especially those who are low-income and vulnerable, from the negative impacts of an already overburdened power grid.**

On December 16, 2025, the Maryland General Assembly overrode the Governor’s veto of the [Data Center Impact Analysis and Report](#). As a result, the Department of the Environment, the Maryland Energy Administration and the University of Maryland School of Business will conduct and generate a report on the impacts of data center development in Maryland. Among other requirements, this report must assess the energy requirements of data centers and the impact on utility costs paid by Maryland ratepayers. While Marylanders await the results of the report, it is important that new construction does not further burden the power grid.

HB0120 requires any new data centers to be co-located with current or to-be-built power generators. These power generators must offset the data centers’ power usage. Without co-location requirements, new data centers will only continue to strain Maryland’s already burdened power grid. That burden will be passed on to Marylanders in the form of increased rates.

Maryland’s utility rates are already at an all-time high. These rates are not sustainable for anyone, let alone MLA’s clients, who are already living paycheck to paycheck, making impossible decisions about whether to pay a utility bill, purchase groceries, or write a rent check. The impact of these decisions is real; MLA sees it play out every week in eviction court. HB0120 creates common sense, simple contingency requirements to address the inevitable costs associated with data center loads and increased energy consumption.

Maryland Legal Aid urges a **favorable report on HB0120**. If you have any questions, contact Meaghan McDermott, Advocacy Director for Community Lawyering and Development ([mmcdermott@mdl原因.org](mailto:mmcdermott@mdl原因.org)) or DiNesha Rucker, Staff Attorney ([drucker@mdl原因.org](mailto:drucker@mdl原因.org)).

# **2026 - HB0120 - Moratorium on Construction of New**

Uploaded by: Patrick Crump

Position: FAV



## **TESTIMONY FOR HB 0120**

### **Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers – Co-Location and Generation Contingency**

#### **Environment and Transportation Committee**

#### **FAVORABLE**

TO: Delegate Marc Korman, Chair; Delegate Michele Guyton, Vice-Chair; and the Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee; and

FROM: Patrick Crump, member of the Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network

DATE: January 30, 2026

The Episcopal Church believes that global climate change is not only a scientific concern or environmental issue, but what the United Nations calls "the defining issue of our time... at a defining moment" (UN Secretary General, September 10, 2018). Our Church has passed numerous resolutions calling for the phase-out of fossil fuels and a responsible transition toward a clean energy future in order to protect God's creation. And the Church is committed to environmental justice, with a specific concern for reducing economic impacts on lower-income communities.

The scale of data center energy usage is enormous. PJM Interconnection, the large regional grid operator covering Maryland as well as 12 other Mid-Atlantic states and DC, is projecting more than five gigawatts (GW) of new electricity demand every year between now and 2030. To meet this surge in demand, much of the recent policy focus has been on bringing new natural gas-fired generation to market, which presents a serious challenge to Maryland's clean energy policies. In the short term, utilities in the Mid-Atlantic region are predicting a substantially higher chance of rolling blackouts by the end of the decade as new data center loads exceed the available electricity supply. And, under current policies, all electricity ratepayers share the costs of system expansion and maintenance. The data center boom thus threatens Maryland's clean energy transition, energy affordability, and grid reliability.

The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland urges the Environment and Transportation Committee to support the Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers, and to put in place regulations to protect ratepayers and Maryland's clean energy targets.

The Diocese of Maryland requests a favorable report.

*The Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network (MEPPN) is a ministry of The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland, The Episcopal Diocese of Washington, and The Delaware-Maryland Synod ELCA*

# **MD HB 120\_ Moratorium on Construction of New Data**

Uploaded by: Trudy Tibbals

Position: FAV

**MD HB 120: Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers - Co-Location and Generation Contingency:** Please **VOTE IN SUPPORT** of this bill.

Dear Environment & Transportation Committee Chair and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully write in **strong support of HB 120 – Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers – Co-Location and Generation Contingency.**

Maryland is at a critical crossroads when it comes to **energy reliability, land use, environmental protection, and community impact.** **HB 120** takes a prudent and responsible pause to ensure that the rapid expansion of large-scale data centers does not outpace our ability to provide reliable power, protect residents, or plan sustainably.

Data centers are extraordinarily **energy- and water-intensive**, and their unchecked growth places enormous strain on the electric grid, local infrastructure, and surrounding communities. Without clear requirements for **co-location with generation and firm contingency planning**, Maryland risks increased energy costs for residents, reduced grid reliability, and greater dependence on fossil fuel “quick fixes” when demand spikes.

**HB 120** is not anti-technology or anti-business. Rather, it is **pro-planning, pro-responsibility, and pro-community.** A temporary moratorium allows the state to ensure that new data centers are built **only when adequate generation capacity is available**, preventing harm to existing ratepayers and avoiding emergency infrastructure decisions that disproportionately burden working families.

Just as importantly, this bill protects **local communities** from rushed siting decisions that can affect land use, water resources, noise levels, and environmental quality for decades to come. Residents deserve transparency and thoughtful planning—not after-the-fact mitigation once the damage is done.

**HB 120** sends a clear message that Maryland values **smart growth over reckless growth**, and that large corporate infrastructure projects must meet clear standards before moving forward. Taking the time to get this right now will save taxpayers, ratepayers, and communities from far greater costs later.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to **vote in support of HB 120.**

Thank you for your time, your consideration, and your commitment to responsible stewardship of Maryland’s resources and communities.

Sincerely,  
Trudy Tibbals



**SPDGJH\_HB120Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Andrew Eneim

Position: FWA

**Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers – Co–Location and Generation Contingency / HB 120**

2026 Maryland Legislative Session

Official Testimony - Science Policy and Diplomacy Group (SPDG) at Johns Hopkins\*

Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT

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To the Environment and Transportation Committee,

SPDG at JHU **SUPPORTS HB 120 WITH AMENDMENTS**. HB 120 would place a moratorium on the approval of data centers unless they are able to provide their own power through co-location with a gas or nuclear energy production plant.

The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to greatly improve the lives of everyday Marylanders. This advancement, however, cannot come at the expense of Maryland residents. Data centers as they are being proposed across the state could do serious damage to our communities, our environment, and public health.

Data centers that are used to power AI are increasing in size. A hyperscale data center using up to 1 gigawatt of energy consumes the same amount of energy as 1.8 million individuals<sup>1</sup>. A growing number of hyperscale data centers of over 250 megawatts (equivalent to ¼ gigawatts) are being proposed across the U.S. and that growth is projected to continue<sup>2</sup>. This growing demand for energy could greatly impact the ability of our energy grid operators to maintain stability and service<sup>3</sup>. With energy costs already rising rapidly for Marylanders, failing to reign in the AI industry could further erode the quality of life of taxpayers in the state. According to a UBMC poll published in December, 65% of Maryland residents believe the cost of household energy bills should be a “high priority” for the Maryland state government<sup>4</sup>.

HB 120 attempts to address the energy production problems with a contingency that would lift the moratorium on data center construction in the case that the Maryland General Assembly requires co-location of data centers with new or existing natural gas, nuclear power, or small module reactor generation facilities. However, there is insufficient data to suggest the co-location would be sufficient for the needs of a data center operating at peak capacity, especially as the size of hyperscale data centers continues to grow, increasing total energy demand<sup>2</sup>. Co-location also fails to recognize the fresh water resources that will have to be diverted to data centers to be used for cooling. Even today, large data centers can consume up to 5 million gallons of water per day, equivalent to the usage of a town of up to 50,000 people<sup>5</sup>. A moratorium exception for co-location misses the mark, and it must be removed while the General Assembly considers the many regulations that will be needed if we are going to ensure data centers are a benefit to Maryland taxpayers, not a detriment.

\*Views in this testimony are solely those of the individuals in SPDG and do not represent that of Johns Hopkins or its affiliates.

On top of the aforementioned problems, building a hyperscale data center that is co-located with a fossil-fuel or other non-renewable energy facility has impacts that extend far beyond utilities like electricity and water. Analysts estimate that the additional fossil-fuel demand driven by these data centers will result in more than \$1.5 trillion of climate damages<sup>6</sup>. This is largely due to the significant amount of harmful pollution they release, which poses a serious threat to public health. In the communities near the data centers currently operating in Northern Virginia, researchers project roughly 14,000 additional cases of asthma symptoms and 13-19 premature deaths due to increased air pollutant emissions, adding \$54 million in annual public health burden across six Maryland counties<sup>7</sup>. These data suggest that continuing to build these data centers, even with co-located power sources, will negatively impact both Maryland residents and the environment they depend on. Further, since data centers are often built in rural and low-income areas, these impacts are likely to disproportionately affect some of Maryland's most vulnerable populations.

Marylanders are aware of the dangers that these hyperscale data centers pose and have voiced their opposition. According to a UMBC poll published in November, 51% of Marylanders are "very" concerned about the environmental impact of AI data centers<sup>8</sup>. In Prince George's County, a proposal to construct a hyperscale data center at the site of the Landover Mall was met with community outrage, contributing to local leadership placing a moratorium on building any data centers within the county<sup>9</sup>. In both Frederick County and Baltimore County, similar construction proposals have faced strong backlash from residents who hope to stop these projects<sup>10,11</sup>. These examples demonstrate widespread support from Maryland constituents for state-wide legislation that completely pauses the creation of more data centers in their state.

Maryland should embrace technological innovation, including AI, but it must do so in a way that adequately protects its residents. HB 120 recognizes some of the risks associated with hyperscale data centers, but the co-location exception neglects to consider many risk factors that could harm Marylanders across the state. A simple, statewide moratorium on all data center construction is the best way to ensure that the General Assembly can have the time it needs to consider all the risks posed by data centers and build a comprehensive set of regulations in line with supporting Maryland taxpayers.

**The Science Policy and Diplomacy Group @ Johns Hopkins urges a FAVORABLE report WITH AMENDMENTS on HB120.**

Sincerely,

Andrew S Eneim

Science Policy and Diplomacy Group at Johns Hopkins  
jhscipolgroup@gmail.com / aneneim@gmail.com

\*Views in this testimony are solely those of the individuals in SPDG and do not represent that of Johns Hopkins or its affiliates.

## References

- (1) <https://www.cnn.com/2024/11/23/data-centers-powering-ai-could-use-more-electricity-than-entire-cities.html>
- (2) <https://www.bcg.com/publications/2025/breaking-barriers-data-center-growth>
- (3) <https://twinmind.com/summaries/how-ai-is-ruining-the-electric-grid-3-ho-aknc8>
- (4) <https://politics.umbc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/778/2025/12/UMBC-Poll-Part-1-Mon-Dec-15.pdf>
- (5) <https://www.eesi.org/articles/view/data-centers-and-water-consumption>
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- (7) <https://arxiv.org/abs/2412.06288>
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- (9) [https://www.thesentinel.com/communities/landover-community-continues-fighting-data-center-amidst-temporary-pause/article\\_a7b69097-efb4-4e7c-9a1a-e66a6b83857d.html](https://www.thesentinel.com/communities/landover-community-continues-fighting-data-center-amidst-temporary-pause/article_a7b69097-efb4-4e7c-9a1a-e66a6b83857d.html)
- (10) <https://foxbaltimore.com/news/local/frederick-county-residents-push-referendum-data-center-zoning-plan-passes>
- (11) <https://www.thebanner.com/politics-power/local-government/baltimore-county-data-centers-pat-young-MAQJTMWHGFGX/JL6FK3CROJTIUE/>

\*Views in this testimony are solely those of the individuals in SPDG and do not represent that of Johns Hopkins or its affiliates.

# **HB120 - Data Center Moratorium - FWA.docx.pdf**

Uploaded by: Benjamin Ford

Position: FWA



## **FWA for HB120**

1/30/2026

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Honorable Members of the E&T Committee:

My name is Benjamin Ford, and I serve as the Miles-Wye Riverkeeper for ShoreRivers. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of House Bill 120.

ShoreRivers works to protect Maryland's Eastern Shore waterways through science-based advocacy, restoration, education, and engagement. We strongly support the intent behind HB 120 to pause and reassess hyperscale data center development in Maryland. The rapid expansion of these facilities raises serious concerns about impacts on ratepayers, water resources, air quality, and land use. A temporary moratorium, coupled with thoughtful planning, is both reasonable and necessary.

However, as currently written, HB 120 links that moratorium to a contingency that effectively encourages the co-location of data centers with new or expanded natural gas generation. This approach risks becoming a backdoor pathway for expanding some of the most carbon-intensive and polluting forms of energy generation in the state.

Natural gas facilities, along with extensive diesel backup systems commonly associated with data centers, impose well-documented public health and environmental costs. These impacts fall disproportionately on surrounding communities and contribute to respiratory illness, degraded air quality, and long-term healthcare expenses. Expanding fossil fuel infrastructure in service of private data center demand undermines Maryland's climate commitments and public health goals.

Moreover, this approach is unlikely to deliver meaningful relief to average Maryland ratepayers. Power generated to serve colocated data centers is typically dedicated to private, high-demand users rather than integrated into the broader grid. As a result, residential and small-business customers are left to shoulder rising infrastructure and transmission costs without receiving corresponding reliability benefits.

At the same time, cleaner and more cost-effective alternatives remain underutilized. Utility-scale solar, battery storage, demand response, and grid modernization projects are among the fastest and least expensive ways to increase capacity and reliability. Many such projects are already positioned for development but face regulatory and market barriers. HB 120 does not prioritize or require consideration of these solutions.

If Maryland's goals are to strengthen grid reliability, control costs, and reduce emissions, then policies should focus on accelerating carbon-neutral and low-impact generation, not expanding fossil fuel dependence. Linking data center development to new gas infrastructure moves the state in the opposite direction.

### **ShoreRivers**

Isabel Hardesty, Executive Director  
Annie Richards, Chester Riverkeeper | Matt Pluta, Choptank Riverkeeper  
Ben Ford, Miles Wye Riverkeeper | Zack Kelleher, Sassafras Riverkeeper

For these reasons, ShoreRivers supports HB 120 **with amendments** that would:

- Remove incentives for new or expanded fossil fuel generation;
- Prioritize carbon-neutral and renewable co-generation options;
- Require serious evaluation of solar, storage, and demand-side solutions; and
- Establish a clear, time-limited planning process focused on minimizing environmental and ratepayer impacts.

With these changes, HB 120 could serve as a meaningful tool for responsible energy and land-use planning. Without them, the bill risks locking Maryland into expensive, polluting infrastructure that does little to serve the broader public.

Maryland has invested heavily in Chesapeake Bay restoration, climate resilience, and public health protection. Allowing hyperscale development to drive new fossil fuel expansion undermines that investment. We have an opportunity now to choose a smarter path—one that supports innovation without sacrificing our communities and natural resources.

On behalf of ShoreRivers and the communities we serve, I respectfully urge the Committee to issue a **favorable report with amendments** on HB 120. **Without amendments, we will oppose this bill.** Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



**Benjamin Ford, Miles-Wye Riverkeeper**, on behalf of ShoreRivers

# **HB120 Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Brandon Russell

Position: FWA

January 30, 2026

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Distinguished Committee Members,

I'm writing in support, with amendments, of House Bill 120 - Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers, and urge the committee to issue a **favorable report** on this legislation **with amendments**.

Residents across Maryland are voicing their concerns about data center development driving up energy costs for consumers. Jurisdictions considering data center development to increase local revenue have been met with concerns about the environment and quality of life as well.

Clear evidence exists that as data centers have multiplied in Northern Virginia the PJM grid capacity auction prices have risen exponentially. We are all now paying the price for the energy data centers are consuming as their ownership, multi-billion dollar corporations, are reaping the benefits.

I support House Bill 120, with amendments, because Maryland cannot afford to add the energy demand data centers will bring to an already over-taxed energy grid. My suggestion is to **amend HB120 to include language prohibiting any data center development until after the Data Center Impact and Analysis Report has been completed and any recommendations included within that Report have been acted upon**.

Additionally, I suggest **amending the bill to remove Section 3** that would permit development of a data center if the General Assembly enacts legislation requiring co-location with a power generation facility.

It would not be appropriate to permit development of data centers under any circumstances until Maryland fully understands the impacts on our infrastructure, environment, and financial outlook. Again, I urge a **favorable report with amendments**.

Thank you,

Brandon Russell  
Leonardtown, MD  
[brandon4stmarys@gmail.com](mailto:brandon4stmarys@gmail.com)

# **HB0120 -- Moratorium on Construction of New Data C**

Uploaded by: Brian Levine

Position: UNF



**House Bill 120 -- *Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers - Co-Location and Generation Contingency***  
**House Environment and Transportation Committee**  
**February 3, 2026**  
**Oppose**

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), the voice of business in Metro Maryland, opposes House Bill 120 -- *Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers - Co-Location and Generation Contingency*, which prohibits the construction of a data center in Maryland.

From a fiscal standpoint, data centers generate substantial and reliable tax revenue. Their significant capital investment strengthens local property tax bases, increases personal property tax revenue, and supports income tax collections from the jobs created both during construction and ongoing operations. These revenues help fund schools, public safety, and critical community infrastructure while placing far fewer demands on local services than most other commercial or residential development.

Beyond the tax benefits, halting new data center development would place Maryland at a competitive disadvantage at a time when innovation and digital capability drive economic growth. Data centers are essential to an innovation-focused economy and form the digital backbone for high-growth industries such as cybersecurity, life sciences, artificial intelligence, and advanced computing. Restricting their development signals to these sectors that the state is not prepared to support the infrastructure required for their success. Meanwhile, other states are aggressively competing for these projects, and imposing a moratorium would discourage future technology investment that delivers long-term economic opportunity.

**For these reasons, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce opposes House Bill 120 and respectfully requests an unfavorable report.**

*The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), on behalf of its members, champions the growth of business opportunities, strategic infrastructure investments, and a strong workforce to position Metro Maryland as a premier regional, national, and global business location. Established in 1959, MCCC is an independent, non-profit membership organization.*

*Brian Levine | Vice President of Government Affairs  
Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce  
51 Monroe Street | Suite 1800  
Rockville, Maryland 20850  
301-738-0015 | [www.mcccmd.com](http://www.mcccmd.com)*

# **HB120 UNF Brian Norman**

Uploaded by: Brian Norman

Position: UNF



February 3, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman  
Chairman, Environment and Transportation Committee  
Maryland House of Delegates  
HB 0120 – Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers – Co-Location and Generation  
Contingency

Chairman Korman and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

On behalf of the Goldwater Institute, I am writing to submit public comment in respectful opposition to HB 0120. The Goldwater Institute works nationwide to protect individual liberty and promote free-market solutions to modern challenges. This legislation proposes a statewide moratorium on the construction of new data centers, establishing a generation contingency that would effectively paralyze digital infrastructure development in Maryland.

Data centers are the industrial backbone of modern life, supporting everything from national security and financial transactions to the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence. These facilities are no different in principle from the railroads or energy networks of the last century and are the essential machinery of our era. Prohibiting their construction ignores a fundamental economic reality: demand for digital services does not disappear because a state chooses to stop building. Instead, the investment, high-paying jobs, and tax revenue simply migrate to states that embrace the future.

Maryland currently ranks 40th in the nation in five-year job growth and faces a projected \$3 billion structural deficit by Fiscal Year 2030.<sup>1</sup> According to the Maryland Tech Council, a typical 800,000-square-foot data center project generates roughly \$775 million in economic activity and \$18 million in state tax revenue during its construction phase alone.<sup>2</sup> Once operational, a single facility can support nearly 500 permanent jobs with salaries 55% above the statewide average. In Prince George's County, the annual tax revenue from one mid-sized data center is estimated to fund the total compensation for 175 police officers, 158 firefighters, or 176 public school teachers.<sup>3</sup> HB 120 would forfeit these benefits in favor of a central-planning approach that undermines fundamental property rights.

Our research, *Data Centers: A Free Market Model for the Digital Future*, shows that electricity prices are a policy choice, not a data center problem.<sup>4</sup> High rates are the predictable outcome of state mandates that sideline reliable power. In contrast, large-scale users like data centers provide the steady, predictable demand necessary to fund grid upgrades, creating economies of scale that can lower costs systemwide. Regarding resource scarcity, the market is already driving the industry toward efficiency. Many new facilities utilize air-cooled or closed-loop designs that eliminate the need for potable water, proving that economic expansion and environmental stewardship are not mutually exclusive.

We believe that the state's long-term prosperity is best served by a policy environment that favors innovation over restriction and property rights over central planning. We urge the Committee to report HB 0120 unfavorably and move toward a framework that welcomes growth rather than postponing it.

Sincerely,

Brian Norman  
Director of State Affairs  
Goldwater Institute

1: Maryland Tech Council, *Data Centers Can Accelerate Maryland's Job Growth and Bridge State's Budget Gap*, Aug. 14, 2025; see also WUSA9, *Maryland faces \$1.5B deficit by 2027, shortfall could near \$4B by 2030*, Nov. 18,

2: Maryland Tech Council, *The Economic & Fiscal Benefits of Data Center Developments in Maryland*, prepared by Sage Policy Group, 2025.

3: Maryland Tech Council, *Economic & Fiscal Impacts of Data Center Development in Prince George's County*, 2025; see also Maryland Tech Council, *The Opportunity: How Maryland Wins with Data Centers*

4: Goldwater Institute, *Data Centers: A Free Market Model for the Digital Future*, Jan. 2026.

# **HB0120\_UNF\_MTC\_Moratorium Construction New Data Ce**

Uploaded by: Drew Vetter

Position: UNF



House Environment and Transportation Committee  
February 3, 2026

House Bill 120 – *Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers – Co-Location and Generation Contingency*  
**POSITION: OPPOSE**

The Maryland Tech Council (MTC), with over 800 members, is the State’s largest association of technology companies. Our vision is to propel Maryland to be the country’s number one innovation economy for life sciences and technology. MTC brings the State’s life sciences and technology communities into a single, united organization that empowers members to achieve their goals through advocacy, networking, and education. On behalf of MTC, we submit this letter of **opposition** for House Bill 120.

House Bill 120 would prohibit the construction of new data centers in Maryland unless legislation is enacted that would require all new data centers to be co-located with a new or existing natural gas power generation facility, nuclear power generation facility, or small module reactor and the construction at the co-located power generation facility of additional power generation capacity meets or exceeds the data center’s power needs.

The MTC opposes this bill because it is overly restrictive of data center development and hinders the enormous economic potential the data center development industry can bring to Maryland. Further, this bill sends the wrong message nationally that Maryland is not welcoming to investment in the burgeoning digital economy.

MTC has launched the Data Center Alliance of Maryland (DCA-MD), a coalition of partners dedicated to informing and educating Marylanders about the potential contributions of data center industry growth. DCA-MD is working to inform Marylanders and policymakers that the digital economy presents Maryland with a historic opportunity to create thousands of family-sustaining jobs and invest in public services like K-12 public education. The need for additional revenue is further underscored by the fact that Maryland is again facing a \$1.5 billion budget deficit, with even larger deficits looming in the coming years.

At the heart of the digital revolution is the critical infrastructure that enables it: data centers. With the private sector planning more than \$1 trillion in capital investments in the U.S., communities that proactively plan for data centers will position themselves for decades of economic prosperity and community strength. Yet, the impacts often associated with data centers – visual, environmental, or operational – are widely misunderstood, and in many cases, overstated.

Data centers are the libraries of the internet. They store and process vast amounts of data that society depends on, including electronic health records, fraud detection systems, websites, and video streaming platforms. They are the digital infrastructure that enables online life and commerce. As integrated technology parks, data centers create immediate construction jobs that

often provide five years of work and permanent career paths in their communities. In addition, state tax revenues from a typical data center could pay the equivalent of 165 average teacher salaries annually. The community benefits from data centers are clear:

- Thousands of Maryland jobs for Maryland workers.
- Massive new tax revenue to invest in world-class schools, police, and other public services we depend on.

Consider this: a recent [economic analysis](#) found that a typical data center project in Maryland would:

- Support 5,000 direct and indirect jobs and \$775 million in economic activity and generate approximately \$18 million in state tax revenues during construction, alongside substantial local tax revenues.
- Once operational, the data center would support nearly 500 permanent jobs and generate \$14 million in state tax revenue annually, plus substantial local tax revenues.

While MTC acknowledges the potential energy consumption ramifications of data center development, the State has already taken some steps to address this challenge. Data center operators pay for the electricity they consume. Additionally, Maryland enacted the Next Generation Energy Act in 2025, making it the first state in the nation to require large data centers to pay a special electricity rate to finance electric grid improvements. The power transmission grid will actually be strengthened as data centers fund improvements. Further, the data center has significantly improved its energy efficiency. These statements are further backed up by a study from [Energy and Environmental Economics](#) (E3), which found that large loads from data centers can provide meaningful grid, societal, and economic development benefits.

The MTC encourages the General Assembly to continue taking a more collaborative approach to charting a path for data center development and related energy demand that balances the enormous economic potential of Maryland's digital economy. For these reasons, we request an **unfavorable** report on House Bill 120.

**For more information call:**

Andrew G. Vetter  
J. Steven Wise  
Danna L. Kauffman  
Christine K. Krone  
410-244-7000

# **HB 120\_Moratorium on Construction of New Data Cent**

Uploaded by: Hannah Allen

Position: UNF



## House Bill 120

Date: February 3, 2026

Committee: Environment & Transportation

**Position: Unfavorable**

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Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce (the Chamber) is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members and federated partners, and we work to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

House Bill 120 (HB 120) would prohibit the construction of a data center in Maryland unless the General Assembly enacts separate legislation regarding the co-location of data centers with a new or existing natural gas power generation facility, nuclear power facility, or small module reactor.

HB 120 establishes a blanket prohibition on an entire category of economic development based on the possibility of future legislative action. Rather than setting clear standards or policy objectives, the bill conditions whether a lawful business activity may occur on the enactment of separate legislation that does not currently exist. This creates profound uncertainty for businesses, investors, utilities, and local governments and undermines Maryland's predictability as a place to invest.

Additionally, as drafted, the prohibition applies broadly and could capture a wide range of existing and future facilities, including smaller data centers located at corporate headquarters, government-adjacent facilities, and installations supporting national security and defense operations. Maryland currently hosts dozens of data centers of varying sizes, many of which are not the large, "hyperscale" facilities that are often assumed when the term "data center" is used. Data centers support critical business, government, and cybersecurity functions.

By halting new development until undefined future legislation is enacted, HB 120 effectively places Maryland at a competitive disadvantage relative to neighboring states. Data centers are increasingly mobile investments, and prolonged uncertainty will almost certainly redirect capital, infrastructure investment, and associated job creation to other jurisdictions with clearer regulatory frameworks.

Finally, the Chamber is concerned that the bill attempts to predetermine the outcome of future energy policy debates by mandating specific generation technologies as a prerequisite for

development, rather than allowing those issues to be considered holistically through Maryland's established energy planning and regulatory processes.

For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests an **unfavorable report on HB 120**.

# **Jason Ascher, OPPOSE - House Bill 120 – Moratorium**

Uploaded by: Jason Ascher

Position: UNF



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## Environment and Transportation Committee

**To:** Delegate Marc Korman, Chair; Delegate Michele Guyton, Vice Chair; and Members of the Committee.  
**From:** Jason Ascher, Political Director, Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association.

### **OPPOSE - House Bill 120 – Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers – Co-Location and Generation Contingency**

The Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association respectfully opposes House Bill 120. This legislation imposes a categorical prohibition on the construction of new data centers in Maryland and prevents State and local governments from approving otherwise lawful projects. The Association represents over 10,500 skilled union workers — including steamfitters, plumbers, pipefitters, welders, and HVACR technicians — across Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. It comprises seven affiliated local unions and approximately 400 union signatory contractors, collectively supporting a substantial economic footprint through wages, benefits, apprenticeship training, procurement, and State and local tax revenue.

Data centers generate sustained, high-skilled employment during initial construction and long-term operations and maintenance. These projects directly support registered apprenticeship programs, prevailing-wage career pathways, and employer-funded health and retirement plans. The Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades' workforce contributes hundreds of millions of dollars annually to the regional economy through payroll, contractor activity, and community spending. Eliminating an entire category of infrastructure development removes these opportunities for Maryland workers while neighboring jurisdictions actively compete to attract this investment.

The Association's membership is drawn from seven local unions — including Locals 5, 10, 110, 74, 486, 602, and 669 — and operates throughout Maryland, the District of Columbia, Delaware, and Virginia. The Association is affiliated with the United Association and partners with hundreds of union contractors who employ, train, and sustain this skilled workforce.

The Association supports responsible siting, environmental review, and robust energy-reliability standards. However, an outright prohibition eliminates local discretion and prevents jurisdictions from negotiating workforce standards, project labor agreements, community benefits, and infrastructure upgrades that ensure balanced outcomes for residents and workers alike. Maryland already has robust permitting and regulatory frameworks capable of evaluating these projects on their merits without resorting to a blanket ban.

For these reasons, the Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association urges an unfavorable report on House Bill 120.

Sincerely,

Jason Ascher  
Political Director  
Mid-Atlantic Pipe Trades Association

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**Plumbers and Gasfitters Local 5** – Lanham, MD  
**Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 10** – Richmond, VA/Roanoke, VA  
**Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 110** – Norfolk, VA  
**Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 74** – Newark, DE

**Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 486** – Baltimore, MD  
**Steamfitters Local 602** – Capitol Heights, MD  
**Road Sprinkler Fitters Local 669** – Columbia, MD

# **Oppose HB 120 Data Center Moratorium\_FWW Testimony**

Uploaded by: Jorge Aguilar

Position: UNF



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[foodandwaterwatch.org](http://foodandwaterwatch.org)

**Oppose HB 120:**  
**Testimony Opposing Data Center Moratorium**  
**As Means To Encourage New Gas & Nuclear Plants**

Position: Unfavorable

On behalf of the nonprofit Food & Water Watch and its 40,000 Maryland members, we submit this testimony in opposition of HB 120. Because of its goal of placing a moratorium on the construction of data centers for the purpose of encouraging the build out of new gas and nuclear power plants in the state, we urge the House to reject this bill.

The rush to build out new data centers in the state has raised critical questions about their impacts, including but not limited to, the amount of energy that will be required to run these facilities, and how data centers may continue to increase electricity bills for Maryland families. This bill, however, would only exacerbate the abundant problems data centers impose on Marylanders and ignores tackling many of their key problems.

Expanding the state's methane gas and nuclear power generation is not only the costliest way to generate energy in the state — a cost that ratepayers would ultimately pay — but also brings about its own negative health and environmental consequences to Maryland residents via air and water pollution.

While we support an immediate data center moratorium in the state, a legitimate moratorium bill would address multiple other issues this bill does not begin to touch upon. We need comprehensive protective legislation; this is not that bill.

As previously mentioned, data centers are causing electricity rates to skyrocket. The Department of Energy predicts that data centers will consume 12% of the nation's electricity by 2028, continuing to drive up rates across the board for ratepayers. In Maryland, officials have warned that data center buildout in Maryland could increase monthly bills by \$70.

Additionally, data centers consume massive amounts of water in order to cool servers and in powering them. This water usage can stress communities and drive up water rates which Maryland has historically struggled with. As of yet, the state has yet to come up with a comprehensive study of how the data center buildout would impact Maryland's water resources, many of which provide drinking water for residents.

Data centers also use hardware (eg. microchips and processing, memory, and storage components) that have an average lifespan of 2-5 years. It is estimated that the e-waste generated from the AI boom driving the growth of data centers could total up to 5 million tons annually by 2030. None of these e-waste concerns have been fully addressed by Maryland officials yet.

Other significant impacts include noise near data center operations and damage to home appliances due to the strain on the grid caused by reliability impacts from these same data centers.

What Maryland needs is a full-scale moratorium bill that would effectively address the many negative impacts that would come with the buildout of data centers to properly protect Marylanders. HB 120 does not do any of that. We urge the committee to reject this legislation and any other legislation that fast tracks the buildout of new data centers in Maryland without first scrutinizing if these data centers can coexist with the health and safety of Maryland residents over the long term.

# **2026-03-02-TPA Written Testimony Opposing MDHB120.**

Uploaded by: Juan Londoño

Position: UNF

# TAXPAYERS PROTECTION ALLIANCE

February 3, 2026

House Environment and Transportation Committee  
Maryland State Legislature  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the millions of taxpayers and consumers we represent, the Taxpayers Protection Alliance (TPA) writes to express its concerns with House Bill 120, a bill that would enact a moratorium on the construction of new data centers in the state of Maryland. The enactment of a moratorium of this nature would be an extremely short-sighted measure that would harm Maryland's consumers and economy, the welfare of Maryland taxpayers, and hamper the state government's ability to provide basic services.

The bill's proposal is built on a fundamentally flawed premise. It presumes that the construction of new data centers will lead to spikes in demand that outpace the state's capacity to increase supply, mainly due to a lack of capacity to generate additional power. Thus, it proposes a rather simple solution: pause the construction of new data centers in the state until the legislature passes additional regulations that force all new data center projects to be accompanied with a proposal to generate additional power on-site. However, these simple solutions often lack the necessary nuance and context to correctly address the issue, especially in policymaking.

The bill's premise rests on incomplete, if not outright wrong, assumptions. While power generation is a vital part of the formula for energy abundance and affordability—and the state and the nation should aim to increase generation capacity as much as possible—it is only part of the picture. In fact, recent studies on energy prices have pointed toward the cost of power transmission, rather than lack of generation, as one of the key drivers of energy price increases.<sup>1</sup> Put simply, energy prices are rising not because the country is not generating enough power, but because we do not have the infrastructure to transport the power we do generate efficiently or sustainably. In many cases, this has been mostly because the United States has allowed its transmission infrastructure to age to a point where overhauls have become extremely onerous. Replacing aging systems with newer, more resilient, and weatherproof lines requires significant investments.

Ironically, in situations like this, increases in the customer base and energy demand can actually help reduce the costs per consumer of these costly renovations. The immense capital expenditures that come with modernizing the power grid are considered fixed costs, which means that the sum will be the same regardless of whether it serves one or millions of customers. In these cases, an expanded customer base allows utilities to spread the costs further, resulting in a lower cost per consumer. This has been the case in states like California, Georgia, and Maine.<sup>2</sup>

This is why the bill's one-size-fits-all approach is misguided. While in many cases additional on-site power generation is beneficial for both commercial and residential consumers (which is why tech companies are generally eager to build generators alongside new data centers), it is not necessarily the norm. For example, there might be localities where local and neighboring utility companies are generating sufficient energy to satisfy consumers' demands, but they lack the infrastructure to transport it to consumers. In those cases, it might be more

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<sup>1</sup> [https://eta-publications.lbl.gov/sites/default/files/2025-10/full\\_summary\\_retail\\_price\\_trends\\_drivers.pdf](https://eta-publications.lbl.gov/sites/default/files/2025-10/full_summary_retail_price_trends_drivers.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

# TAXPAYERS PROTECTION ALLIANCE

beneficial for companies and utilities to broker a deal to build additional transmission infrastructure that benefits the community at large. However, this bill would create a prescriptive mandate that companies could only build a data center if they build additional generation capacity, even if such capacity were to prove redundant or inefficient.

Restricting the development of vital artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure would be incredibly damaging for the Maryland economy. As AI becomes increasingly relevant in the economy of the future, limiting the construction of the infrastructure that powers this technology is a surefire way to ensure Maryland will miss out on the economic benefits of the AI revolution. However, the economic costs go beyond that. Such an initiative directly contradicts policies and programs already underway in the state, such as Governor Moore's "Capital of Quantum" initiative, which commits more than \$200 million in taxpayer funds to the development of a quantum industry in the state.<sup>3</sup> Achieving such a goal will undoubtedly require the development of a robust AI sector in the state. This bill would actively undermine this objective and waste millions in taxpayers' funds.

The effects of hindering the development of the AI industry in the state go beyond the economy. It will also diminish the capacity of the Maryland state government to provide first-class services to its population and could undermine essential, life-saving government services. For example, cities like neighboring Washington, D.C., are using AI tools to optimize their 911 emergency line by using AI agents to respond to non-emergency calls, allowing them to navigate chronic understaffing issues.<sup>4</sup> To process this type of real-time data in a time-efficient manner, these models need access to the computing power that is located in data centers. To ensure that the data is processed and communicated quickly, clearly, and seamlessly, it is required for this data center to be close to the city it is serving. Just this week, AI company Anthropic and the United Kingdom's government announced a partnership in which they will be developing an AI agent that will allow its citizens to better navigate government services and connect them to the right agencies and programs for their specific needs.<sup>5</sup> The future of good governance will be defined through a government's capability to leverage AI, in a similar way in which governments are required to have a website or email access today. Knowingly slowing the rollout of AI in the state would be an active disservice to those communities that this legislature claims to serve.

TPA appreciates the opportunity to provide input on these critical issues. We would welcome further opportunities to engage with the Committee and its staff and to provide additional resources.

Sincerely,



David Williams  
President

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<sup>3</sup> <https://governor.maryland.gov/news/press/pages/governor-moore-announces-1-billion-capital-of-quantum-initiative.aspx>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.govtech.com/em/preparedness/tri-cities-in-wash-turn-to-ai-for-understaffed-911-dispatch#:~:text=Staff%20will%20reportedly%20save%20three,calls%20made%20directly%20to%20911.>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.anthropic.com/news/gov-UK-partnership>

**2026-2-3\_DCC Comments\_MD HB 120\_Oppose.pdf**

Uploaded by: Khara Boender

Position: UNF

February 3, 2026



Maryland General Assembly  
Attn: Trish Gagnon, Assistant to Chair Korman  
House Environment and Transportation Committee  
250 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: HB 120, “Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers – Co-Location and Generation Contingency” (Unfavorable)**

Dear Chair Korman and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee:

On behalf of the Data Center Coalition (DCC), I am writing to request an unfavorable report of HB 120. DCC is the national membership association for the data center industry, and our membership is comprised of leading data center owners and operators, as well as companies that lease large amounts of data center capacity.<sup>1</sup> Data centers provide the digital infrastructure that keeps us connected in our daily lives and supports many sectors of the 21<sup>st</sup> century innovation economy, including financial services, advanced manufacturing, cybersecurity, healthcare, artificial intelligence, and other key industries.

HB 120 would prohibit a unit of state or local government from approving a proposal for the construction of a data center in Maryland. While DCC appreciates that the legislation clarifies that this applies prospectively, excluding data center projects that have received federal, state, and local permits prior to the Act’s effective date, this would still send a strong negative signal to industry. Establishing a statewide moratorium would also prevent local economic development authorities from tailoring and pursuing strategies to attract jobs and investment that they see as beneficial to their communities.

Over the past several years, Maryland has advanced legislation seeking to establish a competitive market that provides the certainty and predictability required to attract and grow long-term data center capital investment and data center jobs in the state. HB 120 runs counter to those efforts just as new projects and investment are just beginning to land in Maryland. At a time when Maryland is experiencing lagging economic growth and facing significant budget constraints, HB 120 would send a signal to all industries, not just data centers, that Maryland may not stand behind its long-term economic development commitments.

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<sup>1</sup> Public testimony and written comments submitted by DCC do not necessarily reflect the views of each individual DCC member. A list of current DCC members is accessible at <https://www.datacentercoalition.org/members>.

Data centers represent large capital investments and support a wide range of roles in the broader local service ecosystem, including construction professionals, engineers, HVAC technicians, electricians, and local hospitality and catering businesses. In fact, each job in a data center supports six jobs elsewhere in the economy. A report from PwC found that in 2023, the data center industry provided 7,780 direct jobs and supported 40,560 jobs in total when considering direct, indirect, and induced effects in Maryland. The report also found that over that same time, the data center industry contributed \$6.3 billion to Maryland GDP and directly and indirectly generated \$646 million in state and local tax revenues.<sup>2</sup> Establishing a moratorium jeopardizes the ability to capitalize on these revenues and job impacts and deters future growth.

We appreciate your consideration of these comments and stand ready to serve as a resource as the General Assembly considers legislation impacting the data center industry. We urge the Committee not to advance this legislation.

Respectfully,

Khara Boender  
Director, State Policy  
Data Center Coalition  
[khara@datacentercoalition.org](mailto:khara@datacentercoalition.org)

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<sup>2</sup> PwC, “Economic Contributions of Data Centers in the United States, 2017-2023,” February 2025, <https://www.centerofyourdigitalworld.org/2025-impact-study>.

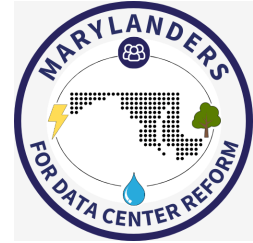
# **HB 120 Testimony UNF.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mariah Davis

Position: UNF

## **HB0120- UNFAVORABLE**

Mariah Davis  
Nature Forward  
davisstrategies1@gmail.com  
757-291-8785



HB0120- Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers - Co-Location and Generation Contingency

Environment and Transportation Committee  
February 3, 2026

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

On behalf of Marylanders for Data Center Reform, I urge an unfavorable report on HB0120, a Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers- Co-Location and Generation Contingency.

Marylanders for Data Center Reform, created by Nature Forward, represents over 40 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. While we strongly believe that Maryland should take time to plan for data center development that is the least harmful to our land and communities, we must oppose HB0120 because it ties a moratorium on hyperscale data center development to a contingency that encourages data centers to collocate with new or existing natural gas generation. The proliferation of fossil fuels driven by hyperscale data center development is a public health concern and puts our state climate goals at risk. A study by Cornell University found that there are significant public health burdens and costs to Marylanders associated with pollution from diesel backup generators from data centers located in Northern Virginia. Here in Anne Arundel County, these health costs are estimated at \$6.3M. The county with the highest health costs from out of state diesel backup generators is Montgomery County, estimated at \$19.9M<sup>1</sup>.

As pressure from artificial intelligence and electrification grows, it is imperative that we use the best available data and research to provide power to data centers that have the least damage and long-lasting impacts to ratepayers and the environment. Utility scale solar<sup>2</sup> and battery storage<sup>3</sup> are not only underutilized, they are the cheapest and fastest way to supply reliable generation to the grid. There are currently 6 solar and battery projects that are poised to leave the PJM que, representing approximately 1 GW of energy<sup>4</sup>, which is equivalent to the generating capacity of Brandon Shores, the retiring power plant<sup>5</sup>. This bill does not reference and require these technologies, nor does it consider additional opportunities that provide immediate capacity to the grid such as demand response. Data shows that if the goals are to increase grid reliability, capacity, and reduce costs to ratepayers, then reducing barriers to

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<sup>1</sup> <https://arxiv.org/pdf/2412.06288>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=67005>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=63025>

<sup>4</sup> [https://insidelines.pjm.com/v3\\_retool-results\\_new-release\\_body/](https://insidelines.pjm.com/v3_retool-results_new-release_body/)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.talenenergy.com/plant/brandon-shores-power-plant/>

increase carbon free generation should be at the forefront of solutions. Instead this bill incentivises building fossil fuel infrastructure that is not only resource intensive, it is slower to build and interconnect to the grid compared to solar and battery storage.

In closing, Marylanders for Data Center Reform urges an unfavorable report for this bill. We have the opportunity now to leverage existing assets and technologies that are not only better for the environment and public health, they are cheaper, faster, and increase grid reliability.

Respectfully,

Center for Progressive Reform

Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund

Friends of Lower Beaverdam Creek

Maryland League of Conservation Voters

Nature Forward

Waterkeepers Chesapeake

**M&A\_EAS Carpenters\_Testimony\_HB120\_UNF.pdf**

Uploaded by: Roger Manno

Position: UNF



**Eastern Atlantic States**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL OF CARPENTERS

8500 Pennsylvania Avenue, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772 | Phone: 301-735-6660 | EASCARPENTERS.ORG

**TESTIMONY OF FRANK MAHONEY  
DEPUTY POLITICAL DIRECTOR, EASTERN ATLANTIC STATES REGIONAL COUNCIL OF  
CARPENTERS  
BEFORE THE HOUSE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE  
HOUSE BILL 120 – UNFAVORABLE**

Chair Korman and Members of the Committee:

The Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters respectfully opposes House Bill 120. This legislation imposes a categorical prohibition on the construction of new data centers in Maryland and prevents State and local governments from approving otherwise lawful projects, regardless of location, energy configuration, or workforce standards. Such a blanket moratorium would eliminate a significant and growing source of skilled construction employment and economic development within the State.

The Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters represents over 40,000 skilled tradesmen and tradeswomen across Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Our members perform highly specialized work including general carpentry, concrete formwork, pile driving, interior systems, and millwright services. The Council partners with a broad network of union contractors and maintains 17 state-of-the-art training centers, including facilities in Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, that provide comprehensive, debt-free registered apprenticeship programs and continuing education for career advancement.

Data center construction and long-term facility operations create sustained demand for these skills, support prevailing-wage employment, and reinforce apprenticeship pipelines that prepare the next generation of skilled workers. These projects generate significant private investment and State and local tax revenues, while also allowing jurisdictions to negotiate workforce standards, safety requirements, and community benefits tailored to local needs.

While the Council supports responsible siting, environmental review, and strong energy-reliability standards, House Bill 120 removes local discretion entirely and forecloses opportunities to structure development in a manner that benefits both communities and workers. Maryland already possesses robust permitting and regulatory frameworks capable of evaluating such projects without resorting to an absolute prohibition.

For these reasons, the Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters urges an unfavorable report on House Bill 120.

Sincerely,

Frank Mahoney  
Deputy Political Director  
Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters

**M&A\_Ironworkers Local 5\_Testimony\_HB120\_UNF.pdf**

Uploaded by: Roger Manno

Position: UNF



TESTIMONY OF GARY R. ARMSTRONG, BUSINESS MANAGER / FST  
IRONWORKERS LOCAL 5  
BEFORE THE HOUSE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE  
HOUSE BILL 120 – UNFAVORABLE

Chair Korman and Members of the Committee:

Ironworkers Local 5 respectfully opposes House Bill 120 because it would halt a significant category of structural construction projects that sustain union ironworkers throughout Maryland.

Data center construction involves substantial steel fabrication, reinforcement, and erection work that supports apprenticeship pipelines, safety training, and long-term workforce stability. By prohibiting both construction and governmental approvals, the bill eliminates opportunities to negotiate project labor agreements and enforce safety and workforce standards. Ironworkers Local 5 supports strong environmental review and responsible development. However, a statewide moratorium undermines Maryland's construction workforce and regional competitiveness.

For these reasons, Ironworkers Local 5 urges an unfavorable report on House Bill 120.

Sincerely,

*Gary R. Armstrong*

Gary R. Armstrong  
Business Manager / FST  
Ironworkers Local 5

**M&A\_MCAMW\_HB\_120\_UNF.pdf**

Uploaded by: Roger Manno

Position: UNF



**TESTIMONY OF  
MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF METROPOLITAN  
WASHINGTON**

BEFORE THE HOUSE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL 120 – UNFAVORABLE

Chair Korman and Members of the Committee:

The Mechanical Contractors Association of Metropolitan Washington (MCAMW) respectfully submits this testimony in opposition to House Bill 120 and its proposed categorical prohibition on the construction of new data centers in the State of Maryland. MCAMW writes from the perspective of Maryland's mechanical and specialty construction contractors, for whom this legislation directly affects project pipelines, workforce stability, and long-term capital and training investments.

MCAMW proudly represents 200 construction contractors, approximately 10,500 skilled workers, and 1,500 apprentices. Our member companies contribute significantly to the region's economy, generating nearly \$2 billion in annual revenue and approximately \$500 million in state, federal, and local taxes each year. These figures reflect real payrolls, supplier purchases, equipment investments, and apprenticeship programs that are directly tied to the availability of large, technically complex projects.

From a contractor's standpoint, House Bill 120 replaces predictable, standards-based project evaluation with a categorical ban that removes entire categories of work before site-specific facts can be considered. Contractors make multi-year investments in workforce training, safety compliance, fabrication capacity, and specialized equipment based on anticipated demand. Eliminating an entire class of development by statute risks reducing apprenticeship intake, shrinking bidding activity, and pushing both firms and skilled labor to neighboring jurisdictions where structured review processes remain in place.

Modern data centers are among the most technically demanding facilities in the built environment, requiring advanced mechanical, electrical, and cooling infrastructure as well as long-term maintenance services. These projects provide sustained employment for licensed technicians and skilled trades, not short-term spikes of work.



Maryland already maintains zoning, environmental-review, and utility-permitting frameworks capable of addressing legitimate concerns through conditional approvals and enforceable compliance standards. A statewide prohibition removes that balance and substitutes rigidity for professional oversight.

For Maryland contractors and the thousands of workers they employ, the central issue is whether the State will continue to provide a predictable, standards-based environment in which long-term workforce and capital investments can responsibly occur. MCAMW respectfully urges the Committee to consider the economic and workforce consequences associated with a categorical moratorium on this class of industrial development and to issue an unfavorable report on House Bill 120.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Bello", is positioned above the typed name.

Thomas L. Bello  
Executive Vice President

**M&A\_Plumbers and Gasfitters Local 5\_HB120\_UNF.pdf**

Uploaded by: Roger Manno

Position: UNF



# PLUMBERS LOCAL UNION NO. 5

UNITED ASSOCIATION OF JOURNEYMEN AND APPRENTICES OF THE PLUMBING AND PIPE FITTING INDUSTRY OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, AFL-CIO

4755 Walden Ln. Lanham, MD 20706 • 301-899-7861 (T) • 301-899-7868 (F)



TESTIMONY OF TERRIEA "T" SMALLS  
BUSINESS MANAGER / FST, PLUMBERS & GASFITTERS LOCAL 5  
BEFORE THE HOUSE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE  
HOUSE BILL 120 – UNFAVORABLE

Chair Korman and Members of the Committee:

UA Plumbers & Gasfitters Local 5 respectfully opposes House Bill 120. The bill imposes a blanket prohibition on the construction of new data centers in Maryland and prohibits State and local governments from approving otherwise lawful projects, regardless of location, power source, or workforce standards.

Data centers represent sustained demand for licensed plumbers and gasfitters in construction, commissioning, and long-term operations and maintenance. These projects generate family-supporting union jobs, apprenticeship opportunities, and significant State and local tax revenue. A categorical moratorium deprives Maryland workers of these opportunities while competing states actively recruit this investment.

Local 5 supports responsible siting, environmental review, and energy-reliability requirements. However, an outright prohibition eliminates local discretion and prevents jurisdictions from negotiating workforce standards, community benefits, or infrastructure improvements.

For these reasons, UA Plumbers & Gasfitters Local 5 urges an unfavorable report on House Bill 120.

Sincerely,

Terriea "T" Smalls  
Business Manager / FST  
Plumbers & Gasfitters Local 5

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**Terriea "T" L. Smalls**  
Business Mgr. / Financial Sec-Treas.

**Michael S. Canales, Jr.**  
Asst. Business Manager

**Anthony A. Solis**  
Business Rep. and Organizer

**Julius Wright**  
Business Rep. and Organizer

**M&A\_Roger Manno\_HB120 Correspondance\_02.03.26.pdf**

Uploaded by: Roger Manno

Position: UNF

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e rmanno@mannoandassociates.com  
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February 3, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair  
House Environment and Transportation Committee  
Maryland House of Delegates  
House Office Building, Room 251  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Jocelyn Peña Millnick, Speaker  
Maryland House of Delegates  
State House, Room H-101  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson, President  
Maryland Senate  
State House, Room H-107  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chair  
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
Maryland Senate  
Miller Senate Office Building, Room 2 West  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Korman, Chair Feldman, Madam Speaker, Mr. President, and Members of the Committees:

I write to respectfully express my concerns regarding House Bill 120 and its proposed categorical prohibition on the construction of new data centers in the State of Maryland. I offer these comments in my capacity as an attorney and principal of Manno & Associates LLC, where my practice is uniquely concentrated on large-scale industrial

## House Bill 120 – Correspondence

and infrastructure development — including highly-skilled workforce integration, power-generation facilities, grid-scale energy projects, and data-center campus development. My work regularly involves coordination across federal and State legal, legislative, regulatory, technical, and workforce domains on projects requiring substantial private capital deployment and long-term infrastructure planning.

From both a policy and technical standpoint, House Bill 120 applies an unusually blunt instrument to one of the most capital-intensive sectors of the modern economy. By establishing a categorical ban rather than preserving standards-based, site-specific review, the bill removes Maryland's ability to evaluate projects based on energy configuration, grid capacity, environmental mitigation, workforce standards, and community-benefit commitments, while risking displacement of private investment and high-skill employment to neighboring jurisdictions without commensurate public-policy gain.

This approach is difficult to reconcile with the policy direction established during the 2025 legislative session through enactment of the Next Generation Energy Act (SB 937 / HB 1035), which evolved from the legislative leadership energy package. That legislation balanced grid reliability with the State's climate mandates while enabling disciplined, standards-based industrial and energy development through ratepayer-relief measures, utility-infrastructure prioritization reforms, a procurement goal of up to 1,750 megawatts of battery storage, an expedited approval pathway for dispatchable generation projects, and creation of a Strategic Energy Planning Office to conduct long-term adequacy and market-risk assessments.

In addition, House Bill 120 would be materially disruptive to regulatory and procurement activities already underway. The Maryland Public Service Commission is actively administering approval processes aligned with last year's statutory framework, including review of multiple CPCN applications and pending submissions by Constellation Energy involving battery-storage facilities and dispatchable natural-gas generation assets intended to stabilize load growth and enhance grid reliability. A categorical prohibition at this stage introduces policy inconsistency and regulatory uncertainty into proceedings already in motion, risks stranded regulatory effort, delays grid-stabilization investments, sends conflicting signals to market participants operating under an assumption of standards-based review rather than categorical exclusion, and risks undermining investor confidence in Maryland's regulatory predictability

Complementary legislation enacted during the same session — including the Renewable Energy Certainty Act and the RENEW Act study framework — further underscores the State's commitment to uniform standards, environmental safeguards, and data-driven climate and energy planning. House Bill 120 would mark a substantial departure from that trajectory by foreclosing precisely the class of projects the State's broader statutory architecture was designed to evaluate through established regulatory channels.

House Bill 120 – Correspondence

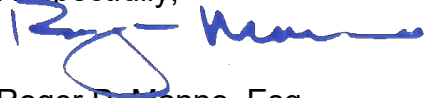
Modern data centers are highly engineered industrial facilities integrating advanced electrical distribution, redundant mechanical cooling, cybersecurity architecture, and increasingly co-located or directly contracted generation. Individual facilities routinely involve hundreds of millions — and often billions — of dollars in private capital investment and sustained demand for specialized engineers, electricians, and certified construction trades supported by multi-year apprenticeship pathways.

For multi-building hyperscale campuses incorporating substantial electrical and mechanical infrastructure and dedicated substations, total private capital investment can reasonably reach the high single-digit to low double-digit billions of dollars over a phased build-out horizon, producing multi-year construction employment, long-term technical careers, and durable increases in State and local tax receipts.

Maryland already maintains comprehensive zoning, environmental-review, public-utility, and industrial-permitting frameworks capable of addressing legitimate siting and resource concerns through conditional approvals and enforceable compliance standards. A statewide prohibition renders those tools inoperative for an entire class of development and effectively transfers private investment and workforce demand to jurisdictions that continue to employ standards-based oversight.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge careful consideration of whether a categorical moratorium aligns with the State’s recently articulated legislative and regulatory policy direction supporting dispatchable energy, grid reliability, and responsibly managed large-scale industrial growth.

Respectfully,



Roger P. Manno, Esq.  
Attorney at Law  
Manno & Associates LLC  
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# **M&A\_UA Plumbers & Steamfitters Local 486\_Testimony**

Uploaded by: Roger Manno

Position: UNF



**PLUMBERS AND STEAMFITTERS**

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Founded 1889

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**Gary G. Glab**

*Financial Secretary/Treasurer*

**Harry M. Schleicher Jr.**

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**C. Ryan Ambrose**

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**Stephen M. Nitsch**

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**Christopher D. Anderson**

*Business Agent*

**Todd E. Eckley**

*Recruiter*

UA – PLUMBERS & STEAMFITTERS LOCAL 486

TESTIMONY OF CHRIS ANDERSON, BUSINESS AGENT

PLUMBERS & STEAMFITTERS LOCAL 486

BEFORE THE HOUSE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL 120 – UNFAVORABLE

Chair Korman and Members of the Committee:

UA Plumbers & Steamfitters Local 486 respectfully opposes House Bill 120. The bill eliminates a critical and growing source of skilled mechanical construction work in Maryland by prohibiting new data center construction and preventing State and local governments from approving otherwise lawful projects.

Data centers are among the most technically complex facilities constructed today, requiring advanced piping systems, cooling infrastructure, fire-suppression interfaces, and ongoing mechanical service. These projects sustain registered apprenticeship programs and provide long-term career pathways for Maryland workers.

Local 486 supports responsible siting and environmental oversight. However, an outright prohibition removes local discretion and prevents jurisdictions from negotiating workforce standards, community benefits, and infrastructure improvements tied to these projects.

For these reasons, UA Plumbers & Steamfitters Local 486 urges an unfavorable report on House Bill 120.

Sincerely,

Chris Anderson

Business Agent

Plumbers & Steamfitters Local 486

# **HB 120 - Data Center Moratorium - NAIOP Testimony**

Uploaded by: Tom Ballentine

Position: UNF



January 30, 2026

The Honorable, Marc Korman, Chair  
House Economic Matters Committee  
230 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Oppose: HB 120 - Data Center Moratorium**

Dear Chair, Korman and Committee Members:

The NAIOP Maryland Chapters represent approximately 700 companies involved in all aspects of commercial, industrial, and mixed-use real estate. On behalf of our member companies, I am writing to recommend your unfavorable report on HB 120 which would prohibit the construction and approval of data centers in the state. NAIOP's opposition is based, in part, on the following rationale:

- **The Moratorium Would be Far Too Broad** – The definition of “data center” in the bill makes no distinction about the sizes and types of data centers. With no attributes to qualify a data center, the moratorium would apply to everything from hyperscale centers that have the largest physical footprints and power demands to small servers and storage systems that can be found in many office buildings.
- **Case by Case Regulation is a Better Approach** – A state-wide moratorium blocks even well-sited, low impact data center projects.
- **A Moratorium Misses the Opportunity to Leverage Grid Modernization** – Medium and large data center projects are required to finance grid upgrades, including substations, transmission, and distribution lines. A blanket moratorium delays these investments and misses the opportunity to leverage data center development as a means of expanding or upgrading grid infrastructure.
- **Co-location Requirement Serves Only Hyperscale Data Centers** - Co-location of power generation with a small to medium sized data center is cost prohibitive. If co-location were required, only the largest data centers operated by major cloud providers like AWS, Microsoft, Google, or Apple would have the financial capacity to comply. This provision also derails the possibility of a power purchase agreement or PJM capacity auction for data center electricity generation.
- **Data Centers are Essential to Maryland's Ability to Compete and Lead in the Digital Economy** - The presence of the U.S. Cyber Command and other technology centered national security assets makes Maryland uniquely positioned to take a leading role in the digital economy. A moratorium on data center development jeopardizes Maryland's ability to capitalize on these competitive advantages and risks losing more ground to Virginia which aggressively promotes data center development.

**For these reasons, NAIOP respectfully requests your unfavorable report on HB 120.**

Sincerely,

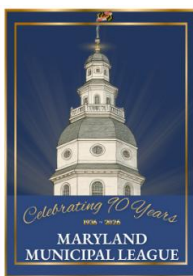
Tom Ballentine, Vice President for Policy  
NAIOP – Maryland Chapters, *The Association for Commercial Real Estate*

cc: Environment and Transportation Committee Members  
Nick Manis – Manis, Canning Assoc.

# **HB120-MML-Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Tyler Brice

Position: UNF



## TESTIMONY

**COMMITTEE:** House Environment and Transportation

**DATE:** February 3, 2026

**POSITION:** Unfavorable

**BILL:** HB 120

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) has taken an unfavorable position on House Bill 120, which imposes a statewide moratorium on the construction of new data centers. The primary concern expressed by the League centers on the bill's infringement upon local authority, a foundational principle for municipal governments throughout Maryland.

Local governments have long held the responsibility and legal authority to manage land use, zoning, and economic development within their jurisdictions. These powers are essential to ensuring that local needs, preferences, and priorities are addressed by those who are closest and most accountable to their communities. With House Bill 120, the State would strip municipalities and counties of the discretion to review, approve, or regulate the construction of new data centers, regardless of local circumstances or community wishes.

Such preemption of local authority is particularly alarming as it ignores the unique economic and developmental contexts of Maryland's diverse municipalities. In many cases, local governments may view the establishment of data centers as valuable opportunities to spur economic growth, create jobs, and expand the tax base. However, under the proposed legislation, even communities that would benefit from hosting these facilities are deprived of the ability to pursue or negotiate these benefits. The bill's "one-size-fits-all" prohibition disregards the careful planning and due diligence that local officials routinely undertake in their land use decisions.

Moreover, MML is concerned by the lack of flexibility or process for local input provided in the bill. Traditionally, when statewide challenges exist, state and local leaders work collaboratively to establish guidelines or best practices. House Bill 120 does not include provisions for such collaboration, nor does it allow for exceptions or waivers based on local considerations. This not only undermines the foundational principle of shared governance but also sets a troubling precedent for further erosion of local self-determination in the future.

*MML represents 161 local governments and about 2 million Maryland residents.*

The Maryland Municipal League's opposition, ultimately, is rooted in the belief that municipal and county governments must retain the authority to make decisions that shape the economic and physical landscape of their communities. By overriding local decision-making authority in the matter of data center construction, House Bill 120 impedes municipalities' ability to manage their own affairs, adapt to changing economic opportunities, and serve the best interests of their residents.

For these reasons, the League calls for the preservation of local authority and urges the General Assembly to reconsider broad, preemptive legislation that removes critical tools from the hands of local governments. Instead, any concerns regarding the siting or operation of data centers should be addressed through collaborative, nuanced approaches that respect the autonomy and expertise of Maryland's municipalities.

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For more information relating to this piece of testimony, please contact:

Tyler Brice: Manager, Advocacy and Public Policy, [tylerb@mdmunicipal.org](mailto:tylerb@mdmunicipal.org)

# **HB0120 OPC Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: David Lapp

Position: INFO

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BRANDI NIELAND  
DIRECTOR, CONSUMER  
ASSISTANCE UNIT

CARISSA RALBOVSKY  
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

**BILL NO.:** House Bill 120 – Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers - Co-Location and Generation Contingency

**COMMITTEE:** Environment and Transportation

**HEARING DATE:** February 3, 2026

**SPONSOR:** Delegates Fisher, Chisholm, M. Morgan, and Szeliga

**POSITION:** Informational

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The Office of People’s Counsel (“OPC”) respectfully submits this informational testimony regarding HB 120 - Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers – Co-Location and Generation Contingency. HB 120 prohibits construction of new data centers in the state unless and until the General Assembly passes legislation that (1) requires all new data centers to be co-located with a new or existing: (i) natural gas power generation facility; (ii) nuclear power generation facility; or (iii) small module reactor; and (2) requires the construction at a co-located power generation facility of additional power generation capacity that meets or exceeds the data center’s power needs—in other words, unless and until the General Assembly requires all new data centers to “bring their own generation.”

Data centers have city-sized energy demands that can grow quickly. They are unprecedented in both scale and timing. For example, PJM projects that the Dominion zone in Virginia will add about as much new electric demand from data centers by 2030 as the total electric demand that Maryland has built up over more than a century.<sup>1</sup> The electric demands required to support data centers are driving up wholesale market supply costs for Maryland customers in three main areas:

**Capacity market costs:** PJM operates a periodic capacity market auction under which power plant owners make advance commitments to provide power to meet reliability requirements. The power demands of data centers are driving substantial

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<sup>1</sup> The entire load for Baltimore Gas & Electric (“BGE”) is roughly 6.5 megawatts. The new demand in Virginia as of spring 2025 was 10 megawatts. See Jeff Morgan, [\*MD could get hit with \\$800 million energy bill due to VA data center needs\*](#), WMAR 2 News.(April 30, 2025).

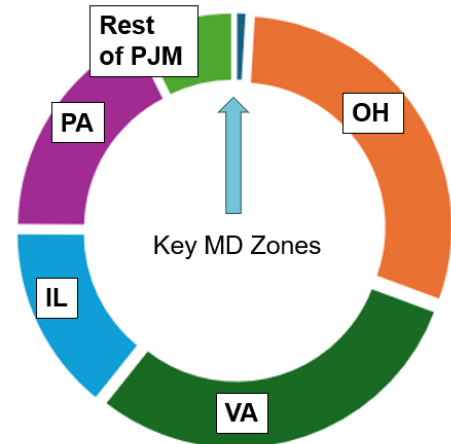
increases in the need for supply, driving up capacity market prices. [According to the independent market monitor \(“IMM”\) for PJM](#), data center load growth is “the primary reason for recent and expected capacity market conditions” within PJM, raising the price in the last three auctions by \$23 billion.

**Transmission costs:** The anticipated addition of massive new electric needs associated with the construction of data centers is driving a large expansion of PJM’s transmission system that Maryland customers see on the supply side of their bill. Between 2024 and 2025 alone, PJM has advanced almost \$12 billion in new transmission infrastructure for regional upgrades primarily driven by data center growth, mainly in Northern Virginia.<sup>2</sup> About \$1.3 billion—plus billions more in recovery for the utility’s return as the initial investments are recovered in future decades—will be paid by Maryland customers.<sup>3</sup> Marylanders also are paying tens of millions in local transmission projects for data centers.

**Energy market data center costs:** Energy costs change hour-by-hour, which makes the impact of data centers harder to quantify, but data centers are most certainly driving higher energy costs for Maryland customers. [An analysis by Bloomberg](#), for example, found that between 2020 and 2025 energy prices grew significantly more near “data center hot spots,” including Baltimore, where they more than doubled. Energy prices comprise the largest part of wholesale costs that show up as part of the supply portion of a residential customer bill. (Wholesale costs include transmission and capacity costs as well.) Energy prices in PJM grew almost 50% from January 2025 to September 2025 compared to the same period last year.<sup>4</sup>

PJM’s recently released [2026 forecast](#) provides important context for where the anticipated load growth is projected to occur. According to that report—based on information from the utilities—PJM forecasts only modest load growth in Maryland through 2045. As this figure demonstrates, almost all of the projected growth in demand from data centers is occurring outside of Maryland.

2030 PJM Large Load Adjustments



Source: PJM's 2026 load forecast ...

<sup>2</sup> Transmission Expansion Advisory Committee (TEAC) Recommendations to the PJM Board, PJM Staff White Paper (Feb. 2025), p. 1 and Transmission Expansion Advisory Committee (TEAC), Reliability Analysis Update, 2025 RTEP Cost Summary, p. 61 (Jan. 6, 2026).

<sup>3</sup> See e.g., Md. Office of People’s Counsel, Protest and Comments before Federal Energy Regulation Commission Docket No. ER24-843 and Md. Office of People’s Counsel’s press release: [PJM proposal would unlawfully saddle Maryland customers with nearly \\$800 million for out-of-state data center growth, OPC tells federal regulators](#).

<sup>4</sup> Monitoring Analytics LLC, annual and monthly wholesale cost components data, [https://www.monitoringanalytics.com/data/pjm\\_cost.shtml](https://www.monitoringanalytics.com/data/pjm_cost.shtml)

If Maryland customers are not responsible for the monumental projections of increased energy demand, then Maryland customers should not bear the costs necessary to meet that rising demand. This principle of “cost causation” is a fundamental tenet of public utility regulation and core to the legal standard that utility rates be “just and reasonable.”<sup>5</sup>

HB 120 proposes to address the costs of data centers by imposing a moratorium on data center development of any size *in Maryland*, unless and until the General Assembly adopts a “bring-your-own-generation” (“BYOG”) approach. As PJM’s Independent Market Monitor (“IMM”) points out, data centers bringing their own supply is the only practical solution to protect customers and prevent reliability issues,<sup>6</sup> and OPC has recommended a BYOG approach at both the state and federal levels.<sup>7</sup>

What HB 120 does not address is the impacts on Maryland residents of the data center development occurring outside of Maryland. Those impacts are largely controlled by PJM market rules, overseen by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), and OPC is extensively engaged in advocacy at PJM, FERC, and in federal courts to protect customers from bearing costs driven by real and projected data center growth.<sup>8</sup>

OPC appreciates the opportunity to provide these informational comments on HB 120 and looks forward to continuing to work with the legislature to exercise its authority to protect residential ratepayers from the costs and risks associated with data center development.

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<sup>5</sup> PUA § 4-201 (“[A] public service company shall charge just and reasonable rates for the regulated services that it renders.”).

<sup>6</sup> [Analysis of the 2027/2028 RPM Base Residual Auction Part A, Independent Market Monitor for PJM](#) (Jan. 5, 2026), at 8.

<sup>7</sup> See e.g., Md. Office of People’s Counsel, Comments, PC 72, RM93 Large Load Tariff Work Group.

<sup>8</sup> For more on OPC’s work to address the impacts of data centers, see the [Data Centers](#) page of OPC’s website. OPC’s data center work has also been highlighted in external media outlets.

**Maryland Catholic Conference\_INFOHB120\_.pdf**

Uploaded by: Michelle Zelaya

Position: INFO



MARYLAND  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE

February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2026

**HB120**

**Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers - Co-Location and Generation  
Contingency**

**Environment and Transportation Committee**

**Position: Information only**

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony for information only on **House Bill 120**. The Maryland Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

The Moratorium on Construction of New Data Centers bill would temporarily prohibit the construction of new data centers in Maryland. It also prevents State and local governments from approving any new proposals for data center development. This moratorium remains in effect unless and until the General Assembly enacts specific legislation addressing the co-location of data centers with certain energy sources, including new or existing natural gas facilities, nuclear power generation, or small modular reactors.

**House Bill 120** touches on important issues regarding energy reliability, environmental stewardship, and responsible long-term planning. Data centers require large amounts of energy and can place significant stress on local infrastructure. Data centers can have significant environmental and economic impacts, particularly on our most vulnerable communities. It is essential that, as Maryland continues to pursue growth and technological development, we do so in a way that does not place additional burdens on those already facing hardship. Responsible planning requires us to consider how increased water usage, higher utility costs, and potential environmental damage could harm the very communities we are called to protect.

As stated in *A Pastoral Letter on Artificial Intelligence* from the Catholic Bishops of Maryland, “the development and use of AI must never benefit only the wealthy while extracting data or resources from the poor or violating the rights and dignity of others”. Establishing a pause allows lawmakers and experts time to assess how best to balance technological growth with environmental protection, energy capacity, and community impact.

As data infrastructure continues to expand, it is essential that decisions about future development are made thoughtfully, transparently, and with attention to the needs of the most vulnerable communities. A carefully considered framework for co-location with appropriate power sources can help ensure that economic development does not come at the cost of environmental degradation or inequitable resource distribution.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference has provided information on **House Bill 120**.