

## Testimony on ZTA 26-01 Data Center Commercial Uses - Data Center

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Christina Suggs

I am writing to urge the Council to adopt a temporary moratorium on the approval of large-scale data centers until comprehensive, enforceable regulations are in place.

Data centers are not typical commercial uses. They consume extraordinary amounts of electricity, place significant strain on the regional power grid, may require substantial water resources, and generate constant noise, heat, and light. Without clear standards, these facilities risk undermining Montgomery County's climate goals, increasing infrastructure costs borne by residents, and causing long-term land-use and quality-of-life impacts.

Unregulated or poorly sited data centers can contribute to the loss of farmland and green space, create environmental and community burdens disproportionate to the limited number of permanent jobs they provide, and lock the County into land uses that are difficult to reverse once approved.

A short-term moratorium would allow the Council to act responsibly by establishing clear rules before irreversible decisions are made. These rules should address zoning and siting restrictions, setbacks from residential areas, clean energy and water-use requirements, limits on backup generators and noise, environmental review, transparency in resource consumption, and protections to ensure communities are not left bearing long-term costs.

I respectfully ask the Council to pause approvals and prioritize thoughtful, balanced policy that aligns with Montgomery County's values and long-term interests.

Thank you for your time and service.

Thank You,

Christina Suggs