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

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Dear County Leaders,

 As an ecological scientist who leads a worldwide education project on climate change, solutions and justice, I have been watching the data center situation closely and with great alarm. Put simply, the explosion of proposed large data centers threatens our climate and energy goals, our health, our air and water quality and our family finances.

 There are many unanswered questions about how to safely and economically build and power data centers. As with many boom technologies that supposedly promise great wealth, there is a tendency to build first and ask questions later.

 I thank the County Executive for holding a public forum on data centers in Montgomery County. I attended virtually and listened carefully. There are many unanswered questions, including the one that I posed online, but was never asked. Are those who are proposing diesel backup systems for datacenters aware that diesel fuel is only stable for 6-12 months and needs to be burned before it goes bad?

 There are many questions and few answers. The prudent course of action is to slow down, put a moratorium on the approval of large datacenters and prevent dangerous decisions.

 Here are some resources to help guide your decisionmaking

 Data Centers (Maryland.gov) https://opc.maryland.gov/Consumer-Learning/Data-Centers

Data Centers | Frederick County MD - Official Website
https://frederickcountymd.gov/9122/Data-Centers

Data Center Demand Response Fact Sheet 26 from Delegate Lorig Charkoudian
https://www.lorigd20.com/_files/ugd/d2587d_287c52e434d747e4854002e111e566be.pdf

Companion Toolkit â€" The People Say No: Resisting Data Centers - MediaJustice

https://mediajustice.org/resource/the-people-say-no-toolkit/

Please include my comments in the hearing record.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

David Blockstein, Ph.D.