

We need to slow down and consider the full impact that Data Centers have on the environment including ourselves. I live in Barnesville, a few miles from the Dickerson Powerplant. I also suffer from COPD and am concerned for myself and others who have respiratory issues about siting a data center in this area without strict air pollution standards. Even for those whose lungs are currently healthy, especially children, exposure to particulate pollution can injure lungs and cause health issues that will remain for a lifetime. We are also in a Climate Crisis and the last thing we need is an industry that consumes vast amounts of electricity generated from fossil fuels. I understand that Data Centers rely on backup Diesel generators that need to be tested monthly. If the Dickerson facility (which has said it will use them) consumes a gigawatt of energy it would need to test a gigawatt of diesel generators monthly. This is a huge public health issue - and not just for the upcounty. The entire county is already breathing dirtier air as a result of Virginia's data centers. The ZTA you are considering would allow data centers and their generators on all industrial land which exists in every corner of the county in already underserved areas. There is so much we don't know about data centers, it is time for a pause while solid regulations are crafted that protect health, wallets, the Potomac and our climate goals. The current proposed ZTA is not taking these serious impacts into account

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

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Joyce Bailey
Barnesville, Maryland

Let us slow down and move more deliberately as we consider the presence of data centers in Montgomery County. I live in Barnesville, a few miles from the proposed Data Center at the old Dickerson Power Plant site. I have COPD and am sensitive to air pollutants especially particulates. Even those of us with healthy lungs risk damage when exposed to long term air pollution. The Climate Crisis has already begun and the last thing we need now is another industry that needs massive amounts of fossil fuel generated electricity.

Data centers are entirely new, complex and increasingly controversial. This is a land use that we have no zoning code for. This proposed ZTA 26-01 is silent on the most impactful issues with data centers - namely the impact on our regional water, power supply and health. The scale of these projects is unlike anything else in the county and the zoning needs to acknowledge that. I've read the data centers will use the same energy as hundreds of thousands of houses and millions of gallons of the Potomac we can't afford to lose. Regulations that take stakeholders into account and balance data centers with climate goals and resource protection will take some time to get right. Please put a moratorium into place quickly to allow the time to craft zoning that takes the real issues into account. We need to pause like several other Maryland jurisdictions have done. Please include my comments in the hearing record.

Thank You,

Joyce Bailey