

Lauren Greenberger
Dickerson, MD

I am not opposed to data centers. I understand that they are needed now and will be an integral part of our future. I understand both the incredible power for good of artificial intelligence, and also the dangers and believe that that is an area we need to navigate carefully as well but whether we like it or not, it is here and it's already part of every institution we rely on.

The question, then is, how do we build the data centers we need so that they serve us and not just the companies that build them?

These facilities are vastly costly to build, require the use of enormous amounts of electricity, and depending on the technology used, huge amounts of water. None of these do we have an unlimited supply of.

We can allow data centers to be built on the terms of the companies that want to build them, or we can allow them to be built on our terms. There is technology that significantly reduces the need for electricity and also technology that allows for recirculating water throughout the data center rather than continually pumping water out of the river. And then there's the financing. Our country has moved in a startling direction away from having a robust and thriving middle class to a country of ultra rich and increasingly poor citizens. There is no reason why the burden of these new data centers should be on the backs of Montgomery County residents. We need a regulatory framework that requires the builders to shoulder the cost of these facilities and requires the builders to use the absolutely best technology to build them so that we benefit equally or more than those who want to come here to Montgomery County and build these industrial facilities.

I am not opposed to having them, but please step back and get your ducks in order. Create strict guidelines so that when a data center is built, it is done so using the absolute best available technology and building practices that protect us and also help support the residents of Montgomery County. We have allowed the tech billionaires to call the shots for too long and the current federal administration is trying to open the door, even more to allowing these individuals to run our lives. Our planning board and County council can regulate that here in our county.

As public servants, I call on you to create a regulatory framework that protects us all and brings data centers here to our County on our terms, not on theirs

Thank you for your attention,

Lauren Greenberger