

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

March 3, 2026

Melanie Kurimchak
Clarksburg, Maryland

Dear Councilmembers,

I am writing as a resident of the Agricultural Reserve and as your neighbor.

I understand that data centers rely on backup diesel generators that are tested every month. If the proposed Dickerson facility draws close to a gigawatt of power, that means testing an enormous amount of diesel capacity on a regular basis. That is not a small impact. It affects air quality, public health, and quality of life well beyond one neighborhood.

Water is an equally serious concern for my family. We rely on a shallow well, and our water pressure is already limited. When we first moved in, filling a small children's pool depleted our well and we had to reprime it. That experience made it very clear how fragile our water supply can be. Large scale industrial water use in this area feels fundamentally misaligned with the realities on the ground.

Dickerson's roads are narrow, winding, and surrounded by working farmland. They are part of what makes this community special. Expanding heavy industrial use into every industrial zone across the county, many of which sit near underserved communities, raises real equity and infrastructure concerns that deserve more careful consideration.

I work with large language models in my professional life. I believe AI is here to stay. But that does not mean we should rush ahead without clear guardrails. If anything, the companies building these frontier systems should be leading on sustainability, not asking our communities to absorb the costs while the regulations are still vague.

There is still too much we do not know. I urge you to pause this ZTA and take the time to craft thoughtful, protective regulations that safeguard our health, our water, and our long term climate goals.

Respectfully,

Melanie Kurimchak