

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

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As electricity rates continue to climb, and drought does not long abate, it is irresponsible for Montgomery County not to take the time and make the effort to thoroughly study all of the effects of allowing data centers to operate at Dickerson. This unseemly rush to give these data centers priority over county residents' concerns tends to show that the County does not care about its people and voters. It may be that allowing the data centers will bring more benefits than detriments, but without time and consideration, we cannot trust in the decision. I also note that data center proponents promise great things, which have not come to fruition in other jurisdictions.

At the community forum on data centers the other night I was struck that it seems like no one has done a cost-benefit analysis of whether the county will really reap any rewards from hosting data centers. All residents are left with are the stories from other cities where data centers have caused havoc with water, noise and more. The cluster of data centers in Dickerson got pre-approval without a site plan - we now know they have applied to use 2 Million gallons of the Potomac each day.

Without hard numbers on both sides of the ledger, how do we know if data centers are good for the county? Take a moratorium to get some answers and build strong policies that make data centers work for all of us. Please include my comments in the hearing record.

Thank You,

Robert Skelton