

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

February 26, 2026

sandy rosenblatt
rockville, MD

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. Right now our River has been polluted & it took our elected leaders weeks to even warn the citizens. And even then it was only a small few of you. In the summer months, the Potomac runs low to empty in the spots by Cabin John. How can you justify building data centers knowing that? Being transparent we have sat back and watched you allow for so much natural destruction of the area. It is clear you have little to no desire to protect the environment and basically you are as bad as the republicans who are attacking the environment. The only difference is, they are being more transparent about it and are not hiding about not caring about it. If you have kids, the legacy you will be leaving them will be more pollution, & lack of nature. Rapid deforestation in the region is happening at an alarming rate and directly contributing to increasing polluted runoff. Worse still, streamside trees receive a D+ in reports about the Potomac and the waterways that flow into it signaling the region's failure to meet its planting goals. Your failure. That is because of you. Forested lands stabilize stream banks, absorb rainwater, and filter polluted runoff. Forests quite literally tree-t our water. The climate crisis is intensifying storms and lengthening droughts in our region's extreme conditions that weaken nature's defenses and increase polluted runoff. Rising river levels, hotter stream temperatures, and changing seasons are further straining the local ecosystem. But all of you know this, yet you continue to contribute and allow for the contribution of destruction. 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,

sandy rosenblatt