



SPOKANE COUNTY REPUBLICAN PARTY RESOLUTION

Moratorium on New Data Center Construction Pending Independent Economic, Environmental, and Public Health Review

Executive Summary: The rapid expansion of data centers has raised significant concerns regarding electricity demand, water consumption, environmental quality, public health, utility costs, infrastructure burdens, and community impacts. Reported data indicate that some facilities consume millions of gallons of water per day and substantial electrical capacity. This resolution calls for a temporary moratorium until independent analysis verifies net community benefits and demonstrates no significant harm.

WHEREAS, data centers are among the fastest-growing industrial and commercial land uses in the United States due to expanding cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and digital infrastructure demands; and

WHEREAS, the Congressional Research Service reported that U.S. data centers consumed approximately 176 terawatt-hours (TWh) of electricity in 2023, representing approximately 4.4% of total U.S. electricity consumption, with some forecasts projecting data centers could account for up to 12% of national electricity use by 2028; and

WHEREAS, the substantial electrical demand of data centers may require new generation resources, transmission infrastructure, substations, and grid upgrades that can increase costs borne by utility ratepayers and taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, data center growth has raised concerns regarding electric grid reliability, power shortages, and the increased risk of supply constraints during periods of peak demand, extreme weather, or other grid emergencies; and

WHEREAS, cooling systems for large data centers can require significant quantities of water, and reports indicate that a single large data center may consume up to five million gallons of water per day, comparable to the water use of a medium-sized town; and

WHEREAS, national data center water consumption was reported at approximately 17.4 billion gallons in 2023 and is projected to increase substantially in coming years; and

WHEREAS, reports from multiple communities have documented concerns regarding the consumption of municipal drinking water, groundwater, and aquifer resources for data center cooling operations, particularly in regions facing drought risks or water supply constraints; and

WHEREAS, in The Dalles, Oregon, Google data centers reportedly accounted for nearly 40 percent of the city's total water consumption in 2025, illustrating the potential scale of localized impacts; and

WHEREAS, the operation of backup diesel generators and other support equipment associated with many data centers may contribute to air quality concerns and emissions affecting surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, residents in numerous jurisdictions have raised concerns regarding noise pollution, including continuous equipment noise, fan systems, cooling systems, and low-frequency vibrations that may affect nearby homes, schools, healthcare facilities, and places of business; and

WHEREAS, community stakeholders have reported concerns regarding potential impacts on public health, quality of life, sleep disturbance, stress, and other effects associated with persistent industrial noise and harmonic vibration; and

WHEREAS, construction and operation of large-scale data centers may require publicly funded road improvements, utility extensions, water infrastructure, wastewater infrastructure, and electrical transmission facilities that can impose significant costs on local governments and residents; and

WHEREAS, questions remain regarding whether the economic benefits promised by certain large-scale data center developments, including employment opportunities and tax revenues, are proportionate to their long-term environmental, infrastructure, and utility costs; and

WHEREAS, independent disclosure and verification of water use, energy consumption, emissions, infrastructure costs, noise impacts, and cumulative environmental impacts are often limited or inconsistent among jurisdictions, making objective evaluation difficult; and

WHEREAS, prudent public policy requires that major industrial development demonstrate measurable net public benefit and avoid causing material harm to environmental resources, public health, utility affordability, or community well-being before additional expansion is authorized;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Section 1. Moratorium.

A moratorium shall be imposed on the approval, permitting, rezoning, construction, expansion, or substantial modification of new data center facilities within the jurisdiction until the requirements of this Resolution have been satisfied.

Section 2. Independent Review.

Prior to lifting the moratorium, an independent third-party analysis shall be completed and publicly released evaluating:

1. Electricity demand and grid reliability impacts;
2. Water consumption, groundwater, aquifer, and watershed impacts;
3. Air quality and emissions impacts;
4. Water quality impacts;
5. Noise and vibration impacts on nearby communities;
6. Public health impacts;
7. Utility ratepayer impacts;
8. Infrastructure and taxpayer costs;
9. Economic benefits, including employment and tax revenues;
10. Property value impacts;
11. Cumulative environmental impacts; and
12. Alternative technologies and mitigation measures.

Section 3. Burden of Proof.

The burden shall rest with project applicants to demonstrate, through independently verified evidence, that proposed facilities will not cause significant environmental, economic, health, or community harm.

Section 4. Conditions for Lifting the Moratorium.

The moratorium shall remain in effect until independent evidence demonstrates that:

- a. Data center operations do not cause significant adverse impacts to air quality, water quality, water availability, public health, or community well-being;
- b. Utility and infrastructure costs imposed on residents, taxpayers, and ratepayers are fully identified and offset;
- c. The measurable economic benefits exceed the total public, environmental, and infrastructure costs;
- d. The net benefit to consumers is positive, quantifiable, and independently verified;
- e. The net benefit to affected communities is positive, quantifiable, and independently verified; and
- f. Effective monitoring, transparency, and enforcement mechanisms are established and funded.

Section 5. Transparency Requirements.

Any future data center proposal shall be required to publicly disclose projected and actual energy consumption, water consumption, emissions, noise levels, infrastructure costs, tax incentives, utility impacts, and mitigation measures on an annual basis.

Section 6. Community Protection.

The governing body affirms that the protection of public health, environmental resources, utility affordability, and quality of life shall take precedence whenever uncertainty exists regarding the impacts of large-scale data center development.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Spokane County Republican Party declares that no new data center construction, expansion, or related infrastructure development shall be approved unless and until independent, transparent, and publicly available analyses demonstrate that such projects will result in no significant harm to environmental resources, public health, water supplies, air quality, utility affordability, or community quality of life; that all direct and indirect costs are fully accounted for; and that the net economic and social benefits to consumers and affected communities are positive, measurable, substantial, and independently verified.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that when credible scientific uncertainty exists regarding potential environmental, health, economic, or community impacts, the precautionary principle shall apply, and protection of residents, natural resources, and future generations shall take precedence over project approval until such uncertainty is resolved through independent evidence.

Adopted by we, the delegated representatives of the Republican electors of Spokane County, assembled in convention on this 22nd day of August 2026.

Signed: _____,

Chair, Spokane County Republican Party Convention

Signed: _____,

Secretary, Spokane County Republican Party Convention