

The

DATA CENTER COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT ACT

of 2026

Emerging technologies that Americans increasingly rely on every day—from artificial intelligence to cloud computing—depend on data centers and the infrastructure that supports them. As demand for these technologies grows, communities across the country will face decisions about whether and how to accommodate new data center development. Data centers can bring new investment and economic opportunities, but they can also place new demands on local infrastructure. Communities deserve clear, reliable, and objective information about these benefits and trade-offs so local leaders can make informed decisions about what is right for their communities.

The ***Data Center Community Empowerment Act of 2026*** would give communities access to technical expertise to better understand the potential benefits, costs, and infrastructure impacts of proposed data center development—while leaving decisions about whether and how to accommodate that development in the hands of local communities.

The bill would establish a program at the Department of Energy (DOE) to:

- Provide technical assistance to State, local, and Tribal governments on the potential energy, water, infrastructure, economic, and other community impacts associated with data center development;
- Develop a Data Center Community Toolkit with easy-to-understand information and resources specifically designed for nontechnical local officials;
- Provide independent project analysis at a community's request, including an assessment of information voluntarily provided by a data center developer and the reliability of its data and reasonableness of its assumptions, projections, and conclusions; and
- Preserve local decision-making by requiring DOE to remain neutral on individual data center projects and prohibiting the Department from recommending whether a particular project should be approved or rejected.

U.S. Senators John Curtis (R-UT) and Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-DE)