



ARIZONA DATA CENTERS: MAKE BIG TECH PAY

THE PROBLEM

YOUR BILLS ARE RISING & BIG TECH IS TO BLAME

Big Tech companies like **Amazon, Apple, Google, Meta, Microsoft, and OpenAI** are racing to build massive data centers across the country to power artificial intelligence (AI). These facilities are big-time electricity guzzlers, and all that power costs money at a time when families are already stretched by grocery, gas, and housing costs. Big Tech isn't paying for it – **you are**.

APS, Arizona's largest utility, is asking regulators for a **14% increase** – about **\$240 a year** for the typical household – and a **45% increase** for large users like data centers.¹

Phoenix is the **second-largest data center market** in North America, with roughly **98 facilities operating** and **86 more** planned or under construction. One major utility says it must **at least double** its generation over the next decade.²

Data center growth could raise electricity bills by as much as **25%** in some regional markets.³

THEY PROFIT. YOU PAY.

BIG TECH CASHES IN

\$63.5 million in Arizona tax
breaks in three years⁵

YOU PAY

+\$240 a year, the increase
APS is seeking from
regulators¹

BIG TECH GETS MILLIONS. YOU GET HIGHER BILLS

Taxpayers are subsidizing the data center boom, through backroom deals for subsidies, tax incentives, and special treatment that amount to **giveaways to Big Tech**.

Data centers nationwide receive industry-specific **tax breaks** that shift costs onto households and small businesses.⁴

Arizona's data center tax exemption cost the state's general fund **\$63.5 million** in three recent years. When lawmakers paused it, **113 applications** poured in during the final two weeks before the door closed.⁵

THE JOB CREATION MYTH

FEWER JOBS. RISING COSTS

"Tech companies are investing hundreds of billions of dollars in data centers across the country. But despite the record-setting price tags, the centers create few jobs."

NPR'S ALL THINGS CONSIDERED⁶

Big Tech promises economic development, but data centers create **few permanent local jobs** while raising costs for existing small businesses.

Data centers are among the least labor-intensive structures in the economy, generating roughly **one permanent job per 5,000 square feet**.⁷

Meta's Mesa campus – **2.5 million square feet** across five buildings on 396 acres – supports about **200 permanent jobs**. Google's nearby Mesa site received a **\$16 million** property tax break over 25 years.⁸

THE SECRECY

THEY'RE HIDING WHO THEY ARE

Local officials are forced to sign **non-disclosure agreements**, and companies **sue towns that say no**.^{10 11}

In Tucson, Amazon spent roughly **two years** negotiating a **\$3.6 billion** campus behind non-disclosure agreements, under the code name **"Project Blue"**.⁹

Residents and county supervisors did not learn Amazon was behind it until a document **leaked to a reporter a month after the vote**. The city council then blocked the project, and the county rewrote its rules on non-disclosure agreements.⁹

PUBLIC OPINION

ARIZONANS OVERWHELMINGLY OPPOSE BIG TECH'S DEMANDS

An August 2026 statewide poll found **57% of Arizona voters oppose** more large data centers, and opposition is intense: **35% strongly oppose** against just 9% who strongly support. Majorities of **Republicans, Democrats and independents** all want the state to limit new development.¹²

Nationally, **71% of Americans** oppose building an AI data center in their local area – **more than oppose a nuclear power plant** nearby (53%).¹³

Overall, **85% of Americans** want lawmakers to pass a law that forces Big Tech, not taxpayers, to pay for the true cost of data centers.¹⁴

WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE

- **Big Tech creates these costs, so Big Tech should pay them.** Not the family down the road, and not the small business trying to keep the lights on.
- Stop the false choice between community investment and giving trillion-dollar companies **blank checks**. Force tech giants to pay for their data centers, instead of hardworking Arizonans.
- Pass **real state-level ratepayer protections** into law and end the billions in annual state and local tax breaks for data center construction. That's money that should fund schools, healthcare, and strategic, sustainable long-term economic development.
- Arizona did two things this year: it **paused new tax breaks** for data centers, and it gave the Corporation Commission power to require minimum bills, long contracts, collateral and cost-of-service studies from the largest users. But the pause is **temporary** and expires in 2029 – the Governor asked to end the exemption outright and did not get it. ¹⁵
- **End the exemption instead of pausing it**, and use that new authority for **every large user** in the state, so the cost of serving a data center is charged to the data center and not to the household next door. ¹⁵

MAKE BIG TECH PAY!

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