



IOWA 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**.

Average Iowa electric bills rose by **5.2%** in 2025, an increase of roughly **\$70** per household.¹

Across MISO – the multi-state grid that powers Iowa – peak demand is projected to jump **35% by 2035**, with data centers driving roughly a fifth of all demand by 2030.²

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

\$208 million in Iowa tax breaks & subsidies for a single Apple data center⁵

YOU PAY

+\$70 more on your electric bill in 2025¹

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

Over the last ten years, Apple, Google, Microsoft, and Meta have bagged **hundreds of millions of dollars** in Iowa subsidies – including **\$208 million** in state and local incentives for Apple's Waukeez project alone.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

Apple's Waukeez data center promises only **50 permanent jobs** on a 400,000-square-foot site – more than **\$4 million in taxpayer money for every permanent job**.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}

Iowa's Utilities Commission keeps data center electricity contracts **confidential as "trade secrets,"** so the public cannot see the terms it is being asked to backstop.⁹

Google built its Cedar Rapids project through a **shell company**, "Heavyside LLC."⁹

PUBLIC OPINION

IOWANS OVERWHELMINGLY OPPOSE BIG TECH'S DEMANDS

An August 2026 Emerson College poll shows **62% of Iowans oppose** data centers being built in or near their community, nearly three times the 24% who support them.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 Iowans.
- 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.
- Right now, Iowa has **no separate rate class** for data centers, the contracts setting their electricity rates are **sealed as trade secrets**, and 2025's HF 976 only put **end dates** on the tax exemptions instead of ending them.¹⁵
- Pass **HF 2690** to require transparent large-load rate classes at the Iowa Utilities Commission, open those contracts to the public, and **end the exemptions outright** – so data centers, not households, cover the cost of connecting to the grid.¹⁵

MAKE BIG TECH PAY!

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