



MARYLAND 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 Maryland electric bills rose by **11.6%** in 2025, an increase of roughly **\$230** per household.¹

Data centers drove **63% of the record price spike** in the PJM capacity market that serves Maryland – **\$9.3 billion** in a single year. In western Maryland, households already pay about **\$18 a month** in those capacity costs.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

\$22 million a year in
Maryland tax breaks – a
number the public had to pry
loose with a records request⁵

YOU PAY

+\$230 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

Maryland gives up about **\$22 million a year** to data center tax breaks – a figure that surfaced only through a **public records request**. The state has not updated its legally required tax expenditure reports since **2022**.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

The Quantum Frederick campus covers **2,100 acres** and could draw up to **2 gigawatts** – by one local group's estimate, twice the power of every home in Baltimore City. The whole campus is projected to produce about **1,700 permanent jobs**.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}

More than **21,000 Frederick County residents** signed a petition to put data center zoning to a public vote. The state's highest court **blocked the referendum** before anyone could cast a ballot.⁹

A bill requiring data centers to report what they use died in committee after the industry called it burdensome. The reporting rules that did pass were written, in the industry's own words, to **"respect the need for confidentiality."**⁹

PUBLIC OPINION

MARYLANDERS OVERWHELMINGLY OPPOSE BIG TECH'S DEMANDS

A summer 2026 statewide poll found **three in four Marylanders** are concerned about the impact of data centers – and the single biggest worry, named by 39%, is **higher electric bills**.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 Marylanders.
- 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.
- Maryland passed the **Utility RELIEF Act** this year. It creates a separate rate class for large power users, requires data centers to **register with the Public Service Commission** and disclose how their power will be served, and is projected to save households at least \$150 a year. Frederick County has paused new development until developers prove they have registered.¹⁵
- Regulators should write that rate class with **real teeth**, so data centers carry the full cost of the grid they require. And the legislature should pass the **transparency requirements the industry killed** – starting with updating the tax expenditure reports the state has owed the public since 2022.¹⁵

MAKE BIG TECH PAY!

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