



VIRGINIA 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 Virginia electric bills rose by **9.5%** in 2025, an increase of roughly **\$170** per household.¹

Data centers drove **63% of the record price spike** in the PJM capacity market – **\$9.3 billion** in a single year – and Virginia is the epicenter: capacity fees in the Dominion zone run about **65% higher** than the rest of the grid.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

\$1.9 billion in Virginia tax breaks in a single year⁵

YOU PAY

+\$170 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

Virginia's data center sales tax exemption cost **\$1.9 billion** in a single year – state and local revenue actually forgone, not an estimate – and it has been on the books since 2010.⁵

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

By the legislature's own study, a typical 250,000-square-foot data center employs about **50 full-time workers**, and **half of those are contractors**. Loudoun County alone holds roughly **31 million square feet** of data centers, the largest concentration in the world.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}

The secrecy is so routine that the Governor had to **ban state agencies from signing non-disclosure agreements** for data center projects by executive order in September.⁹

Virginia Connects, a front group created by the Data Center Coalition, spent more than **\$700,000** in a single year on ads without disclosing the Big Tech companies behind it. The Coalition's own president is listed as its principal officer.⁹

It is **not a Virginia group**. It is one of eight near-identical operations the Data Center Coalition set up across the country, running the same website and the same ads.⁹

PUBLIC OPINION

VIRGINIANS OVERWHELMINGLY OPPOSE BIG TECH'S DEMANDS

A statewide survey of likely voters found **73% blame data centers** for rising electricity costs in Virginia, and **89%** say it is important for state lawmakers to act on their impacts.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 Virginians.
- 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.
- Virginia just moved: a September executive order **bans state agencies from signing NDAs**, ends by-right approval for data centers over 25 MW, and pulls them from fast-track permitting. But it is an **executive order**, and it leaves the **\$1.9 billion sales tax exemption** untouched – only the General Assembly can end that. ¹⁵
- The **General Assembly** should **end the data center sales tax exemption** and write the accountability standards into law, so the protections outlast this administration and the giveaway ends with it. ¹⁵

MAKE BIG TECH PAY!

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