



## NEBRASKA 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**.

Nebraskans own their power companies, and the bills are climbing anyway. Omaha Public Power District raised rates **6.3%** for 2026 after a roughly **20% increase** since 2021. <sup>1</sup>

Data centers took **1%** of OPPD's electricity sales in 2018. By 2024 they took **21%**. The utility projects **41%** by 2035 – nearly half of everything it sells, going to a handful of companies. <sup>2</sup>

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

# THEY PROFIT. YOU PAY.

### BIG TECH CASHES IN

**\$317 million** in tax credits to  
data centers since 2021 <sup>5</sup>

### YOU PAY

**+6.3%** on your power bill this  
year <sup>1</sup>

## 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.<sup>4</sup>

Nebraska handed data centers **\$317 million** in tax credits between 2021 and this June, and exempted **\$15 billion** of their equipment from property tax. Google paid **\$55.8 million** in state sales and use taxes last year, and expects to be refunded **every cent of it**.<sup>5</sup>

### 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 CONSIDERED<sup>6</sup>

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**.<sup>7</sup>

Meta has collected more than **\$310 million** in Nebraska subsidies, more than any other company in the state, for a campus that supports about **300 permanent jobs**. That is roughly **\$1 million of public money for every job**.<sup>8</sup>

### THE SECRECY

## THEY'RE HIDING WHO THEY ARE

---

Local officials are forced to sign **non-disclosure agreements**, and companies **sue towns that say no**.<sup>10 11</sup>

Google operates its Nebraska data centers under the name **Agate LLC**, and told the state that how much electricity and water it uses is a **trade secret**. One of its sites draws **52.65 megawatts** at peak and **13 million gallons** of water a year.<sup>9</sup>

Meta collects its Nebraska subsidies under the name **Raven Northbrook LLC**. Several of its other awards from the state are recorded with **no dollar value at all**.<sup>9</sup>

### PUBLIC OPINION

## NEBRASKANS OVERWHELMINGLY OPPOSE BIG TECH'S DEMANDS

---

Opposition in Nebraska is crossing party lines. Residents in both parties are turning out to protest proposed projects, and the state's Republican Governor has pulled the industry's tax incentives.<sup>12</sup>

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

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.<sup>14</sup>

# 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 Nebraskans.
- 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.
- Nebraska has already acted. The Governor **revoked tax incentives** for new data centers in July, the standalone sales tax exemption was repealed, and a task force is studying what the industry costs the state. But it was done by **executive order**, it reaches only **new** projects, and the task force does not report until 2027.<sup>15</sup>
- The Legislature should write it into statute so the next governor cannot undo it, apply it to the data centers **already operating here**, and close the **trade secret loophole** that let a company hide its power and water use from the public that supplies both.<sup>15</sup>

## MAKE BIG TECH PAY!

### SOURCES

1. Omaha Public Power District, 2026 Corporate Operating Plan, approved December 18, 2025, [oppdcommunityconnect.com](https://oppdcommunityconnect.com); Nebraska Public Media, "Nebraskans cope with rising demand, prices for electricity," [nebraskapublicmedia.org](https://nebraskapublicmedia.org)
2. Nebraska Public Media, "Nebraskans cope with rising demand, prices for electricity," citing Omaha Public Power District sales figures, [nebraskapublicmedia.org](https://nebraskapublicmedia.org)
3. Carnegie Mellon University, "Data Center Growth Could Increase Electricity Bills 8% Nationally and as Much as 25% in Some Regional Markets," July 16, 2025, [cmu.edu](https://cmu.edu)
4. Union of Concerned Scientists, "Finally, Something Everyone Agrees On: Data Centers Should Cover Their Own Costs," November 6, 2025, [blog.ucs.org](https://blog.ucs.org)
5. Nebraska Public Media, "Pillen ends tax incentives for data center developers building in Nebraska," July 2026, citing the Governor's office and Good Jobs First, [nebraskapublicmedia.org](https://nebraskapublicmedia.org); Nebraska Department of Water, Energy and Environment data center annual reports, 2026, reported by [1011now.com](https://1011now.com)
6. NPR: Stephan Bisaha, All Things Considered, "Data centers bring money to small towns. But do they also bring jobs?," April 10, 2025, [npr.org](https://npr.org)
7. Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (Virginia), "Data Centers in Virginia," December 2024, [jlarc.virginia.gov](https://jlarc.virginia.gov) (full report)
8. Good Jobs First, Subsidy Tracker, Raven Northbrook LLC / Meta Platforms Inc. (Nebraska state awards, 2017 to 2024), [subsidytracker.goodjobsfirst.org](https://subsidytracker.goodjobsfirst.org); Meta, Sarpy County data center fact sheet, [datacenters.atmeta.com](https://datacenters.atmeta.com)
9. Good Jobs First, Subsidy Tracker, Raven Northbrook LLC / Meta Platforms Inc., [subsidytracker.goodjobsfirst.org](https://subsidytracker.goodjobsfirst.org); 1011 News, "Improper redaction reveals Lincoln's Google Data Center water and electricity usage," September 30, 2026, [1011now.com](https://1011now.com)
10. NBC News, "How Big Tech uses NDAs to hide AI data center details from Americans," October 28, 2025, [nbcnews.com](https://nbcnews.com)
11. Washington Post: Daniel Wu, "Towns are saying no to AI data centers. One got sued over it.," October 13, 2025, [washingtonpost.com](https://washingtonpost.com)
12. Nebraska Examiner, "Data center opposition is growing, with Nebraskans crossing party lines in protest," September 22, 2026, [nebraskaexaminer.com](https://nebraskaexaminer.com)
13. Gallup, "Americans Oppose AI Data Centers in Their Area," May 13, 2026, [news.gallup.com](https://news.gallup.com)
14. Tech Oversight Project, "Registered Voter Omnibus," December 2025, [techoversight.org](https://techoversight.org)
15. Nebraska Executive Order No. 26-17, July 20, 2026, [governor.nebraska.gov](https://governor.nebraska.gov); Nebraska Department of Water, Energy and Environment Data Center Task Force