

SUPPORT HB1601 & SB1449

Topic: Data Center Transparency

Bill Patron: Delegate Josh Thomas and Senator Adam Ebbin

OVERVIEW:

House Bill 1601 seeks to address certain transparency and information concerns around high-energy use facilities (over 100MW), mainly large data centers. The bill would require data center developers to provide localities with a site assessment examining their noise impact on nearby residential areas and schools. The bill would also clarify existing code ensure that if localities want to consider impacts on water, agriculture, parks, historic sites, forests, and electric utility infrastructure, they have the authority to require this information.

REASONS TO SUPPORT:

- JLARC's Data Center Report identified that numerous localities are uncertain if they are allowed to consider impacts to resources beyond the immediate site of projects before them, such as regional water supply, the electric grid, and other resources. This bill seeks to solve that problem.
- Moreover, JLARC's report, along with lived community experiences around Virginia, indicates the clear need for deeper and more meaningful consideration of noise impacts on communities.
- Overall, this bill supports one of the four pillars of data center reform – increased transparency around the industry. Combined with the other three bills, localities will be better equipped to make responsible decisions, and the state will be in a better position to ensure the data center industry is operating in harmony with communities and the environment.



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This position was taken by Virginia Conservation Network (VCN)'s Legislative Committee and Board of Directors and is supported by Virginia's conservation community. For a complete list of VCN positions, visit www.vcnva.org/bill-tracker. VCN is committed to building a powerful, diverse, and highly-coordinated conservation movement focused on protecting our Commonwealth's natural resources today and for tomorrow.