

SUPPORT HB1515

Topic: Temporary Moratorium on Local Approvals of Data Centers

Bill Patron: Delegate Irene Shin

OVERVIEW:

Pauses local land use approvals of new data centers until existing interconnection requests have been fulfilled, or until July 2028, whichever comes first. Specifically bill prohibits final approval of any application for a rezoning, special exception, special use permit, site plan, or plan of development for the siting of a new data center by a locality until the earlier of (i) the fulfillment of all pending requests for interconnection to distribution service by an electric utility customer that is a data center or (ii) July 1, 2028.”

REASONS TO SUPPORT:

- Dominion Energy in Virginia currently holds electric contracts with data center customers for 47GW's of power, with around 10GW being in the final Electric Service Agreement stage. Most of those likely already have their local land use approvals.
- A temporary moratorium on local data center approvals until pending requests for interconnection to the grid have been fulfilled, provides a critically needed pause to allow for the orderly and fair connection of that pending load. Meaning, those holding all local land use approvals are able to complete their projects with more assurance of power being delivered to them first.
- This will not stop data center development, but it will provide clarity on timelines for the provision of power to data center customers and prevent more projects piling up in an already flooded queue.
- The moratorium will also reduce land speculation for data center development by sending a clear signal to the industry that there is a deficit of power here in Virginia. As well as making it clear that trying to locate new data centers projects closer to generation or transmission lines will not allow you to jump ahead in the queue for power.
- There are numerous data centers already built in Northern Virginia that are waiting for power, and many other facilities under construction. This bill offers a practical and reasonable approach that will help to reduce speculative and sprawling data center development in the Virginia real estate market.



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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.