

# SUPPORT SB552

Topic: Data Center State Oversight

Bill Patron: Sen. Glen Sturtevant

## OVERVIEW:

SB552 seeks to add additional state oversight over large data center proposals. The bill would require data center developers to submit a site plan to the Department of Environmental Quality, which would then examine water source, air emissions, construction impacts, and more. The Department would then hold public hearings, allowing the public to weigh in on the project's potential cumulative environmental impacts beyond the borders of the locality considering the development. The bill allows the Department to institute conditions or mitigation requirements on the development beyond what is already considered by the agency.

## REASONS TO SUPPORT:

- Virginia is the data center capital of the world, with more than 88 million square feet in operation currently, with more than 400 million square feet of development approved by localities around the Commonwealth. Data centers have significant environmental impacts, from water use to energy use, and beyond. Despite this rapid growth and these known impacts, the state's environmental agencies do not do any kind of site assessment or cumulative impact mitigation. As more data centers continue to get approved and constructed, the state should play a larger role in the process. This would ensure that shared resources like air, water, and our grid, are not negatively impacted
- This bill would ensure ample public engagement in potentially impactful development projects, protecting communities and environmental resources, while also giving DEQ the ability to require and enforce mitigation of potential impacts. It would give a voice to impacted individuals that may not reside in the locality considering the data center development.



National Parks Conservation Association  
Kyle Hart  
Senior Mid-Atlantic Program Manager  
khart@npca.org  
202-400-1193



Virginia Conservation Network  
Fatima Kamara, Land Use & Transportation  
Campaign & Policy Manager  
[fatima@vcnva.org](mailto:fatima@vcnva.org)  
Fatima: (757) 309-6647

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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](http://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.