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I am Cathy Johnson, the chair of the Coalition for Responsible Data Center Development, from Farmington, MN. Please, allow me to be up front: our coalition is not opposed to data centers, but have great concern, because lack of regulation and the tax incentives from the state.

These tax subsidies are going straight to the pockets of out of state companies such as Amazon, Google, Meta and Microsoft. Once the construction phase is complete, the state will still be granting subsidies for operating these centers, with very few permanent jobs being created in the process.

- How is that fair to Minnesota tax payers and families?
- How does the well documented rise in land values make it any easier for MN families to find affordable housing?
- How does taking millions out of our states tax revenue allow families to pay for essentials such as, groceries, day care or health care?

Bo Williams, a Microsoft executive responsible for data centers in North America, stated in the NY Times, "I can't think of site selection or placement decision, that was decided on a set of tax incentives Developers and multi-billion-dollar corporations are reaping the benefits, using our resources, but who is taking the risks? MN Citizens!

Developers are unscrupulously trying to site these data centers any place large parcels of land are located near high voltage power lines, sometimes in residential communities or near environmentally fragile sites. This ensures premium profit for themselves, with no regard for the effect on our electrical supply, water supply, value of our homes, noise, air pollution, and quality of life for residents. Again, the risks are born by the people. Are the promised "windfall of taxes to cities and townships" going to be greater than our increased electric bills or water bills, or damaged electrical appliances caused by "bad harmonics"? Those events are the norm in places where data centers have already located. In those states, power companies are promising lower rates, but turning around and passing the cost of infrastructure onto the citizens, and their profits are mushrooming. Why do you think that it will be any different here?

I ask that the legislature of MN be at the helm of data center development in Minnesota and do not leave decisions about data centers parameters in the hands of predatory, out of state developers. Expect them to pay their own way, instead of granting uncapped tax subsidies, coming out of the pockets of your constituents and going right into the pockets of billionaires. Now is the time for our legislative leaders to wholistically examine all aspects of hyper scale data centers, and demand transparency, accountability, and to ensure that the promised financial benefits of these data center are real, balanced, and do not diminish the quality of life and financial wellbeing of Minnesota citizens. The people of Minnesota, with the help of the government, have worked long and hard to protect our valuable resources and have a highly trained and educated workforce. Any corporation desiring to do business in our state should want to enhance this legacy and improve upon it for generations to come. If some data centers are going to come here, let them come responsibly and make them pay their own way.

Pertinent research links :

<https://www.startribune.com/big-tech-will-use-minnesota-tax-breaks-for-an-influx-of-data-centers-nobody-knows-how-much-it-will-cost/601218607>

<https://minnesotareformer.com/2024/04/04/legislature-considering-up-front-sales-tax-break-for-corporations-data-centers-in-minnesota/>