



The Texas Senate Democratic Caucus is calling for an immediate moratorium on the approval of new data centers, including state permitting and certification for tax exemptions, until the Legislature reconvenes and can establish responsible statewide standards that protect Texas families, local communities, and energy and water resources.

Governor Abbott's latest proposal asks data center developers to check a few additional boxes while allowing business as usual to continue. Texans deserve more than a paperwork exercise. They deserve real oversight, transparency, and policies that place communities ahead of special interests.

For years Republican leaders have eroded local control, leaving cities and counties without the authority they need to manage the impacts of large-scale industrial development. The results are predictable: Communities face increased strain on their energy and water supplies, rising costs for residential ratepayers, and little meaningful input into decisions that directly affect their neighborhoods.

A moratorium would give the Legislature time to determine how best to ensure:

- Texans are not subsidizing data center expansion through higher utility bills and taxpayer-funded tax breaks;
- full transparency about tax incentives and electricity and water use, including prohibiting non-disclosure agreements that shield projects from public scrutiny;
- fair wages and strong labor standards for workers;
- impact on the environment, including on wildlife, livestock, and migratory animals;
- noise and light pollution; and
- host communities receive a meaningful share of the economic benefits.

Equally important, the Legislature should restore local control by giving cities and counties meaningful authority over data center siting and development. That includes the ability to establish setbacks from homes, schools, places of worship, childcare centers, hospitals, and other sensitive uses; protect local water supplies; limit diesel backup generators and excessive noise; establish buffer zones; and require developers to provide financial assurance for decommissioning, land restoration, and road repairs.

Texas can welcome innovation without sacrificing transparency, affordability, or local control. A temporary moratorium through the next regular legislative session will give lawmakers the time to put responsible guardrails in place so data center development benefits Texans—not only the companies building them.