



STATE OF MAINE Data Center Advisory Council

Written Comments Received Outside Public Input Period

June 3, 2026 – August 18, 2026

About the Council

The [Maine Data Center Advisory Council](#) was established by Executive Order of Governor Janet Mills to evaluate issues related to large-scale data center development in Maine and make recommendations to protect ratepayers, maintain electric grid reliability, minimize environmental impacts, and enable responsible economic development.

Council meetings will be open to the public, and additional opportunities for public engagement will be announced throughout 2026. The Council's final report is due to the Governor and Legislature by January 29, 2027. Meetings are recorded and posted along with slides and summaries on the [Council webpage](#).

Written Comments

The Council received written comments prior to the two public listening sessions held on August 27th and September 1st. These comments are posted below. There will be multiple opportunities and mechanisms for public input to shape the work of the Council. Interested parties should sign up to receive email updates using the link at the Council webpage to stay informed of upcoming comment periods.



STATE OF MAINE
Data Center
Advisory Council

Table of Contents

Pg. 1-11: David Hamlin

Pg. 14-24: Kat Taylor, Argyle Township

Pg. 25: Steve Ingalls

Pg. 26: Ted Hunter, Champion Networks LLC

Pg. 27-32: Randall L. Gibbs, Sanford Woods/Northern New England Energy Company

Pg. 33-35: Laura Farrell

Pg. 36-37: Neil Osnato, Persistence Analytics Group LLC.

Pg. 38: Eleanor Weisman

From: david Hamlin <hamlin54@hotmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, June 3, 2026 3:36 PM

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Cc: Cunningham, Celina <Celina.Cunningham@maine.gov>; ssmith@cbi.org; David Plumb <dplumb@cbi.org>; biz@maine.gov; Gilbert, Carrie <Carrie.Gilbert@maine.gov>

Subject: Stronger Maine Towns.

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Hello everyone,

Thank you for today's informative and well-run kickoff meeting. I appreciate the clarity, the structure, and the thoughtful way the Council is approaching this important issue for Maine's future.

I'm writing to share a comprehensive policy framework I've developed titled **"Stronger Maine Towns: How Maine Can Lead the Nation in Sustainable Data Center Growth—While Rebuilding Our Communities."** It is attached for your review.

This framework is designed to support the Council's work by offering a model that:

- Protects Maine's environment through PFAS-free standards, closed-loop cooling, brownfield-first siting, and lifecycle GHG accounting
- Aligns directly with Maine's Climate Action Plan and Shoreland Zoning Act
- Ensures strong Home Rule and meaningful community voice
- Provides clear, measurable community benefits, including lower household energy costs and annual local investments
- Eliminates grid strain through 200% on-site power generation with 70% renewables

- Creates high-quality jobs supported by free training and local hiring
- Offers developers a predictable, ESG-aligned pathway that accelerates permitting and reduces risk

My goal is simple: **to help Maine build a data center strategy where everyone wins — communities, the environment, the state, and responsible developers.**

I hope this framework is useful as the Council continues its work. I would welcome any questions, discussion, or opportunities to contribute further as the process moves forward.

Thank you again for your time and service to the people of Maine.

Best regards, **David Hamlin**

Lewiston, Maine

David Hamlin

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"We can't help everyone, but everyone can help someone."

[Ronald Reagan](#)

Stronger Maine Towns Framework

How Maine Can Lead the Nation in Sustainable Data Center Growth—While Rebuilding Our Communities

The Problem

- Maine’s grid is fragile (CMP’s poor reliability costs businesses and residents).
- Towns need rebuilding (schools, emergency services, hospitals, roads).
- High energy costs strain household budgets.
- Workforce shortages limit economic growth.
- Environmental risks from industrial projects threaten Maine’s natural beauty.

The Solution: A Bold, Fair Deal That Benefits All Maine Residents

1. Power Generation: Double the Need, Zero Grid Strain, and 70% Renewable Energy

- Data centers must generate **200% of their power needs on-site**, eliminating reliance on CMP’s fragile grid.
- **70% of generated power must come from renewable, zero-emission sources**: biomass, solar (agrivoltaics/rooftop), waste heat recovery, and battery storage.
- **50% of generated power is reserved for Maine homeowners** as bill credits, reducing local energy costs and supporting communities.

2. Shoreland Zoning Compliance and Sensitive Areas

- All data center projects must fully comply with **Maine’s Shoreland Zoning Act** and any more protective local ordinances.

- New data centers and associated energy facilities will **not be located within protected shoreland, coastal wetlands, great ponds, rivers, or tidal areas** unless:
 - The site is an existing, lawfully nonconforming industrial or mill property; and
 - The project results in a **net environmental improvement** (e.g., brownfield cleanup, stormwater upgrades, habitat restoration).
- Priority siting will be given to:
 - Existing industrial, mill, and brownfield sites
 - Degraded or previously developed land
 - Rooftops and agrivoltaics installations
- **Greenfield development** in intact forests, wetlands, or critical habitat will be avoided wherever feasible and must demonstrate no net loss of habitat function if proposed.

3. Alignment with Maine's Climate Goals

- This framework supports and accelerates the goals of the **Maine Climate Action Plan** and the state's renewable and emissions reduction targets.
- By requiring at least **70% renewable, zero-emission energy** for on-site generation, data centers built under this model will:
 - Exceed typical corporate ESG and clean energy commitments
 - Reduce pressure on Maine's existing grid and fossil generation
 - Contribute to long-term decarbonization of the state's economy

4. Lifecycle Greenhouse Gas Accounting

- Each data center project must complete a **lifecycle greenhouse gas (GHG) assessment**, including:
 - Construction emissions (materials, transport, site work)
 - Operational emissions (on-site generation, backup systems, auxiliary loads)
 - Decommissioning and end-of-life impacts
- Projects must demonstrate a **net-zero or net-negative GHG profile** over a defined operating period (e.g., 20 years), using a combination of:
 - High renewable energy share ($\geq 70\%$)

- Efficiency measures (geothermal cooling, waste heat recovery)
- Reforestation and habitat restoration
- High-quality, verifiable carbon offsets only where necessary
- **Annual GHG reporting** will be submitted to the Advisory Council and made publicly available.

5. Home Rule, Local Consent, and Community Voice

- This framework is built on Maine’s strong tradition of **Home Rule**. No data center project proceeds without:
 - Affirmative municipal approval through local permitting and planning processes; and
 - A binding **Community Benefit Agreement (CBA)** negotiated with the host community.
- Local governments and residents will:
 - Shape project design, siting, and mitigation measures
 - Prioritize how community investments (\$5M–\$10M/year per 50 MW) are allocated
 - Participate in ongoing oversight through a local advisory or liaison committee
- Cross-jurisdictional impacts (traffic, noise, viewshed, emergency services) will be evaluated and addressed in consultation with neighboring towns where relevant.

6. Community-First Outcomes for Every Project

Every data center developed under the Stronger Maine Towns framework must deliver clear, measurable benefits to its host community, including:

- Lower household energy costs through bill credits funded by on-site generation
- Direct annual investments in schools, emergency services, hospitals, roads, broadband, housing, and recreation
- High-quality local jobs supported by free training and a 50% local hiring target
- Environmental improvements such as brownfield cleanup, reforestation, and habitat restoration
- Stronger local tax base and long-term fiscal stability

Each project will include a **Community Impact Plan** that:

- Quantifies expected local benefits (dollars invested, jobs created, bills reduced)

- Identifies timelines and accountability mechanisms
- Is developed with and endorsed by local officials and community members

7. Environmental Protections: Minimal Disruption, Maximum Benefit

- Prioritize **brownfield sites, rooftops, and agrivoltaics** to minimize new land use.
- Use **closed-loop water systems**—no discharge into rivers or lakes.
- Require **99%+ emission controls** on natural gas and sustainable biomass sourcing.
- Commit to **reforestation and habitat restoration** (50+ acres per data center).
- Leverage **waste heat recovery** for district heating or greenhouses.

PFAS-Free Standard & Closed-Loop Cooling Requirement

To eliminate the risk of PFAS contamination in Maine’s water, soil, and ecosystems, all data centers must comply with the following PFAS-free standards:

- **PFAS-Free Cooling Fluids:**
All heat-transfer fluids, lubricants, corrosion inhibitors, and additives used in cooling systems must be certified PFAS-free.
- **PFAS-Free Fire Suppression Systems:**
All fire suppression systems must use PFAS-free agents. PFAS-containing AFFF or fluorinated foams are prohibited.
- **PFAS-Free Construction Materials:**
PFAS-containing roofing membranes, sealants, insulation, waterproofing, flooring, and wire coatings must be avoided wherever PFAS-free alternatives are commercially available.
- **PFAS Monitoring & Verification:**
Annual PFAS testing of cooling fluids, stormwater, and wastewater must confirm compliance. Results are submitted to DEP and the Advisory Council.

Why Closed-Loop Cooling Is Required

Closed-loop cooling systems are required specifically to ensure that even if PFAS were accidentally introduced into the facility, it can never enter Maine’s environment.

- PFAS contamination in Maine has historically come from industrial discharge, firefighting foam, and leaching from construction materials.
- Closed-loop cooling ensures zero discharge of cooling water into rivers, lakes, groundwater, or stormwater systems.
- Even with PFAS-free fluids, closed-loop cooling provides a fail-safe barrier against accidental contamination, leaks, or maintenance-related releases.

Result:

PFAS-Free + Closed Loop = Zero PFAS Risk

This combination eliminates both PFAS introduction pathways and PFAS release pathways, creating the strongest PFAS protection standard in the nation for data centers.

Noise & Low-Frequency Sound Standard

- **Operational Noise:**

The proposed geothermal and closed-loop cooling systems rely primarily on indoor pumps and enclosed mechanical equipment, resulting in very low exterior noise levels. These systems do not require large rooftop cooling towers or high-velocity condenser fans, which are the primary noise sources in conventional data centers.

- To protect neighboring properties and maintain Maine's rural quiet:
 - Continuous operational noise will be designed to remain at or below typical residential background levels at the property line (targeting ≤ 45 dBA at night).
 - Mechanical equipment will be located indoors, below grade, or shielded acoustic as needed.
 - Low-frequency noise (infrasound) will be minimized through equipment selection and enclosure design.

- **Backup Generators:**

Backup generators will be tested only during daytime hours and are expected to be heard rarely and briefly, with no significant community impact.

8. Natural Climate Advantage: Cooler Temperatures Offset Reduced Winter Sunlight

Maine's naturally cool climate offers a **unique energy efficiency advantage** for data centers that balances the challenges of reduced winter solar generation:

- **Cooling Energy Savings:**

Data centers typically use 3–5% of their electricity for cooling. Maine's cool ambient temperatures allow for **free cooling** and **air-side economization** for much of the year, especially during fall, winter, and spring. This reduces the need for energy-intensive mechanical chillers by **30–50%**, lowering overall power consumption and operational costs.

- **Winter Solar Variability:**

While Maine experiences **40–60% less solar output in winter** due to shorter daylight hours and lower sun angles, this seasonal dip aligns with **reduced cooling demand**. Snow cover can temporarily reduce solar efficiency, but this is offset by other renewable sources.

- **Hybrid System Balance:**

The **dispatchable biomass CHP plant** provides steady renewable power year-round, filling gaps when solar output is low. **Battery storage** smooths daily and seasonal fluctuations, while **waste heat recovery** improves overall energy efficiency by repurposing data center heat for district heating or greenhouses.

- **Net Effect:**

The synergy between Maine's cooler climate and hybrid renewable generation results in a **highly resilient, cost-effective, and sustainable energy system**. Lower winter cooling loads reduce energy demand just as solar generation declines, ensuring stable operations without overbuilding capacity.

This natural climate advantage strengthens Maine's position as a premier data center location, combining **energy efficiency, renewable reliability, and operational resilience** unmatched in warmer regions.

9. Workforce Development: Free Training for High-Paying Jobs

- Partner with Maine Community Colleges to provide **free, specialized training** for data center technicians.
- Guarantee **50% local hiring** to build a strong, skilled workforce.
- Target retraining for underemployed workers, veterans, and local youth.

10. Community Benefits: \$5M–\$10M/Year Investment Per 50 MW

- Direct investments in schools, emergency services, hospitals, roads, broadband, affordable housing, and recreation.
- Transparent, community-guided spending overseen by the Council.

11. Economic Impact: Jobs and Workforce Development

Permanent, Full-Time Jobs with Benefits

Small to mid-size data centers create **high-quality, full-time jobs with benefits**, particularly when paired with on-site power generation like biomass and battery storage. These positions are critical for rebuilding Maine’s workforce and supporting local families.

Data Center Size	Construction Jobs (Temporary)	Permanent Jobs (After Opening)	Estimated Annual Wages	Local Hiring Potential
Small (10–25 MW)	150–500	15–30	\$60,000–\$90,000	Up to 50% with training
Mid-Size (50–100 MW)	750–2,000	40–75	\$60,000–\$90,000	Up to 50% with training

Job Types Include:

- Data center technicians & engineers
- Power plant operators (biomass CHP, natural gas)
- Network & systems administrators
- Facilities & maintenance staff
- Security and administrative support

Construction Phase: Hundreds of temporary jobs boost local economies during buildout.

Workforce Development: Free training programs and local hiring mandates maximize community benefits.

12. Real-World Analogues and Market Trends

- Hyperscale data centers globally (Google, Microsoft, Meta, Amazon) are targeting **60–100% renewable energy** and **carbon neutrality**.
- Biomass CHP plants in Maine and Europe demonstrate **reliable, dispatchable renewable power**.
- Battery storage costs are rapidly declining, enabling **grid stability and black start capabilities**.
- Leading tech companies prioritize **community engagement, workforce development, and environmental stewardship**.
- States with aggressive renewable targets and community benefits see **faster permitting, stronger local support, and competitive advantage**.

13. Maine’s Competitive Advantages for Data Centers

Advantage	Description	Benefit to Developers
Lowest Energy Costs	\$0.03–\$0.06/kWh via on-site generation + bill credits	Significant OPEX savings
100% Uptime & Resilience	Biomass + batteries + natural gas backup + black start	Eliminates costly outages
70% Renewable Energy Today	Exceeds most corporate sustainability goals	Strong ESG credentials and marketing edge
Community Investment	\$5M–\$10M/year reinvested locally	Builds social license and local goodwill
Workforce Pipeline	Free training + 50% local hiring guarantee	Reduce recruitment costs, improves retention

Advantage	Description	Benefit to Developers
Fast Permitting	Pre-approved sites, Council oversight	Accelerates time-to-market
Environmental Leadership	Closed-loop water, habitat restoration	Meets strict regulatory and ESG standards
Naturally Cooler Climate	Reduced cooling energy demand and operational costs	Improves energy efficiency and resilience

Purpose: The Stronger Maine Towns Framework establishes clear, enforceable standards for data center development that protect Maine’s environment, strengthen local communities, reduce energy costs, and ensure that economic benefits flow directly to Maine residents. This framework is designed to guide state policy, municipal decision-making, and private investment in a way that aligns with Maine’s climate goals and Home Rule traditions.

Applicability: These standards apply to all data centers with a maximum electricity demand of 20 MW or more, consistent with the Advisory Council’s working definition of large-scale data centers.

Conclusion

By raising the renewable energy requirement to **70%**, Maine data centers will become **national leaders in sustainable, resilient, and community-centered development**. This ambitious yet achievable target leverages Maine’s unique biomass resources, solar potential, and emerging battery technologies.

The **cost increase is moderate** and balanced by **significant operational savings, incentives, and market advantages**. Developers gain a **competitive edge** with strong ESG credentials, reliable power, and community support—while Maine towns receive transformative investments and jobs.

From: k a t <kat.byteme@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 1:47 PM

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Subject: The myths and realities surrounding data center benefits - Kat Taylor

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BCC'd to interested parties

Good Afternoon,

I watched the initial meeting of the [Data Center Council on June 3rd](#). A former tech professional, I have extensive experience in internet and computer applications and have been following AI and Data Center issues over the last couple of years. This last session I testified on several bills that are data center related:

[LD 912](#) - EUT Committee - An Act to Limit the Amount of Electricity That May Be Provided to Data Centers on a Certain Commercial or Industrial Site - **Emergency Enacted** - [Testimony](#)

[LD 1730](#) - EUT Committee - An Act to Make Small Plug-in Solar Generation Devices Accessible for All Maine Residents to Address the Energy Affordability Crisis - **Enacted** - [Testimony](#)

[LD 307](#) - EUT Committee - An Act to Establish the Maine Data Center Coordination Council and Place a Temporary Limitation on Certain Data Centers - **Enacted - Vetoed** - **DEAD** - [Testimony](#)

[LD 713](#) - Taxation Committee - An Act to Exclude Data Centers from the Business Equipment Tax Exemption and the Dirigo Business Incentives Program and to Require

the Department of Economic and Community Development to Study Financial Incentives for Data Centers - **Enacted - [Testimony](#)**

In addition, I have put together information below for the council members, and anyone else, who may be following this issue and want a reference guide.

Perhaps those of you who are running for office may find it helpful in answering questions from voters as data center development is a critical issue nationwide.

Hopefully you will find this information useful. I intend to provide additional comments as the process goes forward.

Please feel free to reach out if you would like my input or have any questions.

The next [Data Center Council meeting is scheduled on June 23rd, 2026 2pm-5pm.](#)

Feel free to share.

Respectfully,

Kat Taylor
Argyle Twp.

Board Member Rights of Nature and Maine Citizens
Sierra Club Maine Clean Energy Team Member
Former Information Technologies Consultant, Manager Research Assistant and
Webmaster at University of Maine Orono
Former Lead Corporate Trainer for Microsoft MSN Technical Support

The myths and realities surrounding data center benefits

Types of Data Centers

The four types of data centers are **Enterprise** Data Centers, **Colocation** Data Centers, **Hyperscale** Data Centers, and **Edge** Data Centers. **Each type serves different needs based on scale, ownership, and proximity to users.** [Wikipedia](#) [splunk.com](#)

1. Enterprise Data Centers

Ownership: Owned and operated by a **single organization**.

- Scale: Typically range from **1 to 10 megawatts (MW)**.
- Purpose: **Support internal IT operations**.
- Characteristics: **Located on company premises**, designed for **specific organizational needs**.

2. Colocation Data Centers

- Ownership: **Operated by third-party providers**.
- Scale: Can range from **10 to 100 MW**.
- Purpose: Provide shared **hosting for multiple clients**.
- Characteristics: **Organizations lease space, power, and cooling**, allowing for cost efficiency and flexibility.

3. Hyperscale Data Centers (Amazon Web Services - Sanford)

- Ownership: Usually **built by major tech companies** (e.g., Google, Amazon).
- Scale: Typically **exceed 100 MW**.
- Purpose: Designed for **cloud services and large-scale data processing**.
- Characteristics: **Support massive scalability** and are **optimized for high-performance workloads**.

4. Edge Data Centers

- Ownership: Can be **owned by various organizations** or **service providers**.
- Scale: Generally range from **1 to 10 MW**.
- Purpose: Provide **low-latency processing close to end users**.
- Characteristics: Smaller facilities **located near data sources to enhance speed and reduce latency**.

Type	Ownership	Scale (MW)	Purpose	Key Characteristics
Enterprise Data Center	Single organization	1 - 10	Internal IT operations	On-premises, tailored to specific needs
Colocation Data Center	Third-party providers	10 - 100	Shared hosting for multiple clients	Leased space, power, and cooling
Hyperscale Data Center	Major tech companies	100+	Cloud services and large-scale processing	Massive scalability, high-performance focus
Edge Data Center	Various organizations	1 - 10	Low-latency local processing	Located near users, smaller footprint

 [Wikipedia](#)

Environmental and Energy Impacts:

Jay is going to use **CMP power to run its center**. It plans to add solar at some point but that will most likely only be part of their usage. The **warm water released into the river continuously, 24/7/365, is going to effect aquatic life downstream and release water vapor**, a greenhouse gas, during the winter months when the rivers should be frozen.

UPDATE: Jay's center has been put on hold since the war in Iran is stopping the shipment of the equipment to Pakistan and the tariffs are putting the cost and access of materials out of reach. [How Donald Trump's policies are slowing a Maine mill's revival](#)

Loring is using power from New Brunswick in the form of natural gas and hydro.

What impact this usage will have on our electric costs remains to be seen as we up here in the north depend on Canada for power. [NMISA](#) is the independent system administrator.

Sanford will be an [Amazon Web Services](#) **hyperscale** data center which will use **vast amounts of natural gas for energy (up to 300 MW)** from the south and **may want to build an additional pipeline** to accommodate the planned energy park. **Developers want to develop hydrogen fuel cells but that will not be for an estimated 5 years of natural gas use.**

Currently [96% of global hydrogen uses natural gas for creation](#).

The energy use alone of Sanford is equal to 6 Lorings and 3.75 Jays.

The consumption of large amounts of natural gas to provide **100- 300MW of power** may greatly increase the cost of natural gas and electric energy in the state.

Water Usage Impacts:

The water used in data centers often comes from local sources, which can raise concerns about water availability for surrounding communities. As data centers expand, their water consumption can impact local water supplies, especially in water-stressed regions. 

[fwpcoa.org](#)  [Wikipedia](#)

Data centers primarily utilize water for cooling their servers through various methods. The **main purpose of using water is to manage the heat generated by the servers**, ensuring they operate efficiently and do not overheat.

Data centers primarily use water for cooling through evaporative cooling systems. This

process involves evaporating water to cool the air before it enters the server rooms, effectively maintaining optimal operating temperatures. [fwpcoa.org](#) [Wikipedia](#)

The proposed data center in **Jay**, Maine, is expected to consume significant amounts of water, similar to other large facilities, which can use up to **5 million gallons of water per day**, equivalent to the water use of a small city yet still less than the paper mill used. However, mills are not known for their positive environmental impacts. [natureforward.org](#) [fwpcoa.org](#)

The proposed **Sanford Woods Industrial and Technical Campus** is estimated to use a **maximum of 300,000 gallons of water per day for cooling and operations**, which local water officials said could be handled by the existing Sanford Water District infrastructure. [sanfordspringvalenews.com](#) [natureforward.org](#)

UPDATE: Sanford initiated a **90 day Emergency pause** on data centers with opponents moving to **extend that time frame** to 6 months.

Loring is using a [LiquidCool Solutions](#) closed [dielectric](#) system so may have minimal impact on the water tables there.

Cooling Methods

Data centers employ different cooling systems, each with varying water usage profiles:

Cooling Method	Description	Water Usage Profile
Evaporative Cooling	Water is evaporated to cool the air before it enters the server rooms.	High water consumption, especially in large facilities.
Air Cooling	Uses air conditioning and chilled air circulation without significant water use.	Minimal water usage, primarily for humidification.
Closed-loop Systems	Recycles water within the cooling system, reducing overall water consumption.	Moderate water usage, depending on design.

Water Consumption Details

- **Evaporative Cooling:** This method is the most common in large data centers, where water is evaporated to cool the air. It can lead to significant water consumption, with some facilities **using millions of gallons daily**.
- **Air Cooling:** Smaller or older data centers often rely on **air cooling, which does not consume much water**. This method is **more prevalent in cooler climates** or areas with water scarcity.
- **Closed-loop Systems:** These systems recycle water, minimizing waste and reducing the demand on local water supplies.

Energy Generation Impact:

Data centers primarily use natural gas (over 40%), followed by renewables (about 24%), nuclear (around 20%), and coal (approximately 15%) for their electricity needs. As demand for data centers grows, the reliance on renewable energy sources is expected to increase significantly. [iea.org](#) [eesi.org](#)

Data centers rely on a variety of energy sources to meet their substantial electricity demands.

The primary types of energy used include:

Main Energy Sources

Energy Source	Percentage of Use
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Natural Gas	Over 40%
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Renewables	About 24%
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Nuclear	Around 20%
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Coal	Approximately 15%
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Additional Insights

- **Natural Gas:** This is the **largest source of electricity for data centers in the U.S.**, providing over 40% of their energy needs.
- **Renewables:** The **use of renewable energy**, such as solar and wind, **is growing** and is expected to increase significantly as demand for data centers rises.
- **Nuclear and Coal:** These sources contribute around **35% collectively**, with coal's share varying by region.

As the demand for data centers continues to grow, **the shift towards more sustainable energy sources is anticipated to become more pronounced, helping to reduce the environmental impact** associated with their energy consumption. [U.S. Department of Energy](#) [iea.org](#)

Impact on Broadband Demand:

The **impact hyperscale data centers will have on Maine's Three Ring Binder** .

Maine's Three Ring Binder is a **fiber optic network that was developed to provide high-speed broadband internet access to rural areas**, covering over 1,100 miles and serving approximately 110,000 **households**. This project represents a significant public-private partnership aimed at improving internet connectivity in the state.

[SlideShare](#) [The University of Maine](#)

We have **spent millions of dollars to develop Maine's broadband coverage** which is barely being discussed by the council. The **growth of hyperscale data centers is a significant driver of broadband demand**, leading to **necessary upgrades in infrastructure** to meet the evolving needs of digital services. [Wikipedia](#) [viavisolutions.com](#)

Hyperscale data centers drive rapid growth in broadband demand by concentrating massive computing and storage capacity, which increases the need for high-speed, low-latency fiber-optic connections to support AI, cloud services, and streaming. Much as with energy utilities, data center expansion also **pushes Internet Service Providers to upgrade broadband infrastructure** to handle the **surge in data traffic and connectivity**. [McKinsey](#) [Wikipedia](#)

Hyperscale data centers support massive computing workloads, particularly for cloud services and artificial intelligence (AI). They **concentrate significant computing and storage capacity, which has a profound impact on broadband demand**.

Increased Demand for High-Speed Connections

- **Massive Capacity:** Hyperscale data centers require extensive fiber-optic connections to manage the large volumes of data they process.
- **Low Latency Needs:** The nature of services like AI and cloud computing demands low-latency connections, pushing the need for faster broadband infrastructure.

Infrastructure Upgrades

- **Provider Response:** The expansion of hyperscale data centers compels internet service providers to enhance their broadband infrastructure.
- **Traffic Management:** Increased data traffic from these centers necessitates upgrades to ensure reliable and efficient connectivity.

Summary of Key Effects

Effect	Description
Increased Broadband Demand	Higher demand for high-speed, low-latency connections due to data center operations.
Infrastructure Upgrades	Providers must upgrade networks to handle increased data traffic.
Enhanced Connectivity	Improved broadband services to support AI, cloud services, and streaming.

Alternatives to fiber-optic connections for hyperscale data centers include high-speed copper cabling like 224 Gbps-PAM4 technology and active optical cables (AOCs), which

provide high bandwidth and low latency for data transmission. [volico.com](#) [corning.com](#)

Tax Revenue Impact:

Critics argue that **the promised economic benefits frequently do not materialize for local communities**, raising concerns about the actual impact of these facilities. **It has been shown that data center developers are not swayed by tax incentives from municipalities.**

The **costs of tax exemptions for data centers have [escalated far beyond initial projections](#)** in states that moved quickly to incentivize their development. Texas surpassed **\$1 billion in foregone revenue** in fiscal year 2025, up from an original estimate of **\$130 million**. Georgia saw its exemption costs jump from **\$10 million to \$625 million** in just a few years. Foregone revenue in Illinois went from **\$10 million to \$370 million in the first four years** of its programs. [mainesenate.org](#) [taxfoundation.org](#)

Some city councilors believe data centers will bring in more revenue for education; a hot topic this year as school budgets are being contested. But **in Maine, if a municipality has a large business that pays significant property taxes, it can lead to a decrease in state funding for education from the general fund.** This is because the state's funding formula considers local property values, which can **reduce the amount of state aid allocated to that municipality's schools.**

<https://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/20-a/title20-Asec15671-A.html>

It might be prudent to **have someone on the Taxation Committee or Maine Revenue Service advise the Council** on property tax alternatives.

[Governor Mills' Stance on Tax Breaks for Data Centers](#)

Exclusion from Tax Exemption Programs

Governor Janet Mills has enacted a law ([LD 713](#), presented by Sen. Nicole Grohoski, D-Ellsworth) was **signed into law**. that specifically **excludes data centers from tax exemption programs in Maine.** This decision is part of a broader strategy to ensure that incentives meant for long-term job creation are not misallocated to data centers, which may not provide the same economic benefits.

Impact on Jobs:

Not all data center jobs are direct company employees and some are temporary.

Amazon [promised](#) a little over 1,000 jobs in Indiana, but a local subsidy [agreement](#) stipulates only 400 Amazon jobs. The remaining 600 jobs [will be](#) employees of subcontractors. And a Time [article](#) shows that [Google data center employees are hired through a specialized temp agency and only for up to two years.](#) Such positions are [often not covered by a subsidized company's benefit and wage plans,](#) reducing the quality of those jobs.

Jobs might not go to local workers.

An [article](#) in the New York Times describes how [electrical jobs at data centers are filled by workers who travel across the country from project to project.](#) While these large projects are built by union construction labor, this might be a concern to some as local workers might not be able to access those jobs.

Not all data center jobs are high paid tech jobs.

Often companies create the impression that all jobs created at data centers will be high-tech and thus high-quality. But besides well-paid positions, data center jobs include security, landscaping, and even catering – many of whom might be subcontractors.

In Wyoming, [35% of jobs](#) at data centers were unskilled workers who earned half of what skilled workers earned (\$26/h vs. \$56/h in 2021). Google's [average wage](#) in its data center in Nevada in 2021 was \$31/h, so about \$65,000 a year. A [developer application](#) to build a data center in North Carolina shows that [out of 69 permanent jobs, 25 will be security and janitorial staff.](#) One former data center technician [reported](#) earnings as little as [\\$15 per hour.](#)

Data center jobs might be created over a long period of time.

Many data center announcements [do not specify how long it will take to create all of the promised jobs.](#) Amazon [promised](#) 1,000 positions in Virginia when it announced a \$35 billion investment that [will take about 17 years to complete.](#) In Indiana, [400 jobs](#) that the company is promising will be [fulfilled "at full development,"](#) meaning [after](#) the entire complex of [16 data centers is constructed.](#)

Data centers can replace as many jobs as they create.

Many data centers are built by major technology companies [racing to expand artificial intelligence, technologies their own CEOs say](#) are designed to replace workers with AI. As AI expands, the same infrastructure being subsidized today could ultimately replace workers rather than create new opportunities for them.

[Meta laid off roughly 10% of its workforce, or about 8,000 people,](#) the latest in a string of tech industry layoffs [fueled in part by artificial intelligence.](#)

The company is also [closing around 6,000 open roles,](#) Janelle Gale, Meta's chief people officer, wrote in a memo published by [Bloomberg](#) that Meta confirmed to CNN. The layoffs went into effect on May 20.

More and more companies have trimmed their workforces over the past year, pointing to what

they describe as AI's ability to improve efficiency. Amazon [said](#) in January it would **lay off 16,000 workers**, its **second large-scale layoffs in three months**, emphasizing the need for efficiency. And fintech firm Block's announcement in February that it would lay off 40% of its workforce, **more than 4,000 people**, came with a stark warning that more companies would follow suit.

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg hinted at the start of this year that the company, which has invested heavily in AI, could see workforce changes because of the technology. On Meta's [January earnings call](#), he called 2026 "the year that AI starts to dramatically change the way that we work."

"We're starting to see projects that used to require big teams now be accomplished by a single very talented person," Zuckerberg said.

Going Forward:

First, **transparency** needs to be a bare minimum requirement. There's an amazing amount of obscurity in data center development right now. Contracts are secretive, and when they are made public, there are huge redactions, and **policymakers are signing nondisclosure agreements**. There should be early and consistent transparency about what's being proposed and what the terms of these deals are.

There should be **rate protections for consumers with clear contract provisions** such that the **cost of upgrading the utility and internet infrastructure** to service a hyperscale data center doesn't get passed on to consumers like you and me, which has been happening consistently across the country.

If you live near data centers, your **electricity bills are going up**, often by a factor of two or more. There should also be a **stronger voice for communities** in determining whether to welcome data centers, and under what conditions.

One final piece is the need to **think about broader planning** on how much **total** water and electricity **demand** from data centers **a state or a region or utility jurisdiction can handle**. It's one thing to say that a state can handle **one hyperscale** data center, but quite another for that state to be welcoming dozens of such facilities.

We have to **make sure that we're not sacrificing climate goals** just for the sake of building more data centers or building data centers faster. We should not be allowing the desire among the tech industry for rapid data center development to push renewable energy goals to the wayside.

In closing I wish to let you know AI and data centers in general are tools we can use to better our lives but they should not be seen as a replacement for human reasoning and interaction. **The total loss of jobs from AI data center development may counteract the few jobs created, sometimes temporarily, leading to mass layoffs.**

Please be thoughtful as you decide the fate of Mainers who are under pressure from rising costs, increasing energy bills and lack of affordable housing. Don't be in a hurry to believe the promises from outsiders of economic opportunity that may never materialize.

Happy Thoughts...

Enjoy your weekend,

~Kat

From: k a t <kat.byteme@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2026 12:23 PM

To: Aarati Halbe <ahalbe@cbi.org>

Cc: giovanna.guidoboni@maine.edu; nick <nick@ibew1253.org>; Sanborn, Heather B <Heather.B.Sanborn@maine.gov>; Vigue, Afton <Afton.Vigue@maine.gov>; mbeasley@sacomaine.org; Answers, Business <Business.Answers@maine.gov>; Jack Shapiro <jshapiro@nrcm.org>; Bartlett, Phil <Phil.Bartlett@maine.gov>; maulianbryant@gmail.com; abutcher@maineconnectivity.org; Curran, Sarah <Sarah.Curran@maine.gov>; Loyzim, Melanie <Melanie.Loyzim@maine.gov>

Subject: Re: Maine Data Center Advisory Council Meeting June 23rd

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Afternoon

Would it be possible for **participants to see who the other participants are on the call and to enable the chat feature?**

Many of us who are interested in the Council's work would benefit from organizing through these features rather than be mute observers.

With over 200 participants at the last meeting, withholding these tools from the public limits the effectiveness of the meetings and is a missed opportunity for the public to collaborate on our own.

Also, could you please **emphasize during meetings the MPUC Docket ([2026-00142](#))** which is, to the best of my knowledge, **the only way [the public can make unedited comments](#)** and organize through a public platform? The Council should consider mirroring the docket on their website and/or establishing their own publicly accessible comment section.

Please consider enabling these tools for public use.

Thank you,

Kat Taylor
Argyle Twp.

On Fri, Jun 19, 2026 at 4:46 AM Aarati Halbe | CBI <no-reply@zoom.us> wrote:

Hi Kat Taylor,

Thank you for registering for Maine Data Center Advisory Council Meeting. You can find information about this webinar below.

Please submit any questions to: ahalbe@cbi.org

You can [cancel](#) your registration at any time.

Thank you!

Maine Data Center Advisory Council Meeting

Date & Time	Jun 23, 2026 02:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Webinar ID	867 6877 6833
Description	This is the second meeting of the Maine Data Center Advisory Council and will be focused on environmental impacts associated with large-scale data center development. For more information including the Council's mission, membership, meeting schedule and materials, visit maine.gov/energy/datacentercouncil



From: Steven Ingalls <sjiemail@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 9, 2026 12:57 PM
To: Cunningham, Celina <Celina.Cunningham@maine.gov>
Subject: Datacenter Webinar

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Celine,

I watched this mornings webinar on datacenter's and want to let you know that I very much agree and support the comment you made regarding strategic locations.

I'll use an illustrative example. Lincoln has been in the news about budgetary challenges it is experiencing. Lincoln is the home to a former paper mill. It presumably has the electrical infrastructure, water infrastructure and it does have middle mile fiber, NG service and the proposed long duration energy storage facility, that together might make the town an attractive location for a datacenter. In addition, that general area has several existing wind farms to help support local clean energy I believe those wind farms are sometimes curtailed due to congestion issues in the Keene Rd and Orrington substation areas. I would imagine those wind farms could benefit by having an increased load to service, thereby lowering the incidences of curtailment. Another example would be the former paper mill site in Bucksport, that has some of the same supporting infrastructure as Lincoln. Bucksport is also exploring clean energy alternatives for that site and it has an existing NG generation plant used as a peaker. Bucksport might also benefit from the clean energy that would flow into the proposed Pittsfield substation from the Northern Maine clean energy project.

One of my suggestions is for the State to conduct a study to determine the best fit strategic locations that it would like to see datacenters target. Included in that would be a survey of which communities would welcome a datacenter, and which wouldn't. That may help facilitate an ordeal roll out of datacenter development for all parties.

Thanks,

Steve

From: **Ted Hunter** <ehunter@championnetworks.com>

Date: Thu, Jul 9, 2026 at 9:30 AM

Subject: Question:

To: ahalbe@cbi.org <ahalbe@cbi.org>

Would having an actual data center engineer in this group be helpful to understanding the details of construction and operations so Maine can benefit from actual hands on experience?

Thank you,

Ted Hunter
Technologist

Champion Networks llc.

Brunswick, Maine 04011

Cell: (207) 725-8903

"This email may contain business sensitive information belonging to Champion Networks, llc. If you have received this email in error, please notify the sender immediately and delete the email, any attachments and any printed copies thereof."

From: Randy Gibbs <rgibbs@multifuels.com>

Sent: Monday, July 13, 2026 12:30 PM

To: Duguay, Michael <Michael.Duguay@maine.gov>; Cunningham, Celina <Celina.Cunningham@maine.gov>; Loyzim, Melanie <Melanie.Loyzim@maine.gov>; Curran, Sarah <Sarah.Curran@maine.gov>; Bartlett, Phil <Phil.Bartlett@maine.gov>; Sanborn, Heather B <Heather.B.Sanborn@maine.gov>; abutcher@maineconnectivity.org; eprescott@sacomaine.org; aturner@foxislands.net; jshapiro@nrcm.org; nick <nick@ibew1253.org>; giovanna.guidoboni@maine.edu; maulianbryant@gmail.com; craig.nale@cmpco.com; erica.young@versantpower.com; brendan.arbuckle@jax.org; Bill@BirngoSolutions.com

Cc: Steven R. Buck <srbuck@sanfordmaine.org>; Todd J. Griset <tgriset@preti.com>; Harrington, Matthew <matthew.harrington@legislature.maine.gov>; Walt Bussells <walt@waybright.co>; Cameron Gibbs <CGibbs@multifuels.com>

Subject: Comments on Possible Restrictions on Self-Generation for Data Center Projects

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Dear Council Member,

Attached is a letter offering a counter-perspective in response to a suggestion by one of the council members at the July 9th meeting, that would seek the imposition of a “renewables only” restriction on data centers that bring their own self-supply of power.

I would be available to discuss to the extent it was helpful. Than you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Randall Gibbs

Lead Developer



8834 Stable Lane

Houston, TX 77024

rgibbs@sanfordwoods.com

www.sanfordwoods.com

Mobile: (713) 447-9878



Subject: Comments on Possible Restrictions on Self-Generation for Data Center Projects

Members of the Maine Data Center Advisory Council:

I write regarding the discussion at the Council’s July 9th energy meeting on how Maine should address the energy impacts of large data centers, including projects that are primarily grid connected, as well as those that may propose on-site or co-located generation. The Council’s own pre read states that its charge is to protect ratepayers, maintain electric grid reliability, minimize environmental impacts, and enable responsible economic development, and it notes that the applicability of many relevant laws and rules depends on site and project-specific details.

Where a project proposes self-generation as its power strategy, Maine should evaluate that proposal through a fair, technology neutral, case specific process. It should not prejudge the issue by imposing a rule that self-generation must be exclusively renewable or that fossil-based alternatives are categorically unacceptable. Instead, self-generation proposals should be reviewed on their own merits under existing permitting and performance-based standards that focus on measurable impacts.

Such a mandate would be arbitrary and counterproductive. It would convert what should be a project specific assessment of reliability, environmental impact, cost, and permitting into a blanket technology restriction targeting one industry. Maine generally does not impose comparable renewable only self-generation rules on other large industrial, commercial, or mission-critical facilities such as hospitals, paper mills, big-box retailers, telecommunications facilities, research campuses, or other major electric users. A selective restriction of that kind would raise serious questions of fairness, competitiveness, and legal defensibility.

The more appropriate question is whether Maine’s existing regulatory structures are adequate to review data center projects that propose self-generation. For projects involving on-site generation, the relevant inquiry should be whether Site Location of Development Act (“SLODA”), Natural Resources Protection Act (“NRPA”), air permitting, utility regulation where applicable, and related state and local review processes provide sufficient safeguards for emissions, water use, land use, noise, resiliency, and community impacts. If those frameworks need refinement, the Council can recommend targeted improvements, but that is very different from declaring in advance that, for developers seeking a self-supply power solution, only renewable self-generation will be permitted.

A renewable only requirement for self-generation would also put Maine at a competitive disadvantage compared to the rest of the country. Developers and investors evaluate investing in different states based on predictability, practical time to power, fairness of permitting, and whether regulatory standards are tied to measurable impacts, rather than broad policy preferences. If Maine signals that self-generation proposals will be judged under an inflexible fuel or technology screen, rather than under ordinary permitting and performance standards, it will send the message that the State is not prepared to evaluate projects on their actual merits. That would discourage serious investment without producing better environmental or ratepayer outcomes.

If the Council believes additional safeguards are needed, a performance-based approach would be more appropriate than a categorical prohibition. By applying such an approach, Maine can holistically examine various issues such as emissions limits, operating restrictions, monitoring, testing protocols, noise, spill prevention, decommissioning, and transparency requirements. Those are familiar regulatory standards that align directly with the Council's charge to protect ratepayers, maintain reliability, and minimize environmental impacts. Such an approach would address legitimate concerns, while also preserving the flexibility for project specific solutions, including phased or hybrid configurations that may be more practical, reliable, and financeable than a rigid renewable only mandate.

The same applies to backup generation. If the Council is concerned about backup systems associated with data centers, those concerns should be addressed through reasonable operating and environmental standards, including runtime limits, emissions controls, and reporting, rather than outright bans. Many other industries in Maine rely on backup generation for critical operations. Is the data center industry to be singled out for limitations that would apply strictly to one industry, rather than all? Backup generation should not become the basis for implementing a broader policy that effectively forecloses self-generation options altogether.

Maine should avoid becoming an outlier by experimenting with restrictions that are not an established national norm. Maine's better course is to focus on ensuring that large load projects, whether grid connected or premised on self-generation, are reviewed under clear, durable, and technology neutral standards.

As a 50-year landowner and taxpayer in Sanford, Maine, I know that Sanford Woods, our 1,079-acre campus, is well suited to attract large investments from growing 21st-century economic sectors such as data centers, advanced industries such as controlled environment agriculture ("CEA"), and other segments of our country's fast-developing digital grid. We are able today to support these investments in clean, new facilities that create high income careers and substantial increases in local government tax revenues without raising tax rates. Unfortunately, Maine's historically high electric rates and lack of regulatory clarity have long been a barrier to this much needed economic growth.

My team and I have spent two years researching energy supply options for our Sanford technology campus. We have identified proven, American made on-site power systems that can meet all of the Advisory Council's policy objectives, while directly addressing Maine's high electric rates and other high energy cost barriers to economic growth. Below is a brief summary

of our plan. In addition to providing guardrails to prevent the negative impacts from data centers, it is imperative that on-site energy supply and Maine economy boosting innovations be allowed for Sanford and for Maine. We support the Sanford City Council's current data center moratorium to enable the drafting of a local ordinance that enacts clear legal guardrails to prevent the negative impacts seen at some data center clusters elsewhere in the country. That same ordinance is being designed to enable multibillion dollar investments and economic benefits needed from our country's digital grid build out to occur responsibly in Sanford.

Maine is already one of our nation's leaders in decarbonizing electric grids, with remarkable gains in the use of solar, wind, and hydroelectric supply. We support Maine's objective to achieve at least 90 percent renewable electric grid power supply by 2040. We also support the growing number of environmental advocacy and research groups that are expanding their focus to decarbonizing our entire economy, not just our electric grid.

Today, transportation greenhouse gas ("GHG") emissions are the largest emissions source, far surpassing current electric grid emissions. Environmental experts also highlight the difficulty of decarbonizing both existing industrial plants that directly use fossil fuels and heavy transportation fleets, including trucking, shipping, and rail. Studies consistently reveal that accelerating the cost-effectiveness and availability of green hydrogen is a critical component of solving these environmental challenges. The Sanford Woods on-site energy supply plan supports these environmental objectives using proven, American made technologies and systems that should be explicitly allowed in Maine and encouraged by the Data Center Advisory Council to benefit both Maine's environment and economy. Our energy supply plan also supports and incentivizes the essential expansion and cost-effectiveness of our nation's green hydrogen supply and delivery.

Our Sanford Woods energy supply plan includes the on-site installation of proven, non-combustion, modular, quiet, ultra-low emission, green hydrogen-ready, American made fuel cells. These fuel cells are already installed and successfully operate at over 1,200 power supply sites across our country, in addition to powering buses and other vehicles, forklifts, and other industrial devices. Our on-site power supply plan will initially use natural gas, which the fuel cells convert to electricity without combustion and without significant water use, and will be ready to convert to renewable green hydrogen as that industry grows and expands.

The fuel cells will be fully paid for and will be the sole financial responsibility of the data center. The fuel cells can, if desired by the electric grid and its Maine regulators, be interconnected to the electric grid to provide cost saving, reliability enhancing benefits for Maine electric customers, but only if approved by Maine regulators. The electric costs for industries taking up residence at our campus will be significantly below current Maine grid electric rates, removing that barrier to economic growth and investment without imposing additional costs on other ratepayers.

It is imperative that such on-site energy supply and Maine economy boosting innovations be allowed for Sanford and for Maine, alongside appropriate legal guardrails against every potential adverse effect from data centers.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Council not to recommend any policy that would require renewable only self-generation for data centers or otherwise categorically exclude fossil-based self-generation options. Instead, the Council should focus on whether existing safeguards are adequate, whether additional project specific standards are warranted, and how best to protect ratepayers, reliability, environmental quality, and economic development in a balanced, practical way. That approach is more consistent with the Council's stated mission and with Maine's interest in remaining open to responsible investment.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss these important issues and opportunities at the Council's convenience.

Sincerely,

Randall L. Gibbs

Lead Developer / Landowner

Sanford Woods / Northern New England Energy Company

From: Laura Michelle <maineadvocate1933@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, August 10, 2026 10:11 PM

To: DOER <DOER@maine.gov>

Cc: Obomsawin, Tagwongo <Tagwongo.Obomsawin@maine.gov>

Subject: Written Public Comment — Proposed Western Passage Underwater Data Center, FERC P-15424

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Maine Data Center Advisory Council:

I am submitting the following written public comment concerning the proposed DeepGreen Western Passage underwater data center and associated infrastructure, FERC Project No. P-15424.

I oppose the industrialization of Maine's coastal waters and submerged lands for large-scale data-center development.

Maine's waters, submerged lands, fisheries, wildlife, and marine ecosystems are natural resources of extraordinary importance to the people of Maine. Before government permits, authorizes, leases, or otherwise facilitates an experimental private industrial use of those resources, the public should be told what authority permits that use, what environmental consequences are anticipated, what standards govern the decision, and what evidence demonstrates that Maine's resources will be protected.

I respectfully request that this submission be retained as part of the public record and that the following questions be addressed:

1. What governmental entity or entities have authority to permit the placement and operation of data-center infrastructure on or within Maine's submerged lands and coastal waters?
2. What rights would a private developer obtain in Maine's submerged lands or waters,

and what statutory authority permits the State or federal government to grant those rights?

3. What obligations does the State of Maine have to protect these waters, submerged lands, fisheries, wildlife, and other natural resources when considering such a project?

4. What baseline biological studies must be completed before any equipment is installed?

5. What studies are required concerning effects upon fish, lobster and other crustaceans, marine mammals, benthic organisms, spawning areas, migration routes, water temperature, currents, sediment, noise, electromagnetic fields, and water quality?

6. What evidence is required to establish the cumulative environmental effects of the entire project—not merely each individual component considered separately?

7. Who determines whether the environmental effects are acceptable, what legal standard governs that determination, and where is that determination recorded?

8. What independent environmental monitoring would occur if equipment is installed, and would all monitoring data be available to the public?

9. What happens if monitoring subsequently demonstrates injury to marine life or degradation of the marine environment? Who has authority to order operations stopped and the equipment removed?

10. What financial assurance, bond, insurance, or other security would be required to guarantee complete removal of the equipment and restoration of the affected environment if the project fails, the developer becomes insolvent, or environmental damage occurs?

11. Who would bear financial responsibility for environmental damage, equipment failure, abandoned infrastructure, and restoration of Maine's submerged lands and waters?

12. What demonstrated operating history exists for underwater data-center and tidal-generation infrastructure comparable in size, environmental conditions, and configuration to that proposed for Western Passage?

13. What specific public benefit to the people of Maine is claimed to justify the proposed private industrial use of Maine's coastal waters and submerged lands, and under what legal authority and standard may that claimed benefit be weighed against the protection of Maine's natural resources?

I request that these questions be answered by identifying the applicable statutes, regulations, permits, studies, standards, governmental authorities, and supporting records rather than by providing general assurances that environmental requirements will be followed.

Maine's marine resources cannot simply be replaced after they have been damaged. Decisions concerning their industrial use should therefore be made transparently, on a complete environmental record, and with meaningful public participation before commitments are made.

Thank you for including my comments and questions in the public record.

Laura M. Farrell
Maine

From: Obomsawin, Tagwongo
Sent: Wednesday, August 19, 2026 10:24 AM
To: doer-dep, datacenter
Subject: FW: Maine Data Center Advisory Council — Independent Large-Load Verification

-----Original Message-----

From: Neil P. Osnato <neil@persistenceanalyticsgroup.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2026 12:34 PM
To: Obomsawin, Tagwongo <Tagwongo.Obomsawin@maine.gov>
Subject: Maine Data Center Advisory Council — Independent Large-Load Verification

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Tagwongo —

I have been following the Maine Data Center Advisory Council's work, particularly its focus on protecting ratepayers from overbuilding, stranded utility assets, and costs caused by large new loads.

There is an additional evidence question I believe is central to that work:

When should a proposed data-center megawatt become a megawatt that utilities, regulators, and the State are justified in building around?

Persistence Analytics Group LLC provides independent Infrastructure Assumption Verification™ and Decision Assurance™ for large-load infrastructure decisions.

Our framework separates:

announced → requested → financially committed → executable → energized → persistent load

and tests the dependencies connecting customer demand, power, transmission, equipment, permits, financing, construction, energization, and long-term operation.

I would be interested in providing Maine with a bounded paid verification review or applying the framework to one representative large-load case as the Council develops its recommendations.

The objective would not be to advocate for or against data centers. It would be to establish what must be proven before public policy, utility capital, or ratepayer exposure relies upon projected demand.

If appropriate, I would appreciate routing to the Council or Department counterpart responsible for large-load evidence, cost-causation, and implementation standards.

Respectfully,

Neil P. Osnato

Founder

Persistence Analytics Group LLC | United Grid National Security & Infrastructure Risk Analytics Demand Durability | Grid Stress | Load Integrity

neil@persistenceanalyticsgroup.com

609-464-9055

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D-U-N-S: 142849930

From: [Eleanor Weisman](#)
To: [doer-dep_datacenter](#)
Subject: Organized Money: An AI Expert Explains The Hype
Date: Tuesday, August 18, 2026 11:43:20 AM

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

As a retired Mainer, I follow technology closely as well as the important work of the Maine Data Center Advisory Council. I appreciate the Council providing opportunities for Mainers to submit questions and opinions on data centers in Maine. In addition, I believe it is valuable for Council members to study the work of expert technologists when determining the future of data center regulations in Maine.

This recent podcast with Gary Marcus discusses many of the pitfalls of the AI capitalist bubble and the hyper scale data centers it requires. I hope Council members will listen or read Marcus's work.

It is obvious to me that while smaller data centers may be economically and even environmentally feasible, hyper scale centers are not. I hope the Council will agree.

Thank you,

**Eleanor Weisman, PhD
Belfast, ME**

An AI Expert Explains The Hype
Organized Money

We've discussed the financial aspects of the AI boom and bubble in previous episodes, but today we're trying to demystify the technology itself. This week we're joined by Gary Marcus, scientist and author of many books about AI and the Marcus On AI Substack. We discuss how chatbots like ChatGPT work, how they've advanced in recent years by harnessing large language models to more traditional symbolic AI systems, and also how the technology still feels stuck in the mud. We also discuss the economic problems these technologies have to overcome, whether there's really demand for AI compute, get into recent the hype for AI "hacks" and math breakthroughs, and finally get into regulatory solutions, based on Gary's congressional testimony on AI.

Listen on Apple Podcasts: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/organized-money/id1773721991?i=1000784008242>

Sent from my iPad