

88th House District
Seneca and Sandusky Counties



Gary Click
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**House Legislative
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Chairman
Ohio Christian Legislators Caucus

Chairman Claggett, Vice Chair Workman, Ranking Member Mohamed and Esteemed Members of the House Technology and Innovation Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 646, which would establish a Data Center Study Commission.

This legislation stems from concerns in the 88th House District, particularly in Sandusky County, where rumors have circulated about a potential data center locating in our area. I was invited to attend a meeting of concerned citizens and listen to their appeals regarding the rapid proliferation of data centers across Ohio. Many of their concerns were compelling. Residents raised issues such as:

- The loss of valuable agricultural land to data centers¹
- Impacts on local water supplies²
- The disposal of wastewater
- Strain on the energy grid, including potential increases in electricity costs for ratepayers³
- Noise pollution
- Light pollution
- Health concerns related to electromagnetic field (EMF) radiation⁴
- Excessive tax abatements
- Unfulfilled promises of economic development
- And many others

While many of these concerns are legitimate and deserve serious consideration, some claims veer into the extreme and conspiratorial—such as assertions that data

¹ <https://www.farmprogress.com/technology/data-centers-appetite-for-farmland-hard-to-suppress>

² <https://ofbf.org/tag/data-centers/>

³ bloomberg.com/graphics/2025-ai-data-centers-electricity-prices/

⁴ <https://qds.com.hk/en/do-data-centers-emit-radiation-is-it-harmful-to-human-health/>

centers could use frequency and thermal recognition to harvest conscious and unconscious thoughts.⁵

On the other hand, proponents of data centers offer the following arguments:

- President Trump has emphasized that the United States is in a critical artificial intelligence race with China and other adversaries.⁶
- PILOT programs (payments in lieu of taxes) can significantly offset the impact of tax abatements.
- Foreign governments, including China, may be using social media propaganda (such as “spamouflage” campaigns) to amplify fear about data centers and gain a strategic advantage.⁷
- Data centers can drive meaningful economic development.
- Behind-the-meter power generation can address concerns about the energy grid.⁸
- Water recycling technologies can mitigate issues related to water usage and wastewater disposal.
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Mr. Chairman, as you know well, technology advances far more rapidly than legislation or regulation, leaving us already playing catch-up.

My constituents deserve to have their voices heard. The more I have discussed this issue, the clearer it has become that colleagues on both sides of the aisle are encountering similar concerns in their own districts.

While local political subdivisions currently have the authority to welcome or reject data centers, it seems inefficient—and burdensome—for small communities to bear the primary responsibility for evaluating these complex issues. Many village and township officials lack the time, expertise, or resources to develop comprehensive strategies on their own.

⁵ https://www.dropbox.com/sc/fi/f3zvtwfydgsa073gazpi6/Eric_Watson-Thought_Harvesting-Data-Centers.wav?rlkey=7bkbb785ziub447y9zmmu2fth&dl=0

⁶ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelashley/2025/11/26/the-ai-race-is-becoming-a-sprint-for-power/>

⁷ <https://globalsecurityreview.com/chinas-ai-driven-information-operations-are-here-the-us-needs-an-ai-rma/>

⁸ <https://www.coresite.com/blog/more-power-behind-the-meter-power-systems-for-data-centers>

It makes little sense to repeat the same debate in Gibsonburg, then in Woodville, Norwalk, Marietta, Cincinnati, Columbus, Youngstown, and countless other communities across the state.

A statewide Data Center Study Commission offers a more sensible approach. A commission composed of respected individuals could thoroughly assess all perspectives, hold public input sessions, and develop informed recommendations.

Under the bill, the commission would be required to hold at least four public hearings (more if needed): two dedicated to the general public and two focused on experts, including representatives from environmental agencies, agriculture, energy, economic development, national security, and other relevant fields. The commission would deliver a report to the General Assembly within six months. That report could include legislative recommendations as well as best practices for local political subdivisions.

To date, I have received support from both opponents and proponents of data centers. Both sides are eager to present their arguments, making this a true win-win for the state of Ohio.

We have included an emergency clause to expedite the process. That said, we fully recognize that meaningful progress will require continued bipartisan cooperation, which we are committed to fostering.

I now yield to my esteemed colleague and joint sponsor from Norwalk, Representative Kellie Deeter.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Click". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Gary Click
State Representative, District 88

