



**Testimony on SB 1292
AAC Energy and Water Efficiency Requirements for
Artificial Intelligence Data Centers
February 17, 2025**

To: Honorable Co-Chairs Sen. Needleman and Rep. Steinberg, and Members of the Energy & Technology Committee

From: Lori Brown, Executive Director, CT League of Conservation Voters

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on SB 1292 which contains long overdue requirements for any Data Centers built in Connecticut to be as efficient as possible with their water and energy use.

All large data servers use water, both directly and indirectly, and the amounts can be substantial.

Data centers are also the most energy-intensive type of building, consuming 10 to 50 times the energy per floor space of a typical commercial office building.

In 2021, legislation was passed as an “Emergency Certification” to incentivize construction of new Data Centers in our state. As such, there was never a public hearing or any opportunity to discuss requirements or standards that would mitigate energy use, emissions, or water consumption.

It is therefore appropriate that the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection adopt standards concerning water and energy efficiency, and that those standards be strictly enforced.

We would further ask that an assessment be conducted of the environmental impact that emissions from a new Data Center would have on our state’s emission reduction targets and include a mitigation plan if needed. There should be explicit rules regarding what is—or is not—acceptable backup power.

There are other significant costs related to data centers that should be considered, such as the impact on any community where they are sited and how that would be addressed.

Connecticut must look at the problems that other states are experiencing with new Data Centers, such as power disruptions, and damage to equipment due to fluctuations and surges of power going out to customers.

With energy reliability of our grid an important concern, does the legislation anticipate studying the power supply needs of AI Data Centers and how to ensure that it would not take priority over the needs of other customers?

And if we are in a drought, would the water needs of an AI Data Center come before all other needs for people and healthy ecosystems that we all rely on?

Clearly the power supply demands of Connecticut are growing and we need to plan responsibly to avoid the potential for harm to our land, air, water, and climate as we consider all the options.

In past years when Data Centers were being discussed, some of these suggestions were made to reduce their impact before they are built:

- Require the most energy-efficient servers.
- Prohibit diesel or fossil fuel back-up power
- Require that Data Centers conserve water by requiring air cooled or closed loop water systems.
- Require that buildings be heated with waste heat from the Data Center and allow excess heat to be used for thermal energy storage and/or community heating needs.
- Require Data Centers to meet sustainability goals of the municipality in which they are located.

Thank you for considering these comments as you deliberate how to address our energy needs in an environmentally responsible way.

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