



October 22, 2026
2051 Kaen Road #409, Oregon City

Testimony Before Clackamas County Board of Commissioners

RE: Clackamas County Data Center Moratorium

Thank you. My name is John Charles, president of Cascade Policy Institute, a nonpartisan policy research organization now in its 35th year. We're based in Portland, although I personally have been a taxpaying homeowner in Clackamas County for over 30 years, so I have a slightly higher interest in the fiscal impacts of what you're going to do here or might not do.

As your staff has already indicated, ORS 197.520 requires findings justifying the moratorium. You must find a "compelling need due to irrevocable public harm that would occur without a moratorium."

While there are some things we don't know about data centers generally, there are at least three things we do know about data centers in Clackamas County.

First, there are no data centers in the unincorporated parts of the county that you regulate. Second, there are no data center applications pending.

Third, there is only one industrially zoned parcel in the unincorporated areas of the county with more than five contiguous acres.

Therefore, with or without a moratorium, nothing is going to happen in the next 120 days, or probably the next 365 days. From the standpoint of the data center industry, Clackamas County is a flyover zone.

It would be very difficult for you to make a finding of "compelling need" when the industry has shown no interest in the county. There is no irrevocable harm to worry about.

Furthermore, staff have noted that the purpose of the moratorium is to pause the process and figure out a way to "more appropriately regulate data centers." I've been in the policy business for about 50 years, and when I hear "appropriately regulate," I imagine going down a lot of rabbit trails.

My impression of your staff and board is that you're pretty busy already and aren't looking for more things to do.

So, the notion that you would burn up hundreds or maybe thousands of hours of staff, commission, and public time discussing the appropriate way to regulate a non-problem seems wasteful.

The moratorium is unnecessary, it is not supported by findings, and it should not be adopted. Thank you.

Testimony of John Charles, President, Cascade Policy Institute, before the [Clackamas County Board of Commissioners](#) on the proposed data center moratorium, October 22, 2026 (View on [YouTube, timestamp 47:30](#)).

John A. Charles, Jr. is President and CEO of Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon's free market public policy research organization. He researches, writes, and presents testimony and analysis on state and local issues important to the freedom and opportunity of all Oregonians.