



*Working together for Ohio farmers to advance  
agriculture and strengthen our communities.*

The Honorable Matthew Huffman  
Speaker, Ohio House of Representatives  
77 S. High St, 14th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable Rob McColley  
President, Ohio Senate  
1 Capitol Square  
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable Dani Isaccsohn  
Minority Leader, Ohio House of Representatives  
77 S. High St, 14th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable Nickie Antonio  
Minority Leader, Ohio Senate  
1 Capitol Square  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Leaders of the Ohio General Assembly,

We appreciate the robust discussion that has begun to occur around data centers at the Statehouse. We have heard concerns from every corner of our statewide membership about data centers and the various impacts their proliferation will have on our state. The Ohio Farm Bureau Federation is the state's largest general farm organization, representing more than 60,000 farm families across the state of Ohio. Our members produce a variety of farm products- from corn and soybeans to tomatoes and lettuce, to livestock and everything in between. Regardless of the type of operation you have or where you are located, with more than 200 data centers in Ohio (the fifth highest in the U.S.), it is becoming virtually impossible to find a community that is not concerned about this issue.

We fully recognize that modern agriculture could not produce the yields needed to feed the world without cutting-edge technology that relies heavily on large amounts of data, which implies the need for data centers to house and protect this competitive advantage. However, the amount of agricultural land and other resources (water, utility-scale power generation, energy transportation infrastructure, and access to natural gas for on-site, "behind the meter" generation fuel) that are being devoted, or rather committed, to these projects has raised many concerns and questions among our members throughout the state. Many are asking if the benefits of attracting data centers at this pace outweigh the costs.

To that point, we write to you today to **urge your support for a veto override that would repeal the Data Center Sales Tax Exemption.** Overriding this veto (Item Number 58) would ensure that if these types of facilities continue to locate in Ohio, they will provide the maximum benefit to the taxpayers of this state.



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These are tax exemptions for multi-billion, if not trillion-dollar companies. If it makes sense for their businesses to continue building data centers, they can do so with little impact on their bottom line without this exemption. **Farmers simply cannot do the same.** With developers willing to pay tens of thousands per acre, no farmer can compete with those prices. Farmers must either acquire more land or make their current land more productive to grow and sustain their operations. Even with monumental advancements in yield technology, farmers are still struggling to stay afloat in the current economic turmoil. Trade uncertainty, skyrocketing fertilizer prices from already historic levels, domestic market stagnation, and many other factors are making this one of the most difficult times in the agricultural economy since the 1980's.

The potential negative impacts of data centers on agriculture, natural resources, the electricity market, and land use, just to name a few, have our members rightly asking, "Are we doing this too quickly? And at what cost?" OFBF has already testified in support of House Bill 646, which would establish a study commission to examine many of the issues that concern our members. Even with quick passage, however, that commission will only be creating recommendations that, at best, could be released by the end of the year, after numerous, thorough hearings that allow for public testimony and rigorous research. While we are extremely supportive of the creation of that commission, we believe that action is needed now to slow the proliferation of data centers.

While data centers may provide some benefits to our country, state, and local areas, the absence of a robust regulatory framework and long-term planning may lead to unforeseen repercussions. OFBF and its members recognize the difficult nature of this issue and stand ready to work with all interested parties and levels of government to create a world in which data centers can best serve our citizens without causing long-term, harmful effects on other parts of the economy and the environment. We appreciate your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adam J. Sharp". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Adam Sharp  
Executive Vice President, Ohio Farm Bureau Federation